

THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

VOL. XXIX.—NO. 4.

OCTOBER, MDCCCLXXVIII.

ARTICLE I.

THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL IN ITS THEOLOGICAL RELATIONS.

Recent discussions, conducted partly in this REVIEW, have directed special attention, and attached fresh interest, to the old but unexhausted, the perplexing but infinitely important, question of the Freedom of the Will. Almost from the dawn of philosophy, and the earliest development of theological doctrine, serious thinkers have, in testing their powers of reflection upon it, consciously touched the limits of the speculative faculty. Yet, as it never has been conclusively settled, each generation is attracted to its consideration as by an irresistible impulse. The agitation of it proceeds, and will, no doubt, continue, until the revelations of another and higher sphere of being have been reached. The relations of the question are too widely extended, its practical consequences too far-reaching, to admit of its being jostled out of the field of human inquiry. But important as it is, the keen and protracted discussions of it by the profoundest intellects of the past and of the present leave but little room for the hope of a solution upon merely speculative grounds. Kant and Hamilton have expressed the conviction that the intricacies of the subject cannot be cleared up in the domain of empirical thought. In the light of such confessions, we are not so presumptuous as to suppose that any lucubrations, the utterance of

which we may adventure, will materially advance the question, as a merely philosophical one, towards a final adjustment. But it has theological relations of the profoundest interest; and, in this regard, no seeker of truth, no lover of his race, need offer any apology for making an humble attempt to remove some of the difficulties by which it is surrounded.

The publication of the celebrated treatise of President Edwards—"that prodigy of metaphysical acumen," as Robert Hall fitly characterised him—was attended by singular and apparently contradictory results. On the one hand, sceptics of the rigid Necessitarian school congratulated themselves upon its production, and fortified their positions by its remorseless logic. On the other, the Calvinistic theology of this country, and, to a large extent, of Great Britain, has absorbed from it a powerful influence, and has been regarded by its opponents as having incorporated its principle of determinism as a component element of its structure. The explanation of so curious a fact is perhaps not far to seek. The infidel employed its philosophy to disprove the punishableness of sin, and the Calvinistic theologian to vindicate the sovereignty of God and the dependence of man. While it is true that even the doctrines of Scripture are often wrested from their true import, and abused in the interest of ungodliness, and that it is perfectly supposable that a like misapplication has been made of some of the principles of Edwards's work, it is still a matter of serious inquiry whether there were not legitimate tendencies in his system which, in a measure, justified that result; and whether the Calvinistic theology has not injured itself and crippled its rightful influence, to the extent of their appropriation. The scriptural doctrines of the divine sovereignty and decrees have been dreadfully perverted, and it is of great consequence that no theological or philosophical explanation of them should furnish a specious pretext for that abuse. Edwards was possessed of a wonderful metaphysical genius and of almost angelic saintliness of character, but that he was no exception to the law of human fallibility is proved by his paradoxical speculations in regard to the nature of virtue, the continuity of creation, and the constituted identity of Adam and his race. With the highest admira-

tion for the consummate ability displayed in his great work on the Will, we are persuaded that its theory of determinism is radically defective, and cannot but regret its continued prevalence even in a modified form. We heartily sympathise with a great deal of what is said in the work, and with its refutation of the Pelagian and Arminian hypotheses as to the spiritual freedom of man in his natural fallen condition. It is to its theory of necessity, as incompetently grounding human guilt, and as logically tending to the implication of the divine efficiency in the production of sin, that we are constrained to object; nor are we able to perceive how the apparently qualified shape, in which it has more recently been presented, saves it from being chargeable with these defects. No doubt, sinners, apart from regenerating grace, as a gift of sovereignty to be sought, or as already imparted, are bound by a moral necessity to sin, but God is not the author of that necessity; they are the authors of it, and are therefore responsible and punishable for its existence. It is in failing to show this, that Edwards and his school furnish an inadequate account of the freedom of the will. While we thus speak, we are conscious of a feeling of pain akin to that with which one finds fault with his friends. But truth is superior to friendship: *amicus Socrates, amicus Plato, sed magis amica veritas*. We are comforted, however, by the reflection that in criticising a peculiar hypothesis of theirs, no support will be afforded to the distinctive theological doctrines of those with whom they contend. We will endeavor in the course of these remarks to indicate the points in which the peculiar theory of the school of Edwards is inconsistent with the genius of the Calvinistic theology, and at the same time that theology will be incidentally vindicated against the hypotheses of Pelagianism and Arminianism. Before proceeding to discuss the merits of the case, it is proper that we make some preliminary statements of an explanatory character, for the sake of clearness and in order to prevent misapprehension.

In the first place, the question of the freedom of the will is partly philosophical and partly theological; and it is necessary that something be said as to our conception of the relation which

these two aspects of it bear to each other. It is frequently taken for granted, that the methods of philosophical and theological procedure are entirely different. But it is evident that all science, whatever may be its object-matter, must proceed upon the one method of analysis and synthesis. The true distinction lies in the nature of the facts which they investigate, and the fundamental data upon which they found their proofs. In these respects, each has, to a great extent, its own proper domain, within which it is entitled to exercise its sovereignty independently of the other; and precisely to that extent, whatever it may be, neither has the right to protrude beyond its sphere and clash with the other. Faith cannot legitimately hold what the reasoning faculty, in its normal condition, can within its own distinctive sphere prove to be false. But there are some things which lie beyond the sphere of the discursive faculty, and its conclusions as to those things are, from the nature of the case, illegitimate and untrustworthy. Whenever it transcends its limits, its apparent demonstrations against the dogmas of faith are but deceitful sophisms. If then faith, in reliance upon the authority of an undoubted revelation, holds what is contradicted by such unwarranted conclusions, it is acting legitimately and in harmony with the fundamental laws of the mind. In like manner, when faith traverses the bounds assigned it, and dogmatizes in regard to matters lying outside its jurisdiction, it acts illegitimately and is liable to be contradicted by the reasoning faculty in the regular employment of its processes. Now, were philosophy and theology altogether distinct in the respect which has been mentioned, that is, their object-matter, their spheres would be wholly independent of each other, and it would follow that no principles or conclusions of the one could be considered as regulative of the procedures of the other. As neither would lawfully cross the path of the other, neither could impose limitations upon the other. But it is clear that the territory which they occupy, and rightfully occupy, is often one and the same. The original truths of natural religion, at least the essential principles of moral government, are precisely the things about which philosophy, especially in its ontological aspects, is chiefly con-

cerned. It is in this way that a science of natural theology becomes possible. But the Scriptures, while doing a great deal more, republish the truths of natural religion and assume and reënforce the essential principles of moral government. Here then philosophy and theology meet each other face to face, and the question must be settled, Which, in the event of a conflict, is entitled to precedence? That question is answered by the simple consideration, that the inferences which reason draws from the facts of consciousness and observation, may, in consequence of the deranging influence of sin upon the human faculties, be erroneous; but it is impossible that a supernatural revelation can err. God's philosophy must possess a higher authority than man's. Whenever, therefore, the inferential deductions of the reasoning faculty come into collision with the authoritative utterances of Scripture, the former must yield to the latter. In the event of a definite issue between them, philosophy must give way to a true theology, on the principle that a lower authority must bow to a higher. For a like reason, the undoubted principles of a correct theology—that is, of one which accurately represents the deliverances of a divine, supernatural revelation—must be held to be regulative of the conclusions which flow from a merely philosophical process, so far as common ground has been occupied. The Word of God cannot err. We maintain that it is warrantable to act in accordance with this law in reference to the matter now under consideration; and as we regard it as well-nigh universally conceded by all Christian parties to the controversy about the Will, that the Scriptures teach the doctrine that God cannot, in any proper sense, be the author of sin, we shall assume that truth as a standard by which to test the validity of the theories which shall be discussed. Whatever hypothesis contradicts that fundamental and regulative principle ought to be rejected. In like manner, we take it for granted that punishment and guilt are strictly correlative—that the absence of guilt implies exemption from punishment, and consequently that any theory which fails to ground punishment in guilt is, on that account, convicted of being defective.

In the second place, we do not admit the distinction, insisted

on by some writers, between ability and liberty.* They say that while man in his natural fallen condition has no ability for the performance of spiritual acts, he possesses freedom—he is spiritually disabled, but is still a free-agent. It strikes us that there is no distinction here worth speaking of. What is ability? It is the power to think, to feel, to will. So far as the will, therefore, is concerned, ability is precisely the power to will. And if the will is defined to be the faculty by which we choose, then the power to choose and the ability of the will are one and the same. But it is obvious that he who has the power to choose possesses what is denominated freedom; which is the same thing as to say that the ability and the freedom of the will are identical, or, what is equivalent, the ability and the freedom of the man. If the question then be, whether an unregenerate sinner has ability to will spiritually, we answer that he has not; and that is the same thing as to say that spiritually he has no liberty—spiritually he is not free. His inability as to spiritual acts is one and the same with the spiritual bondage of his will. He is able to perform natural and merely moral acts; he is free to perform them—these are equivalent propositions. He is unable to perform spiritual acts; he is not free to perform them—these also are substantially the same affirmations. He is characterised by ability in one sense and inability in another. Precisely so he is possessed of liberty in one sense, and destitute of it in another. If therefore we affirm, what is true, that the unregenerate sinner is devoid of ability and yet possessed of liberty, we are not distinguishing between ability and liberty; we are only distinguishing between one sort of ability and another sort of ability, or between one kind of liberty and another kind of liberty. Spiritual inability and natural liberty are perfectly consistent, but spiritual inability and spiritual liberty are contradictory. It is exactly

*C. Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. II., p. 291. Dr. Hodge, we think, misconceives Müller, when he represents him, in his *Christian Doctrine of Sin*, as distinguishing Formal Freedom (*Formale Freiheit*) in the sense of ability from Real Freedom (*Reale Freiheit*) in the sense of "liberty as it actually exists." Müller's formal freedom is the liberty of contrary choice—of otherwise determining; his real freedom is the liberty which consists with an already determined spontaneity.

the same as if we should say, spiritual inability and natural ability are consistent, or spiritual bondage and natural liberty; but spiritual inability and spiritual ability, or spiritual bondage and spiritual liberty are contradictory. The distinction between ability and liberty is not tenable. Adam at his creation was able to stand, liable to fall; which is the same as saying that he was free to stand and free to fall. His unregenerate descendants are unable to perform holy acts, but able to perform sinful, which is the same as saying that they are not free to perform holy acts, but free to perform sinful. Disabled as to holiness, not free as to holiness, are terms which express the same truth. Able to sin, free to sin, these also signify the same fact. This was the doctrine of Augustine and the Reformers, as could easily be shown from their writings, and from the symbols of the Reformed Church. The only trouble is that the term *ability* is unusual in its application to the power of sinning. But if men *can* sin, they are beyond doubt *able* to sin. I can, I am able: where is the difference between the two affirmations?

In the third place, we consider the distinction between natural and moral ability as having no force, so far as the question before us is concerned, which is one not in regard to the possession of faculties, but of the power to act. It is a distinction without a difference. For the end supposed to be contemplated—the thing to be done, is moral. Whatever natural ability, therefore, men may be conceived to possess for the discharge of moral duties is, from the nature of the case, moral. To deny moral ability is to deny natural. The true distinction intended is between a natural-moral ability and a spiritual ability. Now there is in natural fallen men a moral ability to some things, but they are simply moral. The conscience, for example, is by its very nature a moral faculty, and the Fall, although it has damaged it by entirely obliterating from it the spiritual life, has not destroyed it as moral. It is still 'the law of God within man. Natural men have in their constitution moral laws which are fundamental and indestructible; they have moral perceptions, they perform moral acts, they pass moral judgments, they experience moral emotions as sanctions of those judgments. The continued exist-

ence in them of this moral ability is the condition of the "law-work" of the Holy Spirit upon them, awakening and convincing them. That is one thing; but it is quite a different thing to say that they have an ability for spiritual functions, the discharge of which implies a principle of spiritual life. That sort of life no merely natural man possesses. He is "dead in trespasses and sins." He has no spiritual ability, though he has a merely moral ability which is natural. The whole question of the distinction between natural and moral ability in relation to spiritual acts is irrelevant and futile. The only question is, whether unregenerate men have any spiritual ability. That is the only kind of ability which could adapt them to the performance of spiritual acts; for example, to determine to believe in Christ and to repent of their sins. So far as merely moral acts are concerned, there can be no real distinction between moral and natural ability.

In the fourth place, we can perceive no validity in the distinction, deemed by some as important, between the freedom of the will and the free-agency of the man—between the power of the will to determine itself and the power of the man to determine himself. For, first, it is admitted on all hands that the will is especially and emphatically the faculty of action. This is implied in the current terms, a determined will, a strong will, an obstinate will, and their opposites, a vacillating, weak, yielding, will. For a long time the distinction of the mental powers which commonly prevailed among philosophers was into the understanding and the will, or into the intellectual and the active powers. Whatever may have been the defect of that division, it expressed the conviction that the will is the sphere in which the activity of the soul prominently resides. The group of powers which was conceived as active acquired its denomination from the will. The now generally accepted threefold division proceeds upon the supposition that it is necessary to distinguish the will, as peculiarly the organ of action, from the feelings as either the passive recipients of impression from correlated objects, or as mere impulses and tendencies to action. It is plain that each of these divisions is based upon the assumption that the principal seat of activity in the soul is in the will. Now to say that the man is a

free-agent, but that the will is not free, is to say that the very organ through which the agent principally expresses his activity is not free while the agent is; and that is equivalent to affirming that the agent is free as to his acts, but that the most prominent and decisive of his acts are not free. Secondly, an illegitimate distinction is made between the man and the will. What is the will, but a power of the man? If therefore the man is free, his will is free; else the unity of the soul is destroyed. And this becomes the more glaringly inadmissible when, in consequence of this unnatural schism, freedom is denied to the faculty which is by eminence that of action and restricted to those which are only active in a limited degree. Thirdly, the distinction under consideration violates the catholic usage of theology and philosophy. The freedom of the agent and the freedom of the will, as might without difficulty be shown, have nearly always been treated as identical. The distinction between them would seem to have been made by certain Calvinistic divines, in order to explain what they judged might be considered a paradox in the teachings of Augustine and the Reformers—namely that although the will of the unregenerate sinner is bound, the man is still a free-agent. Liberty of the will and liberty of the agent, says Dr. C. Hodge,* are “expressions not really equivalent. The man may be free, when his will is in bondage.” But there is no paradox of that kind in their doctrine which needed such an exposition. All that they affirmed was that the unregenerate sinner is a free-agent in certain respects, and not in others—that his will is, in relation to certain acts, bound, and in relation to others, free. The will of the agent is not free as to holiness, but free as to sin. The paradox—and it is a scriptural one—lies in the doctrine that the will is bound and free at the same time; but the apparent discrepancy is cleared up by the consideration that the will is contemplated in different relations. What is true of it in one relation is not true of it in another. It is, we conceive, a mistake to interpret Augustine and the Reformers as having observed a distinction between the freedom of the agent and the freedom of the will. But this distinction will probably meet us in the heart

**Systematic Theology*, Vol. II., p. 291.

of the discussion, and as we do not wish to beg the question, further remark in reference to it is reserved. What we desire is to prevent any misunderstanding of our own position. The question which it is proposed now to consider is not, whether the soul may be free, while the will is not; but whether the soul is free in willing—that is, whether the will is free. It is the old question of the freedom of the will which we intend to discuss, under the conviction that that is really the matter which ever has been and still is in dispute.

It is obvious, as has been frequently observed, that much of the difficulty attending the treatment of this subject arises from the ambiguity of the terms employed; and it therefore becomes every one who undertakes it to acquaint the reader with the signification which he attaches to them. In obedience to this requirement, we briefly signalise the sense in which some of the most prominent and critical terms will be used in the progress of these remarks. At the outset we encounter the term *will* as designative of the mental power about which the question exists. It is confessedly difficult to furnish a definition of the will which would be satisfactory to all parties. Let us by a brief analysis feel our way to that which we propose to give. There are at the root of the intellect proper, with its group of cognitive powers, fundamental laws of thought and belief which are regulative of its processes. There are æsthetical laws at the foundation of the feelings, in accordance with which their phenomenal manifestations occur. So at the basis of conscience lie implicitly the laws of rectitude—the ultimate principles of morality, which, when developed in consciousness by the concrete cases of experience, become the standards of moral perception and judgment. Now reasoning simply from analogy, we would conclude that there are also fundamental laws at the very root of the faculty which we denominate the will, by which its processes and acts are regulated. We do not undertake an exposition of such voluntary principles, but we venture the suggestion that the law of causal efficiency is entitled to that determination. A distinction must be taken between the fundamental law of causality which regulates the cognitive processes and that which underlies the energies of the will.

The former is a mere intellectual conviction of the necessary relation between effect and cause; the latter, the very principle itself which, in actual operation, furnishes the first empirical condition upon which the intellectual conviction is elicited into formal shape. Here precisely the fountain of causal activity in the soul is to be found. Were there room for the expansion of this mere suggestion, it might perhaps be shown that in the establishment of such a regulative principle at the root of the will, we would go far toward the proof of the inherence in that faculty of a derived, dependent and limited, but real, originating power—a power of the will, at least in its original condition, to determine itself to action. By virtue of this law, it becomes a true cause of acts, in contradistinction, on the one hand, from a substance manifesting itself in phenomenal properties, and on the other, from a faculty determined to activity by its mere spontaneity. In the next place, analysis detects the element of spontaneity in the will—that of conation or effort, in what according to the universal usage of language is termed *willingness*, the state of being willing as distinguished from the act of willing. The question has often been discussed whether desire belongs to the feelings or the will. Hamilton, in his Lectures which were his earliest productions, assigns it to the former category, but in his Notes to Reid, to the latter.* It strikes us that desire is the culminating element of the feelings, and constitutes the point at which they touch the will in the shape of inducement to the awakening of its activity. There then results within the will itself a corresponding spontaneous tendency—a *nisus* to action, which is susceptible of manifold degrees of strength. When inflamed to its highest stage of potentiality, it becomes the proximate motive to a determinate expression of the will. This is the *velleitas* of the scholastic philosophy. In the third place, we reach the deliberate election of the will, the act of choice, which is ordinarily known as volition. This is the product of the *voluntas* of the schoolmen. According to this analysis there are, besides the regulative principle of free causality lying at its root, two complementary factors constituting this special power of the

*Reid's *Collected Works*, *Active Powers*, Ess. iv., ch. iv., p. 611, foot note.

soul—that of conation or effort, and that of election or determinate action. We therefore regard the will as the faculty of effort and choice. First we have the conative and elective power and then the products of that power—conation and choice; just as we have in the understanding the power of cognition and the cognition itself, in the sensibilities the capacity of feeling and the actual emotion, and in the conscience the power of moral perception and judgment and the moral precepts and judgments themselves.

The terms *necessity* and *liberty* are correlative. Our conception of the one will be determined by that of the other. The exigencies of the controversy require but a single, though vital, discrimination, between necessity considered as the relation betwixt resistless physical force and the effects it produces—the necessity of “coaction” or compulsion, on the one hand, and, on the other, necessity as the relation between any influence and the results which certainly and unavoidably flow from it—what is ordinarily termed moral necessity. The first produces effects contrary to the will; the second, effects by means of the will itself. In the one case, the man is forced against his will—he is not a free-agent; in the other, though he acts with inevitable certainty, he acts willingly—he is a free-agent. Liberty, viewed in relation to the first kind of necessity mentioned, is, so far as the circumstances of one’s condition are concerned, the absence of physical constraint or restraint, the opportunity of acting as he wills; so far as his ability is concerned, it is his power to “do as he pleases”—to carry his volitions into execution in the external sphere. Considered in relation to the second kind of necessity signalled, liberty is either the power to act voluntarily, but unavoidably—that is, with no ability to act otherwise; or the power to act voluntarily, but contingently—that is, with the ability to act otherwise. This leads to the explanation of the term *contingency*. It may mean the quality of an act or event which renders it accidental or unintentional; or it may denote the absence of inevitable certainty—the possibility of the occurrence or non-occurrence of an act or event. In this latter sense it is not used as opposed to cause, but to necessity. In this sense we shall employ it, if at all, in these remarks. A contingent act

or event is one which may or may not be done, may or may not happen. The liberty of contingency, consequently, is freedom from all necessity.

As the terms *liberty* or *power of contrary choice* will frequently occur, as important, in this discussion, it is requisite precisely to fix their signification. They are not used as equivalent to *liberty of indifference*, expressing that condition of the soul in which no motives operate upon it, to induce determinate action; nor again as convertible with *liberty of equilibrium*, indicating that state in which conflicting motives are active, but in such equal strength as perfectly to neutralise each other. But they will be employed to designate the freedom of the soul to choose between alternatives, the power of otherwise determining—*facultas aliter se determinandi*.

Having made these explanations, in order to avoid confusion, we pass on to show that the theory of Edwards, either as held by himself or as modified by others who essentially agree with it, fails to ground the sense of guilt and to acquit God of the charge of being the author of sin, and is therefore an insufficient account of the freedom of the will. The point in which they all concur is the denial to the will of any self-determining power, that is, of any power to originate its determinations—of any real, causal efficiency in itself, and the affirmation that its volitions are efficiently caused by the sum of motives existing in the soul. They differ upon minor points—upon the question, how far the internal motives are affected by external circumstances, or, as the phrase goes, the subjective inducements by the objective; upon the question of the order of relative influence exerted by the different mental faculties and the dispositions and tendencies inherent in them; upon the question, whether the sum of motives operating upon the will excludes or includes the *habitus* of the will itself—upon these questions of detail interesting in themselves, but of subordinate value in view of the momentous subject of human responsibility, and the relation of the divine efficiency to sin, the advocates of Determinism differ among themselves. What we deem it important to call into conspicuous notice is the great point in which all forms of the theory are collected into

unity. What that point is, has already been briefly intimated, but it deserves to be made luminous. They agree in affirming moral necessity of all the acts of the will; that is, they hold that the acts of the will, whatever they may be, are unavoidable. They could not be otherwise than they are in any given case. The man wills freely, but he cannot will otherwise than he does. He acts in accordance with a force operating invincibly and inevitably through the will itself. That force is the spontaneity and *habitus* of the man himself. He always acts in accordance with it, never against it. The law which the adherents of the principle of Determinism coincide in enunciating is: As is the moral spontaneity of the man, so must be his volitions—the spontaneity determines the will; the will never determines the spontaneity. This is Edwards's moral necessity, a necessity not imposed in the way of physical constraint, but springing from the dispositions of the man himself. Now every Calvinist must admit the possible co-existence of such a necessity with the highest form of freedom. They concur in God, in the elect angels, and in glorified men. The only question is—and it is of the utmost consequence—Does this concurrence take place in every supposable case? Did it obtain in the instance of the non-elect angels and of Adam in innocence? We do not object to the possible concurrence of this necessity and freedom of will. We admit it as a fact in some actual instances. We deny that it must always exist—that it is the result of a universal and invariable law. But some writers* of the school of Edwards question the legitimacy of the term necessity as applicable to the voluntary acts of men. They regard the use of the term as misleading and injurious. They distinguish sharply, as Edwards did not, between necessity and certainty. All that they deem it requisite to hold is, that the connection between the spontaneity of the man and the acts of his will is certain. The former being what it is, the latter will certainly be in conformity with it. Now the essence of this theory of certainty lies in the inevitable operation of causes in producing effects. That is plain, not only from

*Alexander, *Moral Science*, ch. xv., p. 104. Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. II., p. 285.

the express admissions of its maintainers, but from their doctrine that unless such an operation of causes is known, it is impossible that acts or events should be foreknown. It is affirmed that every cause, including those which operate upon the will acts with unavoidable certainty in producing its effects. And as the moral spontaneity of the man is the cause of his volitions, they spring with inevitable certainty from that cause. They must be as the spontaneity is. But that which must be so and so, which cannot be otherwise, is necessary, or language has lost its meaning. If, as these writers assert, the moral spontaneity always and certainly determines the character of the volitions, it follows that the volitions are necessary.* Edwards is more philosophical and consistent than those who thus attempt to refine upon his theory. The distinction between his moral necessity and their certainty is without foundation. What is inevitably certain is morally necessary. To say that God and elect angels and glorified saints, whenever they act at all, will certainly do what is right, is the same as to say that they will necessarily do what is right. This attempted distinction, therefore, does not destroy the unity of the theory held by these writers with that which was maintained by the great New Englander. The two theories are really one and the same, and accordingly we shall so treat them. Let us settle our view of this common theory. Its essence is that the will, morally considered, has, under no conceivable circumstances or relations, any power to act otherwise than in conformity with the moral spontaneity of the soul. Its freedom consists in its following the law of the spontaneity. It must be what it is. Now the question starts up, What determined the moral spontaneity which thus determines the will? What is its origin? What is the cause which produced it? For we are agreed in demanding a cause for every effect. It will not do to say, it is sufficient to know that the spontaneity belongs to the man himself, and in acting in accordance with it, he is only expressing himself. That may be true; but that accounts only for self-expression, as Dr. Thornwell well remarks,† not for self-

*Alexander, *Moral Science*, ch. xv., pp. 102, 106. Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. II., pp. 285, 299, 301.

†Collected Writings, Vol. I., p. 250.

determination. How came the man to be conditioned thus and so? Did he have any voluntary agency in inducing that moral type of being which now characterises him beyond his power to change it; that all-conditioning law of sin which inevitably leads to sinful acts as its expression? Now either he did, or he did not. If he did not, he only develops his natural constitution when he sins. Not to sin would be to violate the original laws of his being. It cannot be conceived that he would be more to blame than is a poisonous plant in producing poisonous fruit in accordance with the law of its nature. If he did, then he must have done so by a self-determination of the will, that is, a determination uncaused by a preceding moral spontaneity; for, upon the supposition, he determined the spontaneity and was not determined by it. We charge the theory of Moral Necessity or Certainty with the great fault of making it impossible to show how man has determined his present sinful spontaneity. It confines inquiry to the present subjectivity of the soul; allows no question as to the genesis of the contents of that subjectivity. It asserts that it is enough to know that it is the nature of the man, no matter how derived, which determines the acts of the will.* But it is clear that if a self-determining power is denied to the will, it cannot be claimed either for the understanding or the feelings, as a special faculty. To affirm choice, resolution, decision, of these faculties, and to exclude them from the will, would be an intolerable infraction of the laws of language and of the inferences which its usage enforces. It follows from the theory, therefore, that the man comes into individual existence not in any sense self-determined, but determined by the will of another. And to such a conclusion the patent facts of the case shut up the theory. For it admits that men are born in sin—nay, are born totally depraved. There could, therefore, from the nature of the case, be no determination of self at all by the conscious activity of the man. He could not consciously determine himself before his conscious existence. He is born with a sinful spontaneity which his will expresses with inevitable certainty.

*Edwards, *Inquiry*, &c., Part IV., Sec. 4. Alexander, *Moral Science*, ch. xv., p. 102. Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. II., p. 308.

In this conclusion it is impossible to rest. Our fundamental intuitions demand that we go farther, and ask how the nature of the man came to be what it is; and the Scriptures, in measure, satisfy that demand. The advocates of the theory of Determinism themselves inconsistently but necessarily fall into the current of speculation which has set through the ages, and along with all other thinkers take the question beyond the limits of our present subjectivity. We shall meet them again in another field—the field in which the first instance of human sin took place, the real arena of this controversy. Back to the first instance we must needs go, or drivel upon the great inquiry.

Throwing out of account the Pelagian hypothesis as palpably inconsistent with facts and with Scripture, we encounter but two opinions which deserve serious consideration—that of the fall of every human individual for himself in an ante-mundane state of existence, and that of the fall of the human race in Adam. The former challenges consideration because of its advocacy by some of the acutest minds of modern times. We allude not so much to such thinkers as Kant and other German philosophers, for the data of Scripture were not held by them as, in any sense, regulative of their doctrines; but when a Christian theologian like Julius Müller lends his great powers to the support of this hypothesis,* we hardly feel at liberty to brush it aside as unworthy of notice. As, however, the class of writers with whose theory we are chiefly concerned have no sympathy with this view, we content ourselves with a bare outline of the argument which has convinced us of its fallacy. In the first place, the hypothesis is unphilosophical. 1. It supposes man to have existed transcendently, that is, out of time and place, or, to use its own terminology, out of time and space. But it is not only inconceivable that a finite being could exist without those conditions, and if so there can be no *thinking* about the case since it is unthinkable, and no supernatural revelation of it is pleaded as a ground for *believing* it; but the hypothesis involves contradictions. A finite being must be conditioned by time and place, as might easily be shown. It is the prerogative of the

* *Christian Doctrine of Sin*, Vol. II., ch. iii.

Infinite Being alone to exist out of those conditions. The notion of the finite is contradicted by the assumptions of this hypothesis.

2. It is self-contradictory. It is obliged to admit that man was finite in the supposed ante-mundane state of existence and therefore conditioned, and at the same time affirms that he was free from the most indispensable conditions of the finite—those of time and space.

3. It contradicts the laws of the human constitution. It is incredible that so critical and revolutionary a fact as a fall from innocence into sin by the conscious act of every individual human being should have entirely perished from the memory of the race. If it be said that the nature of the hypothesis assumes that the conditions of memory were absent in a transcendental and unconditioned existence, the same absence of conditions would have obtained in regard to the operation of every other faculty or power, and no intelligent action, consequently, could be conceived as having been possible. It is vain to say that no man remembers his part in the sin of Adam, and to urge that as equally a difficulty in the orthodox doctrine; for the simple reason that he is not held to have committed that sin as an individual, consciously and personally, but only representatively and legally; and men are not expected to hold in memory the acts of trustees performed before they were born. No American now remembers the acts of Washington or the framers of the Federal Constitution. Further, this hypothesis supposes every man to have fallen for himself; but, if he does not remember his fall how can he be conscious of guilt for it? This does not hold of the federal theory, because the knowledge of guilt in Adam is held to be derived from the divine testimony as furnished in the Scriptures. But we have no knowledge from any source of our fall for ourselves in a previous state of existence. It is simply a hypothetical inference. This consideration is damaging to a theory the very end of which is to ground our sense of guilt for having determined our present sinful condition. In the second place, the hypothesis is unscriptural.

1. The Scripture in its account of the genesis of man gives not a hint of it, which would be very remarkable upon the supposition of its truth. On the contrary, that account evidently implies that the human race

had its beginning in this world, and at the time of the creation of Adam. 2. The Scriptures represent the first man as innocent when created; consequently, he could not have contracted guilt in a previous existence. How could he have been brought into this mundane state in innocence, if justice had condemned him for a sin previously committed, for which no atonement had been made and accepted in that supposed "extra-mundane" condition? And this is the more remarkable when it is considered that Adam was destined to be the progenitor of a race, the first of a series of millions of intelligent beings, whose condition would even in the judgment of reason have been to some extent implicated in his, and is declared in Scripture to have been affected by his fall. 3. The Scriptures represent Adam as having been created. If creation as mentioned in Genesis, means a first beginning of man, as man, he could not, as man, have existed before. The hypothesis of ante-mundane existence involves two creations of Adam, and consequently an intervening annihilation.

These considerations suffice to show that the hypothesis has no probable support from reason, and none whatever from Scripture, and is simply a speculative attempt to adjust in one way what God has settled in another way in his Word. It furnishes a proof that to philosophy the problem of the will, in its moral aspects, is insoluble. Without a supernatural revelation it must have ever continued to elude the grasp of thought. But the Bible puts into the hand of philosophy the key to the otherwise insuperable difficulties of the question, by revealing the fact that God instituted such a connexion between the human race and its progenitor as implicated them in his responsibilities. It teaches us that his guilt was theirs. The Calvinistic parties to the controversy concerning the will in this discussion are agreed upon this point. Whatever may be their peculiar theories as to the precise mode of the derivation of Adam's guilt to his posterity, they concur in acknowledging that there was such a connection as made them in some sense actors in his first sin and inheritors of its results. It is not necessary, therefore, to consider here the subordinate aspects of the question of our relationship to Adam. All that is demanded for the present purpose is the doc-

trine as to our connexion with him in which the parties to the case are at one.

What has been already said is sufficient to show that, in prosecuting the inquiry in regard to the freedom of the will, it is absolutely requisite to separate the estate of man's innocency from his natural fallen condition. It is true that as he is born in sin man is determined in the direction of unholiness. His will has no power to choose that which is holy; that is to say, he has not now, as unregenerate, the power of contrary choice in relation to the alternatives of sin and holiness. He acts with freedom whenever he sins, but he has no power to act in the contrary direction. Now if it could not be shown that this was not his original condition, insuperable difficulties would emerge—difficulties which are not simply mysteries, but palpable contradictions both to the word of God and the fundamental principles of our moral nature. The theory of President Edwards and his followers strangely fails to note this obvious distinction between the case of man in innocence and that of his present and future condition, and therefore comes short of being an adequate account of the freedom of the will. As it is clear that men could not have determined themselves in the direction of spontaneous unholiness in their present conscious, individual existence, the question thrusts itself upon us for consideration, whether they so determined themselves in Adam. And that question resolves itself into this: Did Adam, by a free self-decision which might have been avoided, determine himself in the direction of sin? Here the issue is to be joined. This is the real place at which the discussion of the self-determining power of the will must be had. It is idle to transfer the question to the will in its present sinful condition. It is the case of Adam which is critical, typical, controlling. We are firmly convinced that only in it are the conditions furnished for anything approaching a settlement of this great debate. The question before us, then, is, Did Adam, in the commission of the first sin, act from necessity—that is, was his first sin unavoidable? or did he commit it by an unnecessitated and avoidable decision of his will? Now, either he was in some sense necessitated to the commission of the sin, or he was not. If he was,

then God must have been the author of the necessity, for it is alike un-supposable either that the devil was or Adam himself. The devil was simply the tempter to the sin, not the enforcer of it. The fact that God punished Adam for it proves that beyond a doubt. It is absurd to suppose that Adam could have imposed upon himself the necessity of committing the first sin. Did God, in any way, render the sin necessary or unavoidable? This raises the question as to the relation of his decree to the first sin of Adam. What then is that relation? Either God decreed efficiently to produce the sin; or, he decreed efficaciously to procure its commission; or, he decreed so to order and dispose Adam's case that the sin would be necessary; or, he decreed to permit the sin; or, he abstained from all decree in reference to it—he neither decreed to produce, nor to procure, nor to permit it. These suppositions, we conceive, exhaust the possibilities of the case, and they have all been actually maintained.

1. Did God decree efficiently to produce the first sin? It makes no real difference whether it be held that God immediately or mediately exercised his causal efficiency in the production of the sin. In either case he would have been the efficient producer and author of it.

In the first place, the following consequences legitimately flow from that position. First, the distinction between sin and holiness would be obliterated. For, whatever God does must be right, and as, *ex hypothesi*, he produced the first sin, it must cease to be regarded as sin. It must be considered as right. Secondly, as man was actually punished for the commission of the act, the fundamental intuition of justice, which we must believe was implanted in man's nature by God himself, is violated. We cannot regard it as just that man should be punished for what God himself did. Thirdly, God denounced death against the perpetrator of the act by which the forbidden fruit should be ate. If now, man was merely, in that act, a passive instrument in God's hands, God must be regarded as having denounced death against himself, the real performer of the sin. Or, if in view of the tremendous absurdity and the blasphemy of such a consequence, it be said that death was denounced against the human

instrument, then it follows that God having cautioned man against the commission of the act as fatal, caused him to commit it for the purpose of killing him. These consequences, logically deducible from the supposition that God decreed efficiently to produce the first sin, are sufficient to refute it in the judgment of every one who holds the doctrine of Theism.

In the second place, the idea of probation, upon this hypothesis, is inadmissible. Even in the case of an elect probationer, whose standing is secured by the infusion of grace, it is difficult for us to see how there can be a real probation, unless there be an intrinsic mutability of will and consequent liability to defection. The check to this possibility, imposed by the determining will of God, is in the interest of the probationer's holiness and happiness, and is therefore not inconsistent with the justice and benevolence of the Divine Being. But in the case of a probationer supposed by the hypothesis under consideration, there is no possibility of holiness, but on the other hand, an inevitable necessity to sin; and in that case the holiness and the happiness of the person on trial are rendered unattainable by the efficient causality of God. Further, while we cannot comprehend the efficiency of God's will and that of the creature in the production of holiness, we admit the fact without a protest of our instinctive sense of justice; but we are unable to make the same admission in the case of one whose election of sin is necessitated by the efficiency of God. In the instance of a non-elect probationer, the sense of justice requires the possession of the power of freely electing between the alternatives of holiness and sin. It may be added that these antecedent improbabilities suggested by reason are confirmed by the scriptural record of the facts of Adam's probation, especially the positive institution of the Covenant of Works, which plainly implied the possibility of the maintenance of his integrity. But we defer that line of proof to a future stage of the discussion.

In the third place, the hypothesis under review is opposed to the clear testimony of the Scriptures. They are full of God's condemnation of sin, and the expressions of his abhorrence of it as an intolerable abomination in his sight. He directly charges guilt upon the sinner, and assigns his destruction to himself.

He declares, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man; but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." It is vain to plead the distinction between the decretive and the preceptive will of God in this relation, for that distinction holds only in the instances of those who have already committed sin. The case of one who commits his first sin cannot be reduced to the same category. It may be that while God commanded Pharaoh to liberate Israel, he efficiently willed that he should not; and that while he commanded the Jews to receive Christ as their Redeemer and King, he efficiently willed that they should crucify him; but it cannot be shown that while God commanded Adam in innocence not to eat of the tree of knowledge, he efficiently willed that he should. It is to us one of the curiosities of theological literature, that the distinction between the will of God as to the sins of sinners and as to the first sin of an innocent being, was overlooked by so acute a thinker as President Edwards, and denied by so judicious a thinker as Principal Cunningham.

In order to save the relation of God's efficient decree to the first sin, and at the same time avoid the difficulties which have been urged, many theologians, from the time of Augustine, have maintained the hypothesis of the privative character of sin. They held that God produced the sinful act, as an act, but not the sinful quality of the act. The act was a real entity, but the sin was a mere privation of a perfection which ought to have existed. Logical completeness in the treatment of the subject might demand a thorough-going consideration of this celebrated theory. Our limits, however, will not admit of it. We beg to refer the reader to the very able discussions of the question by Müller* and Thornwell,† as easy of access. We cite a single passage from the latter, presenting his second argument against the theory, which contains a splendid series of

**Christ. Doct. Sin*, Vol. I., Bk. II., ch. i.

†*Collected Writings*, Vol. I., p. 374 *et seq.*

dilemmas, and bears exactly upon the aspect of the subject that we are considering :

“The theory does not advance us one step in solving the riddle for which it has been so elaborately worked out. It leaves the question of God's relation to the origin of evil precisely where it found it. Evil, it is said, is no real being, no creature, therefore God did not make it. It would seem to be as legitimate a conclusion, therefore man did not make it; and another step seems to be inevitable, therefore it does not exist. But a perfection is not where it ought to be. Now the perfection either never was in the creature, or it has been removed. If it never was in the creature, then God certainly, as the author of the creature, is the author of the defect. If it was once there, but has been removed, either God removed it, or the creature. If God removed it, he is still the author of the evil. If the creature removed it, the act of removing it was either sinful or it was not. If the act were sinful, the whole theory is abandoned, and we have sin as something real, positive, and working; if the act were not sinful, how can sin proceed from a good volition? The truth is, the theory utterly breaks down when it approaches this great question, and the result of its boasted solution is that moral evil is reduced to zero.”

We submit a few additional considerations which have occurred to us. First, the theory confounds the causation of existing beings, as containing in themselves the power of action, with acts as phenomenal changes in the accidental qualities of such beings. None but God can produce the former; created beings may produce the latter. This distinction is grounded in consciousness, and assumed by the Scriptures. It vacates of force the famous dilemma: Sin is either a creature or it is not. If it is a creature, God made it. But that cannot be supposed; therefore in itself sin is nothing. Secondly, the theory proceeds upon the supposition that the good quality which is wanting in sin is a real, positive entity. If not, where would be the privation? Privation supposes the existence, actual or possible, of the thing which ought to be, but is not. Now, say the advocates of this theory, all real, positive things are produced only by God. They are created by him; but of course the creative act cannot be shared by the creature with God, and it would follow that no creature can produce the good qualities of acts, and consequently the possibility of probation and of the formation of character is destroyed.

Thirdly, supposing that a good creature sins, then his sin is the privation of some good quality which previously existed in him. But that good quality was a real, positive thing. It follows that a creature is capable of annihilating an existing thing which, *ex hypothesi*, could only have been created by God—of annihilating a product of God's creative power. But if, according to this theory, the creature can produce no entity, it is absurd to attribute to the creature the power to annihilate. As it cannot produce something from nothing, it cannot reduce something to nothing. Fourthly, if sin be a mere privation, a quality which ought to exist does not. But this can be predicated only of a creature and subject of government. God cannot be said to have been under obligation to produce it. The creature, therefore, ought to have produced it. But every good quality, as a real, positive thing, can, according to this theory, be produced by God alone. Now how can it be maintained that the creature ought to have done what, according to the supposition, only God could do? Either God ought to have produced the real, positive thing which is wanting, or the sinner ought. If God ought to have produced it, then, in the first place, he is affirmed to have been under obligation as to the state of the creature, which is absurd; and, in the second place, the sinner cannot be blameworthy for not doing what God only could do, and there is no sin at all. If the sinner ought to have produced it, it is conceded that the creature can do what, on this theory, God only can do; which is self-contradictory.

2. Did God decree efficaciously to procure the commission of the first sin? This is the position maintained by Dr. Twisse, the Prolocutor of the Westminster Assembly of Divines. He says that God did not decree *efficere*, but *efficaciter procurare*, the sin of Adam. This distinction amounts to nothing more than that between the efficiency of God as immediately and mediately exerted. For, if God efficaciously procured the commission of the first sin, he must, by his positive agency, in some way have rendered it impossible for Adam to refrain from committing it. He must so have ordered his nature or his circumstances or both, as to impose a necessity upon Adam to perform the sinful act.

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Surely this is equivalent to the position that God was the real, though remote and indirectly operating, cause and author of the act. Adam was simply an instrument—a willing instrument—acted on in a way beyond his control. If God efficaciously procured the commission of the first sin, it is perfectly clear that Adam could not have avoided it. This supposition, therefore, is liable to all the objections which have been urged against the first, and with it must be dismissed as untenable.

3. Did God decree so to order and dispose Adam's case as to render his sin necessary, without himself proximately producing it? This is Edwards's position. We will let him define it for himself: "If by the author of sin is meant the permitter, or not a hinderer of sin, and at the same time a disposer of the state of events in such a manner, for wise, holy, and most excellent ends and purposes, that sin, if it be permitted, or not hindered, will most certainly and infallibly follow—I say, that if this be all that is meant by being the author of sin, I do not deny that God is the author of sin. . . . And I do not deny that God's being thus the author of sin follows from what I have laid down."* Again he says: "Thus it is certain and demonstrable from the Holy Scriptures [he had been proving from Scripture the relation of God's will to the sins of sinners], as well as from the nature of things, and the principles of Arminians, that God permits sin, and at the same time so orders things in his providence, that it certainly and infallibly will come to pass, in consequence of his permission."† This hypothesis is so nearly akin to that of the efficacious procurement of sin which has just been mentioned, and both of them so coincident in substance with the first as to the efficient production of sin, that it would seem not to require separate consideration, were it not that Edwards proceeds philosophically to vindicate his position by maintaining that there is an imperfection proper to the creature which, without the continued infusion of grace counteracting it, necessarily leads to sin. He thus states his doctrine: "It was meet, if sin did come into existence and appear in the world, it should arise from the imperfection which properly belongs to a creature as such, and

* *Inquiry, &c.*, Part IV., Sec. IX. † *Ibid.*, Part IV., Sec. IX.

should appear so to do, that it might appear not to be from God as the efficient or fountain. But this could not have been if man had been made at first with sin in his heart, nor unless the abiding principle and habit of sin were first introduced by an evil act of the creature. If sin had not arose from the imperfection of the creature, it would not have been so visible that it did not arise from God as the positive cause and real source of it.* This is the hypothesis of a metaphysical imperfection of the creature which, as has been said, "disfigured the great work of Leibnitz," and came so nigh reducing the notion of sin to that of the simple finite as to threaten the distinction between sin and holiness, right and wrong. We briefly indicate some of the obvious objections which strike us as militating against this theory. In the first place, it imposes the limitations of human conception upon the products of the divine omnipotence. We have not the faculties to enable us to pronounce dogmatically upon the question, whether it be possible for God so to construct a creature's nature as to make the attainment of holiness the result of its constitution, without the continued infusion of fresh measures of grace. In the second place, in upholding this view, Edwards is out of harmony with the fundamental principle of his system of Determinism, namely, that moral acts are efficiently caused by the *habitus* of the soul. If "it could not have been made to appear that God was not the efficient or fountain of sin, if man had been made at first with sin in his heart, nor unless the abiding principle and habit of sin were first introduced by an evil act of the creature," we ask, Whence the act which grounds the abiding principle and habit? If there be anything for which Edwards strenuously contends, it is that acts receive their denomination from the *habitus* of the man. But here the act determines the moral spontaneity and is not determined by it. To say that it could spring from a mere imperfection or defect of nature, and not from positive dispositions, is to give up the very essence of his theory. Further, it is to hold that sin may arise from a deficient and efficient cause at the same time, which is self-contradictory. *Quandoque Homerus dormitat.* In the third place,

* *Inquiry, &c.*, Part IV., Sec. X.

upon this hypothesis, it is evident that God is the remote, though not the proximate, efficient cause of sin. If he so constructs a nature as that sin will be, without his intervention to prevent it, an unavoidable result, he is the real, though indirect, producer of that result. He must be conceived, in such a case, as forming the nature in order to sin. It is impossible, upon such a theory, validly to ground the sense of guilt and the right to punish. In the fourth place, the hypothesis is contradictory to Scripture as interpreted by the *consensus* of the Church. Adam was not created in a state of imperfection which made his sin unavoidable, without the determining influence of grace. He was able to stand, though liable to fall. He was in a sense imperfect as not confirmed in holiness, but his imperfection was not of such a nature as to necessitate his fall. He was richly endowed with the gifts of his divine Maker, adequately furnished for the maintenance of his integrity. As a specimen of the faith of the Church in regard to this matter we quote the testimony of the Scotch Confession: "We confess and acknowledge that this our Lord God created man, to wit, Adam our first parent, in his image and after his likeness; to whom he imparted wisdom, dominion, righteousness, free will, and a clear knowledge of Himself: so that in the entire nature of man no imperfection could be detected."* But as this point will be elucidated in a subsequent part of this discussion we will not dwell upon it here.

4. Did God neither decree to produce, nor to procure, nor to permit the first sin? Did he abstain from all decree respecting it? We have seen that he could not have decreed efficiently to produce it, nor efficaciously to procure it, nor to render it necessary by the constitution of man's nature. But was there no permissive decree in relation to it? Was there the negation of all divine decree concerning it? That is the view elaborately pressed by Dr. Bledsoe, in his *Theodicy* and elsewhere; and we cannot allude to him without the conviction that his recent removal by death, while he was engaged in debating this question of the will, imparts the solemnity of eternity to the present discussion. We shall all soon stand at the Judgment-bar to give account of the

*Niemeyer, *Coll.*, p. 341.

manner in which we have discharged our stewardship of truth. He held that if it be right to say that God permitted the sin of Adam, it is right to say that he could have prevented it. But he could only have prevented it by exerting his causal efficiency upon the will of Adam, and that would have involved a contradiction of his own will. For, in making Adam, he endowed him with a free will, capable of determining its own acts. But Adam in the exercise of that power sinned. Had God prevented the sin, he could only have done so by violating Adam's constitution imparted by himself, and so have contradicted his own design in making him free. The possible occurrence of the sin, therefore, lay beyond divine control. It is only its results which are subject to God's will. This hypothesis is liable to the following insuperable objections:

In the first place, it cannot be thought probable that a will derived from God could be entirely independent of his control. If this were the case with Adam, it is, for the same reasons, the case with all creatures; and it is conceivable that the wills of all the inhabitants of the universe might be in rebellion against the divine government without the ability of God to prevent it. The population of the universal system might break out into moral revolution, and the Supreme Ruler could not help it. He depends for the continued peace of his empire entirely on the free and uncontrollable volitions of his subjects. No exertion of influence on his part upon their wills can be conceived as determinate, without the supposition that God would contradict himself. Extreme cases are tests of principles, and the hypothesis before us cannot abide this test. It is altogether improbable that the spark of insubordination in a single will cannot, without violence to the freedom of the creature, be prevented from kindling the flame of sedition in other wills and spreading into the raging conflagration of a universal revolt. Power may crush the rebels, but grace could not prevent the rebellion! Every world might be converted into a prison and the universe into a collection of hells, because the independent sovereignty of the individual will may not be touched with the finger of God himself! This is freedom of will with a vengeance.

In the second place, this hypothesis contravenes the whole doctrine of Scripture in regard to the grace of God. On Calvinistic principles the theory must at once be rejected; for the indefectibility of Adam's posterity, on the supposition that he had stood during his time of trial and they with him had been confirmed in life, and the final perseverance of the saints in Christ Jesus, can only be accounted for on the ground of the controlling influence of divine grace upon the human will. But the hypothesis may be convicted of fallacy upon the principles of Dr. Bledsoe himself. He admitted the supernatural efficacy of grace in the regeneration of the sinner, and the immutable happiness of infants dying in infancy. He perceived the difficulty of reconciling his theory with the doctrine of regenerating grace as usually understood, but avoided it by a peculiar view of regeneration. He held that the understanding and the sensibilities may be regenerated, but not the will. God cannot touch that. It depends, consequently, upon the free and untrammelled action of the will in concurrence with the regenerated intellect and heart, or in opposition to them, whether the man will be saved or not. This curious theory of regeneration is easily subverted. It splits the unity of the soul. A part of it is allowed to be regenerated and the other part not. The man, therefore, is partly under the control of holiness, and partly under that of sin. He perceives the beauty and excellency of the divine character, for his understanding is purged from the blindness of sin; he loves God, for his affections are renewed; but his will is still in opposition to holiness until the question is decided by itself whether it will comply with the suggestions of the other powers of the soul. We have then the case of a man half alive and half dead, loving God and opposed to him; and that not by the presence of indwelling sin in all the faculties during man's imperfect condition upon earth, but by the supremacy of sin in the totality of one faculty—the will. Now, as it is perfectly supposable that, on this hypothesis, the will, subsequently to the regeneration of the other powers of the soul, may continue to reject the service of God, we would have the difficulty to meet, growing out of the death of the man while in that condition. He would, in that

event, seem to be in the case of Pomponatius the Italian philosopher before the Romanist Court, when he admitted that he held the impossibility of proving the immortality of the soul upon merely rational grounds, but at the same time believed it as a Christian doctrine resting on dogmatic authority. Well, then, the Court decided, Pomponatius must be acquitted as a Christian, but burnt as a philosopher. Dr. Bledsoe's man must be saved as regenerate and damned as unregenerate. Should it be replied that as the will is the paramount faculty and stamps the destiny of the man, so that on the supposition made he must be lost, it would follow that he would carry with him to hell a renewed understanding and heart, and the community of the pit would be surprised by the arrival among them of one penetrated by a sense of the divine glory and moved by the love of the divine holiness. If, further, it be said, in accordance with Arminian principles, that the grace of regeneration which operated upon the understanding and the affections is finally lost through the free resistance of the will, and the man passes into the eternal state in the condition in which he was previously to the admitted partial regeneration, we answer that the difficulty is ingeniously evaded, but not met. For it is certainly possible that a man in the regenerated state supposed may be cut down before his will has had a fair and full opportunity of expressing its resistance, and thus causing his final fall from grace; and, in that case, he would, upon the principles of Dr. Bledsoe, be unjustly condemned. But if that be conceded, then, as the only other alternative possible is that he should be saved, it follows that the man is taken to heaven with an unsubdued will in opposition to God and holiness. So that contemplating this theory of regeneration in any possible aspect of it, we cannot see how it can be shown to be consistent with the obvious teachings of Scripture or even with the dictates of common sense. If it be said that in this reasoning it has been taken for granted that Dr. Bledsoe allowed the sinful complexion of the will itself, we reply, certainly we have taken that for granted, for the obvious reason that as he constantly held that the will alone, by its free action, can determine a character either of holiness or sin, and at the same time admitted that the

character of man is sinful, it is plain that upon his principles the will is emphatically the organ and the seat of sin.

In the third place, the position that God cannot determine by his grace the attitude of the will and so prevent the commission of sin, is incapable of adjustment to the admissions of Dr. Bledsoe in regard to the case of infants dying in infancy. It is conceded that they are taken to heaven; but if so, they are transferred thither, either with wills determined or undetermined to holiness. If determined to holiness, it must be admitted that the grace of God accomplished that result, for the voluntary action of the infant is out of the question. If undetermined to holiness, it is affirmed that they are probationers in heaven, with wills incapable of being determined by grace, and, therefore, subject to the contingency of a fall. And although the circumstances surrounding them in a heavenly state would be highly favorable to the cultivation of holy habits, they would, upon this theory, commence their glorified career without any previous discipline of trial, and with the hazards inevitably attending the contingent acts of the will in relation to the establishment of fixed habits of holiness. The consideration that external temptation will be absent avails nothing, since the devil fell without the solicitation of an outward tempter. The only possible method of accounting for the security of infants removed to heaven, is by admitting the positive infusion of grace determining their wills in the direction of holiness. But to concede that is to abandon the hypothesis in question.

The same difficulty will hold in regard to believers in Christ dying soon after conversion. According to Dr. Bledsoe, their characters cannot be fixed at the time of their death, since that is the result alone of free and uncaused acts of the will, determining impulses and tendencies into habits. Their standing in glory must needs be contingent and insecure. In fact, the stability of none of the glorified saints can be pronounced perfect. Their only ground of security against a fall is in the fixedness of self-developed character. Upon the supposition, grace cannot confirm them. There would always be the possibility and the danger of some excursion of the imagination beyond its prescribed and legitimate sphere—a temptation to which Bishop Butler

thinks even saints in glory may be exposed, or some outburst of impulse in itself innocent, but tending in a wrong direction, as in the earthly Eden, which would threaten the bulwarks of habit with a surprising irruption and put wonted dispositions to an unexpected strain; and reasoning from the analogies of this life, furnished by instances of the best and most firmly established characters suddenly breaking down through the force of some inflamed appetency in spite of extensive reputation, high social standing, lofty ecclesiastical position, and every external guard by which virtue is fortified and assured, we would have reason to indulge an apprehension which would cast a shadow upon the prospects of the brightest worshipper in heaven. The Achilles' heel would never cease to be vulnerable.

These considerations, derived mainly from the admissions made by the advocates of the supposition that God did not decree to permit sin, would lead us to reject it as untenable. Of course, no Calvinist could for a moment entertain it, since he is bound by the fundamental principles of his system to hold that nothing can come to pass, in the sphere of being or that of act, without either an efficacious or permissive decree of God. The difficulty of speculatively reconciling the causal efficiency of grace exerted upon the will with its free determinations, is one which, under the present limitations of our faculties, it may perhaps be impossible to solve. Possibly, it may never be solved to thought; but may always remain a test of faith and of the submission of dependent intelligence to the supremacy of the divine will. But the denial of the existence of the difficulty, and the attempt to reduce the whole case, either with the extreme Arminian to the simple and independent efficiency of the human will, or with the extreme supralapsarian to the exclusive causality of God, plunge us into difficulties which deepen into absolute contradictions and hurl us in insurrection against the authority of the Scriptures. Adam was endowed with grace sufficient for him, but was under obligation to settle his character by the free elections of his will; and even those who are justified in Christ are enjoined to work out their salvation with fear and trembling, precisely because it is God who worketh in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

5. The only remaining supposition is, that God decreed to permit the first sin of Adam,* and we are entitled to regard it as logically established, if the other suppositions in the case have been disproved. If God neither decreed efficiently to produce the sin, nor efficaciously to procure it, nor so to construct the nature of man as by its imperfection to necessitate it, nor abstained from all decree in reference to it, it follows that he decreed to permit it. He decreed efficiently to produce Adam as an actual being, or he would have forever remained in the category of the merely possible. But having decreed to reduce him from that category to actual existence, God did not decree to prevent him from sinning. He may have done so if he had pleased. It pleased him to determine to permit him to sin. Having decreed to create Adam, he also decreed to endow him with the power freely to obey his law, "and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of his own will which was subject to change."† It follows that Adam was not determined to sin by any necessity of nature established by the divine decree, and further, that his sin was not rendered certain by that decree. The only possible way in which it is conceivable that the certainty of the sin could have been grounded in God's decree, is by attributing a causal efficiency to the execution of the decree respecting the sin, similar to that which characterised the decree to create Adam as an actual being. That would be to make the decree efficacious, and we have seen that it was permissive. It deserves, however, to be remarked that we hold it to have been permissive, specifically in relation to the production of the sin. God did not decree to produce it, nor to necessitate its produc-

*By some writers a distinction is made between the decree to permit sin and the decree to suffer it. If the distinction had any real force, we would be obliged according to the scheme of the argument to give a separate consideration to the question, whether God decreed to suffer the first sin. But when we speak of God's permission of sin, we do not imply his approbation of it, in itself considered. This simple explanation makes it apparent that to say, God permits sin, is substantially the same as to say, God suffers sin. We see no necessity accordingly for the disjunction of the two propositions.

† *Westminster Confession*, Chap. IV., Sec. 2.

tion; he decreed to permit Adam to produce it. At the same time, considered in relation to the whole case, the decree was not barely permissive. As he did not determine to prevent the sin—which he might have done—by the causal influence of his grace, or the hindering arrangements of his providence, God knew that it would be committed, and so must be regarded as having, on the whole, deemed it better that the sin should take place, rather than that Adam's will should by his intervention be confined to holy acts. Upon this point we cite the words of Calvin,* whose statements, especially in his Institutes, touching the relation of God's will to the sins of sinners have been intolerably misrepresented as applying to the first sin of Adam. After affirming it to be monstrous to hold that God by an implanted necessity of nature leads any creature to sin, and that it must be maintained that the only positive agency which he exercised in reference to the introduction of sin was that of permission, the venerable Reformer proceeds to say:

“We must now enter on that question by which vain and inconstant minds are greatly agitated: namely, why God permitted Adam to be tempted, seeing that the sad result was by no means hidden from him. That he now relaxes Satan's reins to allow him to tempt us to sin, we ascribe to judgment and to vengeance, in consequence of man's alienation from himself; but there was not the same reason for doing so, when human nature was yet pure and upright. God therefore permitted Satan to tempt man, who was conformed to his own image and not yet implicated in any crime. . . . All who think piously and reverently concerning the power of God acknowledge that the evil did not take place except by his permission. For, in the first place, it must be conceded that God was not in ignorance of the event which was about to occur; and then that he could have prevented it, had he seen fit to do so. But in speaking of permission, I understand that he had appointed whatever he wished to be done. Here, indeed, a difference arises on the part of many, who suppose Adam to have been so left to his own free will, that God would not have him fall. They take for granted, what I allow them, that nothing is less probable than that God should be regarded as the cause of sin, which he has avenged with so many and such severe penalties. When I say, however, that Adam did not fall without the ordination and will of God, I do not so take it as if sin had been pleasing to him, or as if he simply wished that the precept which he had given

**Comm. on Genesis*, Chap. III.

should be violated. So far as the fall of Adam was the subversion of equity and of well-constituted order, so far as it was contumacy against the divine Lawgiver, and the transgression of righteousness, certainly it was against the will of God; yet none of these things render it impossible that, for a certain cause, although to us unknown, he might will the fall of man. It offends the ears of some, when it is said God *willed* this fall; but what else, I pray, is the *permission* of him who has the power of preventing, and in whose hand the whole matter is placed, but his will?"

The testimony of Calvin in this passage plainly amounts to this: that Adam fell by the permissive will and ordination of God. In addition to this view, we must maintain that the case, as a whole, could not pass out of the controlling hand of the Supreme Ruler. Having determined to permit the sin, he "bounds, orders, and governs" it—such are the cautious words of the Westminster Confession—and so weaves it and its results into the grand web of his providential scheme as to secure the glory of his name, and, for aught that appears to the contrary, the highest welfare of the universe.

We have now seen that the relation of the divine decree to the first sin of Adam was of such a nature as not to involve, on God's part, a necessitation of its commission. And as it is inconceivable that either any other created being than Adam, or Adam himself, should have rendered it necessary or unavoidable, we might here rest in the conclusion, enforced by the law of disjunctive arguments, that the sin was not the result of moral necessity, nor of unavoidable certainty, but that it must have been produced by a self-determination of Adam's will. But as all human argumentation is imperfect, and what appears to the writer incontestable may to the reader need explication and reënforcement, we will endeavor to complete the proof by an examination of the account of the facts in Adam's case, which is given in the word of God. We shall thus be led, also, to a more particular consideration of the question, whether Adam's self-decision for sin was precisely a self-determination of his will. Taking, then, the Scriptures for our guide—and there is no other which is available—let us notice some of the features of Adam's condition in innocence which bear materially upon this subject.

1. It is the plain testimony of Scripture that "God made man upright." Rectitude was the internal law of his nature as he came from the hand of his Maker. His constitution was subjectively adapted to the objective rule of life under which he was placed. It is also distinctly taught that God made man in his image. Now it is the concurrent doctrine of theologians, excepting Pelagians, that this image was not merely natural, but was also moral, embracing, as the New Testament writers clearly show, knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. It is obvious, upon this view, that the moral spontaneity of Adam was not that of mere indifference to right and wrong, but was incipiently holy and projected positively in the direction of virtue. It follows, therefore, that God did not determine Adam to sin by the constitution of his nature, and that his first sin was not the necessary or unavoidable result of the moral motives which operated upon him. They were all right, and, unless holiness may be the cause of sin, could not have induced the fall. Adam sinned unnecessarily, in opposition to his moral spontaneity, and must consequently have been endued with the power of contrary choice—that is, the ability of electing between conflicting alternatives by a decision of his will, of otherwise determining than he actually did. This is plainly the teaching of Scripture, and if so, the great law of the Determinist school—that moral volitions are invariably as the moral spontaneity—is confronted with a case which cannot be adjusted to it, and that *the* case which determined the posture of all other human cases. Adam's sinful volition, formed in the teeth of his moral dispositions, not only cannot be accounted for on the fundamental principle of Determinism, but positively overthrows it as one of universal and invariable application. Further, the contempt which the Determinist pours upon the supposition of a power in the will of otherwise determining itself—a power to the contrary, and the metaphysical arguments by which he vindicates that contempt, all avail nothing in the face of the scriptural record which unmistakably implies its existence in the instance of Adam.

If the ground be taken, as has been done, that an evil principle, an unrighteous self-will, though it synchronized with the first

sin, was, in the order of production, precedent to it, a position is assumed which cannot be supported. For, we have seen, and all evangelical theologians concede, that God made man upright, and started him with dispositions and tendencies, which, so far as they were moral, were inducements to holy acts. How then is a sinful principle precedent to the first sinful act to be accounted for? Either the devil was the author of it, or God, or Adam. The devil is out of the question. God is equally so, even upon the express admissions of Determinists themselves. Edwards, as has been shown, inconsistently it may be, but truly, affirmed that in the first instance a sinful act must introduce into the soul a principle or habit of evil, and he indignantly denies that God implanted evil in the nature of man. If Adam was the author of the evil principle which in the order of production preceded his first sinful act, as no one can be the author of anything without willing to produce it, he must have put forth an act of will in order to the production of the evil principle in question, and as such an act must have been sinful, we have the circle: the first sinful act determined the sinful principle; the sinful principle determined the first sinful act. It is manifest that the hypothesis of an evil principle, precedent in the order of nature to the first sinful volition, is a paradox. Nor does it relieve the difficulties in the case to say that the evil principle was a concreated imperfection, a defect of nature—a *causa deficiens*. It has already been shown that neither Scripture nor reason justifies the supposition of the privative character of sin; nor can the Determinist consistently contend that principles and dispositions are the efficient cause of volitions, and at the same time assign a sinful volition to a deficient cause. Surely a thing cannot be the effect of an efficient and a deficient cause at one and the same time.

2. The facts as to Adam considered as a probationer deserve next to be carefully considered. Every Calvinist, to be consistent, must hold that moral necessity is, in some cases, coëxistent with conscious freedom. The cases of the elect angels, of unregenerate sinners, of confirmed saints, of Christ in the discharge of his mediatorial work on earth, and of God himself, are instances to him of the consistency of moral necessity with free agency.

But the question is, whether there be not conditions which render the two utterly inconsistent with each other. Is not the case of a non-elect probationer one in which moral necessity and free-agency are incapable of being harmonised? We maintain that it is; and that one of the great defects of the Edwardean school is that they leave out of account the broad distinction between elect and non-elect probationers. They reason upon the extraordinary assumption, that the cases may be reduced to unity under precisely the same conditions of moral agency. This we regard as a fault in their system which invokes particular inspection. Now Adam, and we think also the angels who fell, are instances which fall into the category of non-elect probationers. It is their peculiarity, that they were not influenced by the moral necessity which obtains in the case of elect probationers. For, if they had been the subjects of moral necessity, it must have been intended to secure either holiness or sin. If holiness, it failed, and a contradiction emerges; for a necessity which fails to accomplish its end is no necessity—it sinks into contingency. Whatever is necessary must be. If the moral necessity was intended to secure sin, as the necessity could not have been elected through a self-determining act in the first instance—that is, at the start of his being—by the probationer, but must have been concreated with him, it follows that God was the author of the necessity to sin, and that he was remotely, though not proximately, the producer of sin. Neither of the alternatives signalled can possibly be admitted, and we are consequently shut up to the position that in the case of a non-elect probationer moral necessity and free agency are totally inconsistent with each other. The specific difference of such a case is the possession of the power of contrary choice—of the will's power to determine itself *in utramque partem*. Neither sin nor holiness was unavoidable in Adam's case. His will was mutable; it could turn to either. The formula which precisely expresses his condition is: able to stand, liable to fall. Now it is perfectly clear to every Calvinist that this formula cannot be applied either to God, or to Christ as a probationer, or to the saint as confirmed in Christ Jesus; that had Adam stood and been justified it would

have ceased to be applicable to him; and that as he sinned, it did cease, in consequence of his having determined his spontaneity as sinful, to be further applicable to him. In the case of one who is now a sinner, the question is, not whether the moral necessity resulting from an established sinful spontaneity is consistent with free-agency in a certain sense; that is conceded by every Calvinist. But the question is, Did he possess originally the power to resist the introduction of that sinful spontaneity by virtue of a holy spontaneity with which his being began? Did he, in the exercise of the liberty of contrary choice, as free from all necessity, determine the moral principles and dispositions which now control his volitions? To these questions we must reply affirmatively. To state the matter differently: the question is not, whether God can, or ever does, causally determine the will of elect creatures. It is admitted that he both can and does. But the question is, Did he, in the instance of the first sin, causally determine the will of Adam, considered as a probationer who was not a subject of election? We hold that he did not. There are but two alternatives: either God efficiently determined Adam's will in the first sin, or he did not. There is no middle ground. If he did, the sin was unavoidable and could not have been attended with just liability to punishment. If he did not, as no other being could have efficiently determined Adam's agency, the sin was avoidable. If avoidable, there was no necessity which operated to its production. For, if a thing is necessary in any sense, it is not avoidable. To suppose that it is, is self-contradictory. But if Adam, as a probationer, was neither under the necessity to sin, nor to refrain from sinning, his case is peculiar. It cannot be assigned to the same class with the sinner unregenerate or regenerate, or with glorified saints, or with Christ as a probationer, or with the elect angels as probationers, or with the Deity himself. The only analogue would be the case of the non-elect angels who failed in their probation and fell from their first estate.

In addition to these considerations, it may be specially urged that upon the theory of Determinism the Covenant of Works, as an instituted element of Adam's probation, becomes inconceivable.

The formation of that covenant evidently supposed that Adam was able to stand and to secure the reward freely offered to him of justification for himself and his posterity. If to the divine mind it was impossible for him to stand, but his sin was unavoidable in consequence of the direct or indirect causality of God expressing itself either in the efficient production of the sin, or its efficacious procurement, or its evolution from an imperfect nature, the Covenant of Works cannot by us be conceived of except as a mockery. It stipulated conditions which could not be fulfilled, and tendered rewards which could not be secured. To that conclusion must every consistent sublapsarian be forced. If it be said, that the Covenant of Works was formed with the Second Adam with the full knowledge on God's part that Christ would inevitably stand during his time of trial, and the moral necessity of his performing the conditions of the covenant was not inconsistent with his free-agency as a probationer, we answer, that the cases of the first and second Adams, as probationers, were immensely different so far as the matter in hand is concerned. In this respect, they cannot be brought into unity nor subordinated to the same law. In the first place, they differed as elect and non-elect probationers. Christ was elected to be holy, as to his human nature; Adam was neither elected to be holy nor sinful. The election of the former was, in the order of thought, antecedent to his probation; that of the latter, subsequent. Adam was elected, if at all, as an unsuccessful and fallen probationer, to be saved from the sin to which he freely determined himself and his seed. In the second place, it is monstrous to suppose that any probationer could be divinely predestinated to sin, in any such sense as a probationer might be elected to be holy. No intuition of justice would impel a creature to object against his election to holiness and eternal bliss, and the consequent determination of his will by divine grace in order to effectuate the electing purpose. But the case is vastly different if we suppose him predestinated to sin, and so determined by the divine causality as to carry that ordaining purpose into execution. In the case of the "elect angels"—if those Scripture terms are to be interpreted in accordance with the usage of the inspired writers as to election—

it is likely that they were, by infused grace, prevented from falling and determined to holiness. In the case of Christ, whatever may have been the intrinsic possibilities as to his merely human will—and that question as irrelevant to our present discussion we will not turn aside to consider—we are obliged to believe that the very nature of his person, the genius of the Covenant of Redemption, and the plenary unction of the Holy Spirit which was conferred upon him by the Father, rendered it impossible for him to sin and determined him to holiness. But in the case of Adam, it is out of the question that a divine influence causally determined him to sin. He was endued with sufficient grace to have enabled him to fulfil the conditions of the covenant under which he was placed, but not sufficient to determine his standing. On the other hand, he was free to sin, if he chose, but not determined, by the causal efficiency of God, to its commission. The cases cannot be referred to the same law. God elects to holiness and determines to its production, but not to sin.

3. The nature of the specific test to which the obedience of Adam was subjected was such as to bring his will in immediate relation to the will of God. The command in regard to the tree of knowledge was positive, not moral! Adam was brought face to face with the naked authority of God. The very issue was, whether he would submit his will to that of his divine Ruler. God appears to have dealt with him, and with the race in him, as we deal with our children in the earliest stage of our government of them. We require them to submit to our authority, whether they can understand the reason of its exercise or not. And, accordingly, the first issue we have with them is in the sphere of the will. So, it would appear, was it in Adam's case. God required him to submit his will to His, without assigning any special reason for the requirement; and Adam in refusing to obey asserted his will as against God's will. The very core of the first sin was its unreasonable wilfulness. The will was the chief factor in its commission.

4. But inasmuch as we cannot conceive an act of the will to the performance of which no inducement existed, we naturally

inquire whether the inspired account of the first sin meets this difficulty. It does. There were inducements to the commission of it; but they were not motives which sprung from the moral nature of our first parents. Their moral spontaneity, so far from furnishing the motives to the perpetration of the sin, would, if it had been consulted, have urged them to its resistance. The narrative plainly enough indicates what was the nature of the inducements. They were, as Bishop Butler intimates, blind impulses, in themselves innocent and legitimate because implanted by God himself in the very make of man. The bodily appetite for food, and the intellectual desire for knowledge, were, in Eve's case, precisely the inducements upon which the great master of temptation put his finger. In the case of Adam, in contradistinction from that of Eve, it is more than a probable inference—it is one necessitated by the narrative—that the natural impulse of affection for his wife and sympathy with her operated as an inducement to the commission of his first sin. It must be admitted, that while we may accept Butler's theory as in all probability correct, that Eve fell through the lack of vigilance mainly, we cannot account for Adam's sin in the same way. The Scriptures inform us that he was not deceived as was Eve. His eye was directed to both alternatives. He saw clearly the issues involved, and deliberately resolved to break with his God and ruin his race. But we cannot avoid the conclusion that, as his moral dispositions and tendencies were all in the direction of holiness, the intrinsically legitimate blind impulses of his constitution started the train of inducements, inflamed the desire, which enticed the will in the direction of sin. Here were motives brought to bear upon the will; but it is obvious that, in their first presentation, they were in the control of the will. It had the power to resist them, or to comply with them. The instant it freely consented to entertain them directed to the forbidden object, that instant the fall began. Here then we have a reason why the will acted in a specific direction—used its *libertas specificationis*, and we see that it had the power to act or not to act in accordance with it. There was motive, but the will was, at first, master of the motive, not the motive of it. The innocent impulses

of man's constitution, when directed to a forbidden object and approved by the will, traversed the dispositions to holiness and dashed down the moral spontaneity. But, although, in the first instance, the will was not necessitated to action by these impulses, but had the control of them so that it could have resisted them, yet when it did freely consent to tolerate them, it surrendered that control, and was thenceforward mastered by them. Just so we often see it now in the natural and simply moral sphere. The first acts which threaten to form a habit are controlled by the will, but when a sufficient number of acts have been freely performed to constitute a confirmed habit, the will loses control and becomes a slave to that of which originally it was master. Of course, the man is responsible for consequences which at the last he has not, but at first had, the power to control.

The following testimonies from the Symbols of the Church are cited in order to show that in maintaining the preceding views we have advocated no novelties, but have trodden the road crowded with the footprints of the flock of Christ:

Confession of Basle: "We confess that at the beginning man was made entirely after the image of God, which is righteousness and holiness. But he fell into sin of his own free will (*sua sponte*)."*

First Helvetic Confession: "Man, the most perfect image of God upon earth, . . . when he was created in holiness by God, fell into sin by his own fault (*sua culpa*)."[†]

Gallic Confession: "We believe that God not only created, but also governs and controls all things, and disposes and orders according to his own will whatsoever comes to pass in the world. Nevertheless we deny that he is the author of evil, or that any blame can be transferred to him of those things which are wrongly done, since his will is the highest and most certain norm of all righteousness. . . . We believe that man, created in purity and integrity, and conformed to the image of God, fell away from the grace which he had received, by his own fault (*sua ipsius culpa*)."[‡] It thus proceeds to speak of the freedom of the will since the fall, indicating no distinction between ability and liberty: "Likewise, although he is endowed with will, which is moved to this or that, nevertheless since it is entirely captive under sin, he has no liberty to seek good except as he may receive it from grace and by the gift of God."[‡]

Belgic Confession. After speaking of the fall of some of the angels from the excellent nature in which God had created them, it assigns the cause of the standing of others: "But the others continued in their first

*Niemeyer, p. 88. †*Ibid.*, p. 116. ‡*Ibid.*, p. 331.

standing by the singular grace of God." In regard to man it says: "We believe that God created man out of the dust of the earth after his image, good, righteous, and holy, and manifestly perfect in all respects (*in omnibus plane perfectum*), who could by his own free decision (*proprio arbitrio*) adjust and conform his will (*voluntatem*) to the will of God. . . . But he knowingly and willingly subjected himself to sin."*

Heidelberg Catechism: "Did God create man thus depraved and perverse? By no means: yea, truly, he created him good and after his image, that is, in true righteousness and holiness, that he might rightly know God his creator, heartily love him, and live with him in blessedness forever."† There is here no imperfection of nature certainly leading to sin.

Second Helvetic Confession: "Man was created by God after his image in righteousness and true holiness, good and upright; but, at the instigation of the Serpent, and by his own fault, he fell from goodness and rectitude. . . . Man, before the fall, was without doubt upright and free, who had the power to remain in the good or to decline to the evil."‡ Here is the power of contrary choice.

Anhaltine Confession: "It is a most true judgment that God is not the cause of sin, neither does he will sin."||

Confession of the Marches: "God is by no means the author of any sin, but the fountain and author of all good, the hater and avenger of evil. . . . Although a natural ability of free will remains after the fall, as to things natural and civil, nevertheless there is no ability of it to supernatural and spiritual good."‡

The Czengerine Confession is still more express in denying that God can be the cause of sin.¶ The language of the Westminster Confession, upon these points, is so familiar that we refrain from quoting it.

We collect from these symbolic testimonies of the Churches of the Reformation: That God is not the cause or author of sin; that man was created with no imperfection of nature tending to sin, much less necessitating it; that he possessed the power of contrary choice by which he might by the decision of his will have determined to stand in holiness or fall into sin; that he fell by the unnecessitated election of his will; that the power of contrary choice still remains as to things natural and merely moral; and that there is no real distinction between ability and liberty of will.

Here we must arrest the discussion for want of room to prosecute it; but hope, with the leave of Providence, to continue it in the next number of the REVIEW.

**Niemeyer*, p. 368. †*Ibid.*, p. 431. ‡*Ibid.*, p. 479. ||*Ibid.*, p. 638. §*Ibid.*, p. 672. ¶*Ibid.*, p. 549.

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THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW,

VOL. XXX.—NO. 1.

JANUARY, MDCCLXXIX.

ARTICLE I.

THE DIACONATE.*

The Committee appointed last year to report to the Synod, at its present meeting, on the subject of the Diaconate, respectfully present the following paper:

The Committee in taking up the subject referred to them have acted under the impression that the purpose of their appointment was not that they should attempt an exhaustive treatment of it, but should consider it in certain aspects in which either principles underlying the diaconal office may be developed, or theoretical differences be discussed, or the points indicated in which our practice is defective. Accordingly, we propose, after a brief statement of certain assumptions in reference to which there is universal agreement among us, to submit the results of our reflections under the following heads: first, The Relations of the Diaconate to the Presbyterate; secondly, The Scope of the Deacon's Functions; and thirdly, The Sphere of his Operations.

*This paper was presented as a report to the Synod at its recent sessions at Spartanburg, and appears in the REVIEW in accordance with a request of that body. It will be observed that the report was a partial one, discussing only the first head of the general scheme of topics which it proposes to cover. The Committee were directed to submit the remainder at the next sessions of the Synod.

ARTICLE III.

THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL IN ITS THEOLOGICAL RELATIONS.

The foregoing analysis* of the facts of Adam's case, and the development of the inferences which legitimately flow from them, have, we submit, fairly conducted us to the following positions: first, that Adam was not in any sense necessarily determined, but determined himself, to the commission of his first sin; secondly, that the moral spontaneity of Adam, as started in the direction of holiness, did not determine his will to the formation of his first sinful volition, but that his will, traversing the path of his holy dispositions and tendencies so far as they were moral, was precisely the organ through which he determined himself in the commission of the first sin. In other words, we have seen that Adam sinned by a self-determination of the will. He had the power of contrary choice as an attribute characteristic of his will, and by an exercise of that power, which might have been avoided, willed to sin. Whatever difficulties emerge to speculation in the attempt to *think* the case, as one involving the self-determination of the will, we are under the necessity of *believing* the facts as revealed by Scripture, and of accepting the inferences which they enforce. The conclusion to which we are shut up is, that the sin of Adam was avoidable, and, therefore, cannot without a contradiction be affirmed to have been necessary, or unavoidably certain. His first sinful volition was efficiently produced by the causal power of his will. Here now we have the real test-case of a power in the human will to determine itself, that is, to form unnecessitated volitions—a case which is lifted out of the embarrassments environing the acts of a being already determined to sin by a fixed moral spontaneity. In Eden, and around the will of the first man, is the great theological and philosophical battle to be fought. Thither every train of speculation, not independent of God's revealed authority, inevitably tends; and there, we insist, is the ground upon which, after all, the issue as to the

*In an article in the October number of this REVIEW for 1878.

freedom of the will must be met. We do not reject nor overlook the argument from individual consciousness—that has its proper office; but consciousness has been, in the progress of the controversy, so diversely interpreted, inferences from its alleged deliverances have been so conflicting, that the demand becomes imperious for a more certain source of information. Kant, as we have seen, affirmed that we cannot, in the empirical sphere, escape the conclusions of Necessitarianism, and Sir W. Hamilton, that while the fact of liberty is to be believed, it is wholly inconceivable. Hamilton rested in an assumed deliverance of consciousness as to a fundamental belief in a self-determining power of the will. Kant, in order to ground responsibility, mounted to a transcendental existence, unconditioned by time and space, in quest of an original self-determination of each individual. The Sublapsarian Calvinist goes back to the will of Adam, and, as with the call of a trumpet, demands attention to its unnecessitated decision as fixing the moral complexion of every other human will.

Here, then, we encounter the great argument for Determinism—*instar omnium*—which if true of every human will is true of Adam's, if untrue of his is shorn of universal validity. We allude to the argument, against a self-determining power of the will, of a *reductio ad absurdum*. It is presented in two forms: First, If it be affirmed that the will is the self-determined cause of its acts, we have an absolute commencement, which is inconceivable. Secondly, The law of cause and effect requires for every specific determination of the will a preceding determination, and that another preceding it, and so on *ad infinitum*; but, as that is absurd, we are obliged to hold that every specific volition is efficiently caused by the sum of motives arising from the dispositions, tendencies, and desires of the soul; and as they in turn depend upon the views of the understanding, every such volition is ultimately caused by the last view which the understanding takes of any given case. This second branch of the argument reduces itself consequently in the last analysis to this: that every specific determination of the will is efficiently caused by a mental apprehension.

In regard to the first form of the argument—conceded to be reflectively valid by Sir W. Hamilton, himself a pronounced Libertarian*—we have to say, that there is a failure to signalise a distinction between the origination of existence, and the origination of phenomenal changes in existence. If the question were, whether the will by its determination originates itself as an existing thing, we would be obliged to confess that it would be a supreme absurdity to affirm that it does. That would imply that an effect produces itself—an absolute commencement with a witness. Or, if the question were, whether the will causes, that is, creates, any other substantive thing than itself, we would of course deny. Or, if it were, as Edwards in attempting to reduce the case to absurdity says, whether one act of choice produces another act of choice, we would also deny, since no phenomenal change can be conceived as, of itself, producing another phenomenal change. But if the question be—and we hold that to be the real state of the question—whether the will, as an existing power, causes its own acts, we fail to see that an absolute beginning is involved. In the power of the will we have a cause, of which volitions are legitimate effects. The chain of cause and effect is unbroken. We would have: volition caused by the power of the will, and that power caused by the creative will of God. There is no addition to the sum of substantive existence by a determination of the will. All that is accomplished is a phenomenal change in previous existence. We are happy to be sustained upon this point by the able and acute American critic of Hamilton's philosophy—the late lamented Dr. Samuel Tyler. After stating Hamilton's doctrine as to the origin of the causal judgment in our inability to construe in thought, as possible, an increase or diminution of the complement of existence, he remarks†:

“The question in nature is not, whether the present complement of existence had a previous existence—has just begun to be; but, how comes its new appearance? The obtrusive and essential element is the *new appearance*, the *change*. This is the fact which elicits the causal judg-

*Hamilton's Reid, pp. 602, 611, foot notes.

†*Progress of Philosophy*, p. 175, *et seq.*

ment. To the *change* is necessarily prefixed, by the understanding, a cause or potence. The cause is the correlative to the change, elicited in thought and posited in nature. The question as to the origin of the sum of existence does in no way intrude into consciousness, and is not involved in the causal judgment. Such a question may of course be raised; and then the theory of Sir William Hamilton is a true account of what would take place in the mind. And this is the question which, it seems to us, Sir William has presented as the problem of the causal judgment. His statement of the problem is this: 'When aware of a new appearance, we are unable to conceive that therein has originated any new existence, and are therefore constrained to think, that what now appears to us under a new form had previously an existence under others—others conceivable by us or not. We are utterly unable to construe it in thought, as possible, that the complement of existence has been increased or diminished.'

"This seems to us not a proper statement of the problem of causation. This problem does not require the *complement of existence* to be accounted for; but the *new form* to be accounted for; and a new form must not be confounded with an *entirely new existence*. Causation must be discriminated from creation; in the first, *change* only, in the last, the complement of existence, is involved. If we attempt to solve the problem of *creation*, the notion of an absolute beginning is involved; consequently, a negative impotence is experienced, as we cannot think an absolute beginning, and we would fall back on the notion of causation—would stop short at the causal judgment, unable to rise to a higher cognition, the cognition of creation.

"The causal judgment consists in the necessity we are under of prefixing in thought a cause to every change, of which we think. Now change implies previous existence; else it is not change. Of what does it imply the previous existence? Of that which is changed, and also of that by which the change is effected. Now change is effect. It is the result of an operation. Operation is cause (potence) realising itself in effect. . . . When we attempt to separate effect from cause, in our thought, contradiction emerges. It is realised to consciousness in every act of will, and in every act of positive thinking as both natural and rational. . . .

"It is doubtless true, that the negative impotence to think an absolute beginning necessarily connects, in thought, present with past existence; and as all change must take place in some existence, the change itself is connected in thought with something antecedent: and, therefore, the mind is necessitated by the negative impotence to predicate something antecedent to the change. But, then, as a mere negative impotence cannot yield an affirmative judgment, it cannot connect present with past existence, in the relation of cause and effect, but only in sum of existence which it is unable to think either increased or diminished. The causal

judgment is determined by a mental power elicited into action by an observed change, and justified thereby as an affirmation of a potence evinced in the changed existence; and it matters not whether the change be the result of many concurring causes, or of one; still the notion of potence cannot but be thought as involved in the phenomenon. When we see a tree shivered to atoms by a flash of lightning, it is difficult to be convinced that the causal judgment elicited by the phenomenon is merely the impotence to think an absolute beginning.

“We are conscious that we are the authors of our own actions; and this is to be conscious of causation in ourselves.”

If these views be correct, Adam's first sinful volition, as caused by a divinely imparted efficiency of his will, was not an instance of a supposed absolute commencement. It was an effect of the causal power inherent in his will; or, what is the same thing, of the causal power of will inherent in him.

In regard to this aspect of the argument we would further observe: First, that the difficulty alleged is not peculiar to the will, and therefore ought not to be urged in reference to it alone. The same difficulty might be adduced in relation to the production of any physical effect by a material cause. Unless we are prepared to adopt the hypothesis of Absolute Dependence in its most unqualified form, we must admit that there is a causal efficiency, derived, dependent, limited, indeed, but real, in natural forces to produce their appropriate effects. Why not such a causal efficiency in the human will? In the case of the effects produced by a natural force, is there any absolute beginning of existence? Are not these effects regarded simply as new appearances, as phenomenal changes in substantive existence? We see no difference in the two cases, so far as this difficulty is involved, unless it be supposed that the divine efficiency is more immediately exerted in the will than in physical force, and all real causality is denied to the human soul. It is sufficient to say in regard to such a supposition, that it is precisely the opposite of the ordinary judgment of men; and would, by denying the causality of the will, bar the possibility of an empirical development of the notion of cause as applied to physical changes. Whence do we derive the notion of cause, as elicited in experience, if not from the exertions of the will? And that it, the very instrument by which

the causal judgment is formally developed, should be stripped of causality, is something passing strange.

But if it be said that, although the acts of the will are not substantive beings, they are existences, real things susceptible of predication, and that the difficulty, in that view, is not relieved; we answer, that it does not appear how that distinction would vacate of force the argument just presented; for phenomenal changes in nature resulting from the operation of physical force are, in this sense, existences: and yet in affirming that they are caused, we do not dream of affirming that they have an absolute beginning. But we remark, secondly, that the difficulty, in this form, presses equally in relation to the acts of the understanding, held by the Determinist to be regulative of volition, as in relation to the acts of the will. The understanding being, in the general, the power by which the soul knows or forms cognitions, the cognitive acts are products of the cognitive power. If this is not granted, then whence come cognitions? What is their genesis? The law of cause and effect postulates a cause for them. What is that cause? If it be not the power of understanding, we crave to know what it is. Now, if volition is accounted for by referring it to intellectual apprehension as its ultimate cause, so as to avoid the inference of an absolute beginning, how is that inference to be avoided in relation to the first intellectual act? It would seem to be clear, that the alleged difficulty of an absolute commencement is not peculiar to the processes of the will, but holds equally, upon the hypothesis in hand, of those of the understanding. And so, all intellectual and voluntary activity are alike estopped by this inconceivable thing of an absolute beginning. Ere we can suppose ourselves to act causally at all, we must await the removal of this formidable contradiction! Now, if the Determinist replies, that all this is true, and that it only supports his doctrine, that cognitive acts are the unavoidable products of an immanent necessity in the intelligence which must be referred to the will of God, we confront him with the first sin of Adam, and urge upon him the irresistible consequence of his position, to wit, that Adam sinned by virtue of a necessity divinely implanted in his nature; which is tantamount to the position, that God was

the real efficient of the first sin. But if that cannot be true, the hypothesis which logically conducts to it is fallacious. It is scarcely necessary to remark, that the full force of the assumed difficulty of an absolute commencement directly recoils upon the half-way Determinist, who inconsistently maintains an originating causality in the understanding as the ultimate ground of voluntary action. To him the inconsistency is irretrievably damaging. We cannot forbear observing, in addition, that the refusal of causality to the will, and the assignment of it to the understanding, is a paradox, the statement of which is sufficient to refute it. As well might we say, there is no power of motion in the muscles; it resides in the brain.

It must be admitted, however, that the core of the difficulties attending this question has not yet been reached. That is found in the second aspect of the argument against a self-determining power in the will. Let it be conceded, it is urged, that there is a power resident in the will, adapting it to the formation of volitions; still, that power as a generic activity will not account for specific determinations. Each act, as being of a particular kind rather than another, can only be accounted for by the supposition of an intelligent reason, in which its peculiarity is grounded. Thus in thought we are never able to escape the necessity of referring specific acts of the will, as characterised thus and so, to the apprehensions of the intellect. Let us fix our conception of this difficulty, as presented by Leibnitz and relentlessly pressed by Edwards. On the hypothesis of a self-determination of the will, each act of choice must be determined by a preceding act of choice, and that by another antecedent to it, and so on *ad infinitum*; which is absurd. This absurdity is avoided on the part of Determinism, by denying the dependence of acts of choice, one upon another, and referring each to the causal efficiency of the *habitus* of the soul as ultimately directed to specific results by the last view of the understanding. The regression is, on the one hypothesis, to infinity; on the other, it is arrested, according to some Determinists, by the apprehensions of the understanding; according to others, by the causal efficiency of God. Such is the difficulty, stated, we think, with fairness. Now, if it be conceded

that an unnecessitated determination of the will is incapable of being thought, that fact would not destroy its possibility. It might still be believed, on the ground of a datum of consciousness, or the deliverances of supernatural revelation. And if an equal difficulty, to thought, can be proved to exist in the opposite hypothesis, the two would be *in equilibrio*, speculatively, and their respective claims would have to be adjudicated at the bar of consciousness and the Scriptures. This plan we propose to pursue. We shall endeavor to show, that the hypothesis of Determinism may be reduced to absurdity, at least equal to that which is alleged against its antagonist; and then, by throwing our fundamental beliefs and the testimony of the Scriptures into the opposite scale, kick the beam against it.

First, let us start with the assumption, which we have no disposition to dispute, that every effect must have a cause. Now, every act of the understanding, according to the Determinist, is an effect; for every thing that comes to pass, he contends, is an effect. And as an act of the understanding is something which occurs—which begins to be—it must be assigned to that category. But if every act of the understanding is an effect, it must have a cause. Now, either that cause must lie in the understanding or without it. Without it, it cannot be; for the Determinist makes the acts of the understanding ultimate causes of volition. The only cause, therefore, for an act of the understanding must be within the understanding—namely, a previous act of the understanding itself; and as that is an effect, it is likewise grounded in another preceding it, and so on *ad infinitum*. But it is just as absurd to suppose the acts of a finite understanding to be projected backward infinitely, and of an understanding acting in time to reach to eternity, as to make a similar supposition in regard to a finite will acting in time. The Determinist cannot meet this argument from an infinite regression of intellectual acts, by affirming the existence of a first act which originates the series; for, on his own principles, that first act, as an effect, must be accounted for by the assignment of a cause for it, and so we would have an act preceding the alleged first act, and his own contradiction as to the will emerges. If he says that there must

be a limit to the series of intellectual acts, and that the first act is not determined by a previous act, but by something extraneous to the subjectivity of the man—by the circumstances, for example, in which he is placed, and the objects to which his understanding is related—he gives up his position, that although the will does not determine itself, the man determines himself. If, inconsistently, he admits that the man does not determine himself, but is determined to the first act of the understanding by something outward to himself, he strikes the track of external effects and causes. Either that series must recede *ad infinitum*, or it must stop with the efficiency of God. If the former, his own *reductio ad absurdum* ensues. If the latter, we confront him again with the first sin of Adam, and, Scripture and intuition being our authority, we pronounce the result still more absurd.

If it should be objected to this reasoning, that intellectual activity is a property of a substance rather than the effect of a cause, the reply is obvious, that a distinction is to be taken between the power of thinking, which is a property of the soul, and the act of thinking, which is a product or effect of that power. The relations are different. But such an objection would be incompetent to the Determinist, whose theory is that the intellectual apprehensions are causes and not mere properties; and as they must be admitted to be second causes, they are also effects. Otherwise, the immediate efficiency of God is exerted in the production of every human act, and, consequently, of every sinful act.

Secondly, upon the hypothesis of Determinism, there can be no such thing as responsibility for intellectual opinions. Its very core is in its affirmation, that every specific act of the will is ultimately determined by some view of the understanding. It is not our intention to deny that in many cases that may be so; what we have to do with is the assertion that it is so in every case. Now, the only way in which, so far as we know, it has ever been attempted to prove that men are responsible for their intellectual views, is by showing, that in some sense the will is able to control the operations of the understanding, either by determining it to reflective, as distinguished from spontaneous, processes; or,

by directing its attention to certain kinds of evidence; or, by controlling its relations to external circumstances which influence it; or, by holding this or that class of objects in connexion with the springs of action in the appetites and emotions, which in turn affect the mental states. But if the understanding always controls the acts of the will, never the contrary, it is clear that that method of proof is destroyed. Then, either the man is responsible for his intellectual views on some other ground or he is wholly irresponsible for them. The only other ground, possible to the Determinist, is the self-determining power of the man over his intellectual acts by his intellectual acts. But it is absurd to say that the man determines one involuntary mental act by another equally involuntary. They may possibly be determined one by another, but he does not determine them. The only remaining supposition is, that he is wholly irresponsible for his mental acts; and it may be left to common sense to say whether that position does not lead to practical consequences not only absurd, so far as our relation to God and to truth are concerned, but dangerous to the well-being of society. And this is all the more remarkable, because the Determinist makes the views of the understanding determine the acts of the will. If, therefore, we are not responsible for intellectual acts, we are not for volitions. And so, all the actions of men would be exempted from the law of responsibility. The truth is, that the very seat of obedience to law is the will; but if the will is always determined by the views of the understanding, and there is no responsibility for them, there is no responsibility for disobedience and no room for punishment. Now let the application be made to Adam's first sin. If his will was determined by the views of his understanding, and he was not responsible for them, he could not be justly said to have been responsible for his disobedience to God, and therefore could not have been punishable. To that result Determinism logically leads; and if so, no reduction to absurdity could be stronger, since it would hold in the moral, and not simply in the speculative, sphere.

If it be said, that this reasoning begs the very question in dispute, namely, whether the will is not always controlled by the

directive power of the understanding; and that it is overlooked that the very reason why the will determines the intellect in its reflective processes, or directs the understanding to this or that sort of evidence, or places the man in this or that relation to circumstances, or puts the springs of action in connexion with this or that class of objects, is precisely some previous view of the understanding itself without which the action of the will in the premises would be irrational and arbitrary; we answer: In the first place, we concede the fact that there must be some intelligent reason for the specific determinations of the will in the premises, but the very pinch of the question is, Does the reason absolutely control the acts of the will, as a natural law the operation of a natural force, or has the will power to concur or not to concur with the reason? And we anticipate our final conclusion by the remark, that in the beginning of certain voluntary acts the understanding illuminates, without absolutely governing, the will—shows the path to be pursued, but does not compel the will to take that path. There must be some light to see by, but the light is neither the power nor the determination to walk. In the second place, if this be not admitted, it follows with indisputable certainty, as the states and acts of the understanding must conform to the laws of evidence, or implicitly follow those of its spontaneity, that if they control the will and are in no degree swayed by it, men are not responsible for their intellectual processes and opinions. This last position cannot be true, and therefore it cannot be true that in every case the understanding dominates the will. Granted that we cannot escape in thought the antecedence of some intellectual action to every volition, it is equally true that we cannot escape the moral conviction that we are responsible for our opinions. Now we may legitimately doubt whether the views of the understanding control the will in all its acts—it is not perfectly clear what the precise *quantum* of their influence is upon the will. But we cannot legitimately doubt the responsibility of men for their opinions—it is perfectly clear that the conspirator against lawful government lawfully administered, that the criminal whose crime has been proved by unimpeachable testimony, that the hearer of the gospel who rejects it when truly

preached, cannot plead immunity from judgment on the ground of irresponsibility for their opinions and beliefs. We are, therefore, bound to square the doubtful position by the undoubted. It is the latter which is entitled to stamp the type of our theory.

Thirdly, the theory of Determinism furnishes an incomplete account of the origination of motives, and of the mode in which they operate upon the will. It is conceded that no elective act of the will ever takes place without some motive to its occurrence. We reject that view of contingency, as sometimes applied to the acts of the will, which ascribes to them no cause for their existence, and no motives to their production. In this respect, therefore, there is no controversy between us and the Determinist. But there is a twofold aspect of his theory of motives, in which we regard it as inadequate and unphilosophical. In the first place, he assigns to motives an invariable dependence, in their origination, upon the perceptions of the understanding. The rise of the emotions and desires, as inducements to voluntary action, is regulated by the intellectual processes. Says Edwards:*

“Whatever is a motive in this sense [of a complex whole operating as inducement] 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 to act anything 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.”

We have no wish to misstate any element of the theory under consideration; and we think it will be acknowledged that these words of Edwards justify the account, attributed to it, of the determining influence of the understanding upon the origin of motives. Not that we mean to imply that Edwards taught that no feelings, tendencies, or desires could spontaneously arise without the originating influence of the understanding; but that they could not operate *as motives* upon the will without such an influence of the understanding. Now we appeal to consciousness and Scripture to bear us out in the assertion, that there is a class of

* *Inquiry*, etc., Pt. i., § 2.

motives which cannot be assigned to this category. Those appetencies which are termed blind impulses must be excepted from it. They receive that denomination, partly because they do not depend for their emergence as springs of action upon any operation of intelligence. Hunger does not originate in, nor is it regulated by, any perception or thought or view of the understanding as to the necessity or desirableness of food. It springs blindly, unintelligently, from the very make of the bodily organism. So is it with curiosity, which, although intellectual in its nature, does not depend for its excitation upon any particular view of the intellect. It is an original spring of action. These examples of a class are sufficient to expose the incompleteness of the Determinist's analysis of the origin of motives. But these impulses are among the most frequent and powerful inducements which solicit the will to action. They are imperious wants which clamor for gratification; they admit of no rest until they are supplied.

In the second place, the Determinist makes the understanding always and absolutely regulative of the application of motives, when they have arisen, to the activity of the will. It is an inevitable mediator between inducements and the will; more than this, it first appropriates the inducements, gives them the character of motives, assimilates them to its own processes, and then presents its views as the controlling motive—the real, efficient cause of volition. “The will,” according to the great canon of Edwards, “always is as the greatest apparent good,” and nothing can appear as good or agreeable except as submitted by the understanding. It is its office to stamp the agreeable complexion of every object to which the tendency of the will is directed. It is alike, therefore, the master of the motives and of the will. If this claim for absolute supremacy and unexceptional control in favor of the understanding can be invalidated, it is obvious that the theory of the Determinist would break down at its most critical point. His position would be fatally breached, if any exception could be indicated to the operation of this law.

We appeal to consciousness to sustain the statement that, in the first instance, the blind impulses regulate the views of the

understanding, and subordinate it as an adjuvant in the attainment of their appropriate objects. Hunger excites the imagination of food, and drives the judgment to adopt the means of its procurement. The very dreams of the hungry man are ruled by the craving for food; they are haunted by visions of it. He sits at royal banquets and feasts on delicious viands. So with the appetite of sex, and so with curiosity. They impress themselves upon the imagination, mould it into conformity with themselves, and stimulate the mental processes to action in order that the means of their gratification may be furnished. True, the imagination thus excited reacts upon them and inflames them to a higher pitch of energy. But that is because of its vicarious power of representing the objects with which the impulses are naturally correlated. It is as if those objects were themselves presented. And if it be a fact that it is not the presence of the real objects which creates or regulates the impulses, for the hungry man, for example, continues to be hungry in the absence of food, the power to create or regulate them cannot be assigned to the imagination as their mere vicar. Now, it is further clear, that the tendency in the impulse, which awoke into activity independently of the representations of the intelligence, terminates as directly upon the will as upon the imagination. There is no need of the mediating office of the understanding to transmit the influence of the inducement to the will. It may heighten the impression, but does not communicate it. The impulsion is communicated immediately to the will, and its conative element is directly incited to exercise. The hungry man, for instance, thus stimulated by the direct influence of the impulse upon the will, forms the volition to seek food; and, if the desired object is at hand, forms the volition to eat. Here then, we maintain, is a volition which no necessity compels us to refer to the view of the understanding as its efficient cause; and we have in it a negative instance which checks a thousand affirmatives in the prosecution of the induction leading to the law, that the acts of the will are invariably determined by the views of the understanding. Let consciousness be consulted, and it will testify that while the influence of the impulse may simultaneously terminate upon the imagination and

the will, we do not depend upon the information of the understanding for an inducement to act, but are moved by the impulse communicated immediately to the will. That is inducement enough.

It would be vain to say that the very nature of these blind impulses is to impel, without directing, and that consequently the understanding must come in to designate the special mode of their gratification, and so to cause a specific volition to adopt that mode. That may be so, but we have already discovered volitions which do not depend upon this office of the intelligence, and therefore cases infringing the invariability of the law we are considering. And further, in regard to the specific directions of the understanding in these cases, it is the will which puts that power upon exerting itself to furnish them, and the will is moved by the impulses to that determination. To say that the understanding directed the will to direct the understanding to direct the will specifically, looks very much like burlesquing the whole matter; but that is what the Determinist must say in accordance with his theory.

The conclusion to which we are conducted by this special line of argument is, that it is not a universal and invariable law that the understanding originates, absorbs, and regulates all motives acting upon the will, but that, on the contrary, the blind impulses start and control the intellectual processes, and at the same time terminate independently of them and immediately upon the *nisus* of the will.

In accordance with the central idea of this discussion—that the question of a self-determining power of the will is really the question of an original self-determining power in the will of our first progenitors, the exercise of which was destined to fix the moral attitude of all their posterity—it is necessary to subject this doctrine of a regulative control by the understanding of all motives operating upon the will to induce specific action, to a comparison with that first test-case. Now, it would seem to be manifest, that the understanding of our first parents, normally right as it was in their estate of innocence, could not have *originated* the motives to the first sinful act. It could not have been the precise seat of responsibility for the “first disobedience”—

the organ and motor of the great revolt. The supposition is impossible. Did it then take up the inducements to the sin originated by other elements in their subjective condition, represent them to the will as motives, and causally enforce them upon it in order to the commission of the sin? The moral spontaneity of their affections and wills and consciences was as normally right as that of their understandings. The motives to the sin, therefore, could not have originated there, any more than in the spontaneity of the intellect. Where, then, was the source of those motives? We have seen that in all probability it was, as Butler has profoundly suggested, in the blind impulses implanted in their constitution by the hand of their divine Maker. Possessed of no intrinsic moral character, they might be correlated either with lawful or forbidden objects, by virtue of the inherent adaptability of their nature. These impulses received their direction to a forbidden object, not by the spontaneous or elective action of the powers of our first parents, but by the insidious art of an external tempter. Here is the scriptural account of the way in which they were induced to a specific determination of the will—to an abusive employment of the *libertas specificationis*. It was not their understanding which, in the first place, imparted the specific direction; it was that of the devil, immediately in Eve's case, mediately through Eve in Adam's case. He touched the spring of action in the blind impulses, perhaps the only vulnerable point at which they were accessible to temptation. If it be said that the devil must have operated upon the understanding in order to reach the will, it may be answered: In the first place, the first apprehension which mediated the access of the temptation, the first channel through which it came, was one of sense—the visual apprehension of the fruit, and the suggestion of good to accrue from eating it was consequent. The sensation conditioned perception and judgment; and so the appeal to the intellect was not the initial step in the process. The great master of temptation, with consummate adroitness, put his finger upon the divinely constituted adaptation between the make of the body and the external object.* It must not be overlooked, that the

* It deserves to be noticed, that such was precisely his policy in his first approach to the Second Adam in the wilderness.

sin had a progressive development culminating in the eating of the forbidden fruit; and that the moment at which it began was exactly that at which, at least in Eve's case, the will moved by the blind impulse consented to that motion—tolerated the suggestion to look wishfully at the interdicted tree. It was this sinful consent of the will in the first instance which made it possible for the imagination to be inflamed, and the intellectual apprehensions to be impressed, and thus for the soul to be projected forwards, under a combination of inducements, to the consummation of the transgression. It would seem, therefore, to be clear that the views of the understanding could not have been the efficient cause of the beginning of the sin. In the second place, in the progress of the temptation, it must be observed, that the argument of the tempter addressed to the intelligence was not employed until he had appealed to the blind impulse of curiosity. Here, again, the will must have consented to the indulgence of this innocent impulse thus directed towards a forbidden object, before the intellectual incentives presented by Satan could have had their designed effect. In other words, in the second stage of the temptation of Eve, the impact of the blind impulse of curiosity upon the will was felt, before the intellectual considerations suggested by the tempter operated as motives upon it. We have not space, nor is it necessary, to consider particularly the case of Adam. Allowance being made for the circumstantial differences between it and that of Eve, we believe that the conclusions reached would be substantially the same, with the exception that his sin was more aggravated than hers. The considerations submitted we regard as sufficient to prove that, in the case of our first parents, the views of the understanding were not motives which causally controlled the action of their will in the production of the first sin. And if so, this leading element in the theory of Determinism is overthrown, in relation to the only case of self-determination in the religious sphere about which it is worth while to discuss—the case of our first parents in the garden of Eden.

Fourthly, The hypothesis of Determinism, however specious its argumentation, is opposed to consciousness, Scripture, and

the general usage of language as expressive of the convictions of the race, in regard to the seat of efficient causality in the human soul. It is, we know, an old question, whether the soul has any efficient causal power; whether the will of God be not the sole efficient cause in the universe. We will not now discuss that question at length, but content ourselves with one brief but conclusive argument. If the will of God is the only real efficient cause of all things, it is the efficient cause of moral acts, and if so, of sinful acts. It was, therefore, the efficient cause of the first sinful act of the first man, and by consequence of all the sinful acts of all men which spring from it as their ultimate source. But we have already shown that such a position leads to inconceivable absurdity and contradiction. We therefore assume that God, in creating man, endowed him with a causal efficiency as to acts somewhat analogous to his own—not a power creative of existence, but a derived, dependent, and limited power, productive of phenomenal changes in the mode of man's being. Now, this causal efficiency in man has its seat precisely in the will, and expresses itself in the determinations of that faculty. In the first place, we must distinguish, what Determinism confounds, efficient and final causes. The Determinist makes motives the efficient causes of voluntary acts. But what are motives but ends of action as conceived by the mind? They are, therefore, final and not efficient causes. Granted, that the understanding furnishes some of the motives to action, it *proposes* the ends to be secured—it gives the final cause. But it is the will itself, as the doer of the action, which *purposes* its performance—it gives the efficient cause. The understanding proposes; the will purposes and disposes. The power to direct lies in the motives as final causes; but the power to do lies in the will. It is clear that neither the understanding, nor the emotions, nor the blind impulses, could do what the will does. The distinction would seem to be perfectly obvious between that which incites to doing and that which does. Motives, therefore, are the final, the will is the efficient, cause of voluntary acts.

But, in the second place, the old difficulty will here be urged that the specific acts of the will are determined by the motives:

otherwise they are unaccountable. We have admitted that where a moral spontaneity has been established by an original free self-decision, that is so. The fixed self-expression is the result of that self-determination. But in the instances of natural and merely moral and non-spiritual acts, that principle does not operate. Nor did it operate, in the case of our first parents, in the spiritual sphere. The Determinist confounds the *directing* power of motives with a *determining* power. They direct, but do not determine the will. It determines itself in accordance with directions furnished to it. On the principle that most effects are produced by a concurrence of causes, we admit that final causes concur with the efficient cause in the production of voluntary acts. Without the final, the efficient would not produce; but it is the efficient, not the final, which produces. Without the final cause of justification—the glory of his grace, God would not justify the sinner; but surely it is not the final cause which justifies. It is grace itself which is the efficient cause of the result. And we might just as well argue that, because it is inconceivable that God would specifically determine to justify a sinner without the direction of his wisdom as to the end contemplated, therefore it is his wisdom and not his grace which justifies, as to say that because the specific determination of the human will cannot be formed without the directing power of the understanding, therefore it is the understanding and not the will which voluntarily determines. So, Adam's will would not have formed the sinful volition, without motives inducing the act; but it would be unphilosophical and unscriptural to say that the motives, and not his will, efficiently produced the act. This is another of the defects of determinism, that it paradoxically transfers the seat of efficient causality in the human soul from the will to the understanding. It is like mistaking a man's eyes which indicate the point toward which he walks, for his power to walk to that point. Without his eyes he would not walk to that point, but surely it is not his eyes which walk.

Further, the distinction between the spontaneous and reflective processes of the understanding deserve especial notice in the consideration of this question. With the spontaneous, it is con-

ceded that the will has nothing to do; but it is directly concerned in the reflective. The very point of difference between the two is, that the one class of intellections is involuntary, the other voluntary. This the Determinist must admit, or announce his arbitrary resolution to stick to paradox. But, if it be admitted, we have the understanding determining the will to volition, and the will determining the understanding to reflection, or, since the Determinist must hold that some of the acts by which the understanding determines the will are reflective, the case may be put more sharply: reflection determines volition; volition determines reflection. This circle cannot be endured; we must break it and get a starting point somewhere. Where shall it be? Is it reflection? Is it volition? If reflection, the case will be: reflection determines the volition which determines reflection, and the circle is as vicious as ever. If volition, the Determinist admits that there are some cases in which the will determines the understanding, not the understanding the will; and his invariable law, that the views of the understanding are efficient of volition, breaks down. Let it be observed that this is an *argumentum ad hominem*. It is not our purpose inconsistently to depart from the position for which we have contended—that at the root of every faculty there are laws by which its own processes are regulated. The understanding discharges its appropriate functions in obedience to the fundamental laws of thought and belief, and the will in conformity to the law of efficient causality, lying at the basis of all free, voluntary determinations. As we have maintained that the understanding does not causally effect the decisions of the will, so we here concede that the will does not produce the acts of the understanding. It is the understanding which reflects, not the will, even when it is determined to reflection by the will. All that we do urge is, that the intellect does not efficiently cause the free determinations of the will. The nature of effects, strictly speaking, must correspond with the nature of the efficient causes by which they are produced—intellectual effects with an intellectual cause, emotional with emotional, and voluntary with voluntary. The Determinist departs from this principle in demanding for the free determinations of the

will an invariable connection with the acts of the understanding as their efficient cause. He makes the root of intellection produce volition as its fruit.

The following remarks of Müller are worthy of consideration :*

“That the will is this, inseparably one with all other elements of the personal life, just as its inmost determining centre, the very use of language confirms. Even consciousness and reason it ventures to denominate as something which the Ego has ; while it directly identifies the will with the Ego. No one will say : my will has determined this or that, just as he says : my reason, my consciousness has taught me that. The will is very man himself, just as Augustine says : *Voluntas est in omnibus ; imo omnes nihil aliud quam voluntates sunt*. By a just estimate of this relation, the old instances of the common Determinism, that the will in each one of its decisions is determined by certain representations, as motives, that these therefore produce the resolve and bring about the act by the will as their instrument, will scarcely be able any more to place us in embarrassment. That would imply a strange psychology, which regarded the conceptions, mental representations, as the only strictly active and efficient agencies in the soul, and on the contrary gave to the will a merely receptive, or, to speak more correctly, passive position. That is in reality to deny the will, which is indeed nothing if it has not real causality. . . . Are, then, determinate mental representations, as such, motives, impulses, for our will ? The question is not, whether they ought to be, but whether they factually are so. No, answers experience, but they first of all become so, by our placing our *interest* in their contents, and then making it the object of our desire. . . . The motives are always only the self-mediation, not the producing cause of the free volition ; they belong to that inner body which the will out of pre-existent stuff forms for itself, in order to reveal itself therein. The will attracts and encircles itself with the representations and feelings which correspond with its germinating tendency, not as by a definite resolve, but as if with the power of magic, operating unobservedly, and thus constitute them the permanent determinings and determinate tone of the inner life, by which it is actuated, or by which its volition is mediated in the individual act. As therefore the conditions of, and changes occurring in, the soul become known in the expression and movement of the body, so does one recognise in the nature of the motives, by which man determines himself, the fundamental constitution or character of his will, present at the time, and which he cannot have derived elsewhere than from himself. His will is entirely in them, the motives are very moments of his will ; but thereby it is not in the smallest degree deprived

**Christian Doct. Sin*, Vol. ii., p. 54 f.

of its freedom. Also the individual act of the will is never dependent upon the motives, strictly taken, but may very well be so upon the tendency immanent in the will itself."

Let us now review the state of the question in hand. The alleged unanswerable argument of the Determinist is his *reductio ad absurdum* of the theory which affirms the possibility of an unnecessitated determination of the will by showing that it involves a regression of such determinations to infinity. This cannot be thought. We have endeavored to show that there are, on the hypothesis of Determinism, difficulties equally insoluble, absurdities equally great. We claim that this has been accomplished; and the effect is, to neutralise, at least, the force of the famous reduction from a *regressus ad infinitum* of unnecessitated volitions. That celebrated argument is checked; and we are at liberty to appeal to other sources of proof. This would be the state of the question, upon the admission of a perfect equipoise.

But we submit that the equipoise is not perfect, that the force of each *reductio ad absurdum* is not the same. There is not a simple neutralisation of each other. This may be the case in respect to the arguments considered only as metaphysical. But in favor of that in the *moral* sphere we have the testimony of our fundamental intuitions and of the Scriptures, which, taken together and thrown, like Brennus's sword, into the scale, kick the beam; while for that in the metaphysical sphere, there is no equal additional consideration. The equilibrium is thus destroyed. But even if it be granted, that no more has been achieved than to complete the neutralisation within the limits of the subjective states and processes of the soul, still, as soon as those limits are overpassed, and the connection is palpably established with the train of causes leading to the causal efficiency of God in relation to sin, the equipoise is destroyed, and the argument from that point is overwhelmingly opposed to the hypothesis of Determinism. Let us gather up these additional considerations with reference to the first sin of the race and by rapidly throwing them together evince their transcendent power. God was not the efficient producer of Adam's first sin; that sin was not a mere negation of rectitude, a privative effect of a deficient

cause, but a positive and gigantic disorder; Adam was the efficient producer of the sin; his moral spontaneity was all right, and therefore it could not, as a motive or as a complex of motives, have necessitated the commission of the sin; therefore, the first sin was the effect of an unnecessitated and avoidable determination of Adam's will.

This conclusion having been fairly established, it follows that the invariableness of the great law of Determinism is disproved—namely, that, in the moral sphere, volitions are always and necessarily as the moral spontaneity; that the decisions of the will are necessarily or unavoidably determined by the sum of motives in the soul. The first sinful volition of the first man furnishes that “negative instance,” which Lord Bacon says, is, “in establishing any true axiom, the most powerful.” It overthrows the induction proceeding upon a host of affirmatives. The determination of the will in the first sin was not necessary, not unavoidably certain. It negatives the universal conclusion of the Determinist. And this is true of the sin which fixed the destiny of the race, apart from the supernatural interposition of grace. We see clearly, what the Determinist fails to show, that the fixed expression of a sinful spontaneity was not original—it is penal.

The question finally demands our attention—and it is a critical one—what is the relation of God's foreknowledge to the first sin of Adam? The ground has been taken by some Calvinistic theologians that inasmuch as only that, the futuration of which is certain, can be foreknown, and nothing can be certain in the future unless it be efficaciously decreed, the divine foreknowledge of Adam's sin as a fact certain to take place must have been grounded in a decree that it should take place. They seem, in addition to a strange oversight of the distinction between efficient and permissive decrees, to have been led to adopt this view from a failure to observe another obvious distinction—namely, that between the sin of one already a sinner and the first sin of one previously innocent. They put these two sorts of sin, differently conditioned as they are, in the same category, and make them the subjects of common predication. For example, they deal with Adam's first sin and the crime of our Saviour's crucifixion upon

the same principles. Because the Scripture appears to affirm that the divine foreknowledge of the crucifixion was grounded in the divine decree that it should take place, they infer that the same must hold good of Adam's first sin. Principal Cunningham,* ascribes to the compilers of the Westminster Standards and the Reformers the belief, in which he himself evidently concurs, "that God's providence, executing his decrees, was concerned in the fall of Adam, in the same sense, and to the same extent, to which it is concerned in the sinful actions which men perform now." Let us soberly inquire whether this principle is capable of equal application to the first sin of Adam and the crime of the crucifixion. It is argued, as by President Edwards, that God, in decreeing the death of Christ, also decreed the means by which it was to be accomplished. But as those means involved the sin of the agents of his crucifixion, that sin was decreed in the sense that it could not but have been committed. Its commission was necessitated by the decree; and so, it was an object of the divine foreknowledge. Now assuming that this view is correct, in so far as the foreordination of the sin efficaciously is concerned, is there no difference between such a case and that of Adam's first sin? Because it is right and just in God judicially to shut up malicious sinners to the performance of an act which is but the climax of their iniquity, the consummation of their desperate wickedness, does it follow that he would appear to be equally just in shutting up an innocent being to the commission of a sin which would initiate an endless series of crimes and be the key-note of an eternal doom? It cannot be true that the relation of God's providence to the two cases is precisely the same, nor that Dr. Cunningham has correctly represented the catholic doctrine of the Reformers and Westminster divines upon this point. But if there be a difference between the cases, then the alleged ground of foreknowledge in that of the crucifixion is not proved to be the ground of foreknowledge in that of Adam's first sin. In the one, it is assumed that the certainty of the event as necessitated by the divine decree was the ground of its being foreknown. In the other, there was no such necessitation, as we

**Historical Theology*, Vol. I., p. 579.

have shown in the previous argument, and consequently no such ground of foreknowledge. God most assuredly knew the certainty of Adam's first sin, but he did not know its certainty because by his decree he had necessitated its occurrence. No sublapsarian, at least, can hold that to have been the reason of his knowing it. He must admit that, as there was a possibility of Adam's standing, he was not necessitated to sin by the divine decree. So far as God's positive agency was concerned, he might have obeyed, been justified, and have secured eternal life for himself and all his seed; otherwise the covenant of works was a mockery. To the sublapsarian, therefore, there must have been some other ground of God's foreknowledge of the sin of Adam than the causal necessitation of decree.

But admitting that the sin of the crucifixion was rendered necessary by an efficacious decree, it would not follow that God's knowledge of its certainty was grounded in—depended upon—the relation between it and the decree. The concurrence of the foreknowledge and the necessary result of the decree may be conceded, without the admission that the divine foreknowledge of the certainty of an event cannot exist without the effectuation of that certainty by a decree. The acts of no creature can pass into the category of history, without having been necessarily objects of the divine knowledge from the very nature of that knowledge as infinite.

And here we must call attention to a distinction which is too often overlooked, but which it is necessary to signalise; namely, that between the foreknowledge of the existence of an active being as grounded in the divine decree to produce it, and the foreknowledge of the acts of that being. It must be confessed that God could not have foreknown the existence of Adam as an actual being unless he had decreed to create him, and the certainty that he would exist, as depending upon the execution of that decree. Otherwise Adam must have remained an object of knowledge only as in the category of the possible. But God having decreed to create him and therefore having foreknown his existence, the question is, how he foreknew the sin of Adam. Now we have proved, if argument can prove anything, that God neither decreed

to produce his sin nor efficaciously to procure its commission. But he must have foreknown it, else his knowledge was limited and imperfect. *That* it could not have been, nor can be, for it is infinite. The foreknowledge of the sin of Adam was not grounded in a decree which necessitated its commission. The explanation seems very simple, and the wonder is that it is so often lost sight of. It is certain that Adam's sin has taken place. It has passed into history. We know it as an historical fact. But all historical facts must be known by the divine mind from eternity by virtue of the very nature of his knowledge, however they may be produced. He must equally know those produced by the agency of other beings than himself with those which are the products of his own causal efficiency. Adam having been known as to be produced by a creative act, and to be produced as an active being endowed with power to will, all the acts which he would put forth must have been also objects of divine knowledge. For that knowledge, being commensurate with God's existence, reaches from eternity to eternity. He knows the succession of events, but there is no succession in his knowledge. It is all as much present to him as an object now gazed upon is to us. Having determined to create Adam, he knew how he would act, not from a sagacious calculation based upon the relation of cause and effect, but by intuition. If God had determined to prevent the sin of Adam, it could never have occurred. In that case God would have known his purpose causally to hinder the commission of the sin, and the necessary effect of that purpose—its non-occurrence. But he did not please so to determine. Consequently, what he knew was Adam's free causality, and the acts proceeding from it. He made Adam an active being, and such a being, while in a state of activity, must produce some acts. But if so, God must know those acts before they actually occur and become historical, or his knowledge would be imperfect. What has occurred, what occurs now under our observation, is no more certain to us, than what will occur is certain to God. But Adam's sin has occurred, and it is obvious that God must have known it from eternity by virtue of the infinite perfection of his knowledge. In the case of the *acts* of beings whose *existence* was determined by his effica-

cious decree, there is no need of any effectuating causality; to ground the certainty of his knowledge. He knows, not because those acts are made certain by any necessitating influence, but because from the very nature of the case, he must know them, if they are to be, no matter how produced. If a future event can never be known to be certain unless there is the previous knowledge of a cause which will necessitate its occurrence, then the knowledge of the certainty of the event is not immediate and intuitive, but mediate and inferential. But God's knowledge is immediate and intuitive; and it follows that its relation to a future event, no matter what its cause, is not mediated through, nor inferred from, the operation of the cause. The event as an element of history is as directly known to him as is any occurrence upon which we actually gaze. He knows the operation of causes, and he knows their effects, but he does not know the effects because they can only be produced by the causes. He knows both alike in the same intuitive act. If any proof were needed for this view, it is found in the consideration that God's knowledge must be commensurate with his being. If not, then a portion of his being would be characterised by knowledge and a portion not; that is, God would be partly ignorant—which is contradictory and absurd. But his being is eternal and immense. All events occur within his immensity and eternity. He is present in his undivided existence at every point of space and at every instant of duration. Wherever and whenever he is, he knows. All facts, therefore, whether past, present, or future, in the order of their actual occurrence, are matters of present knowledge to him. He knows the succession and order of actual events as they are developed, but his knowledge of them is not developed. As intuitive, perfect, infinite, it is characterised by no succession, no development. It is not dependent upon premises, whether they be causes which ground existence, or reasons which ground conclusions. He knows the relations of cause and effect, but does not depend upon them in order to know; he knows how to reason, but is not indebted to reasoning for knowledge.

If these views be correct, it follows that God knew Adam's sin

from eternity, as he knew it at the time of its actual occurrence, and as he knows it now, that it has become an element in human history—by intuition.

Two sorts of error have been maintained by the parties to the controversy concerning the relation of knowledge to the certainty of events. The first is, that as certainty is a quality predicable of events as related to causes, there can be no knowledge of an event the certainty of which is not guaranteed by a necessitating cause. The other is, that certainty is never a quality of events, but only of knowledge. It must be admitted, on the one hand, that there may be certainty of knowledge in regard to an event where the event is not made certain by necessity—that there may be intuitive knowledge without reference to cause; and on the other, that there may be certainty in an event owing to the necessary operation of cause, apart from the knowledge of the event—that the certainty of existence is not the same thing as the certainty of knowledge. Allowing, on the one side, that certainty may characterise events, we deny that God knows them to be certain by a process of inference; and admitting, on the other side, that certainty may characterise knowledge, we deny that God knows an actual event without its being certain. In brief, all actual events are certain, and God certainly knows them as certain, not by sagacious calculation, but by an infinite, all-embracing, all-perfect intuition.

It is proper to remark, that in speaking of God's knowledge as intuitive, it has not been intended to deny that the term *fore-knowledge* may be legitimately employed under certain relations. There is a period of duration during which every event which comes to pass had no actual existence. Considered in relation to its actual occurrence, God's knowledge of it must to human thought be conceived as foreknowledge; and so the Scriptures employ the term. But considered as to its intrinsic nature as an energy of the divine being, knowledge is neither before nor after events; it is neither prescience nor memory. It is, to speak reverently, as presentative as ours is, when an external object is in immediate relation to our faculty of perception.

It may be said, that, as there is an actual succession in the

acts of God's power, the same may be true of his acts of knowledge. To this it is obvious to reply, that, as power is creative and productive, it is necessary, unless all things which it effects are simultaneously brought into being, that there should be succession. But no such necessity obtains in the case of knowledge. It is not creative and productive, but simply apprehensive. God knows in the unity of intuition the successive acts of his power. Accordingly, the Scriptures say: "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." And in like manner, known unto him from the beginning are all the works of man. He does not produce all things at once, but he knows all things at once.

A farther distinction, in order to a complete discussion of the subject, ought to be noted between the contingency of Adam's sin, as related to his knowledge, and the certainty of it as related to God's. To Adam it was contingent, while he was innocent, whether he would sin or not. He had the power to do either. He may, or he may not, have sinned. And, of course, his knowledge as conditioned upon the exertion of his will, was contingent and uncertain. But such was not the case with his divine Maker. His knowledge of Adam's course was not conditioned upon the acts of Adam's will, and was, therefore, not contingent and uncertain. What was contingent to Adam was certain to God.

From these considerations it appears, that the Divine prescience of an event as certain is not grounded in the perception of the necessary relation between an efficient cause and its effect, so far as acts are concerned. The argument, therefore, founded on that assumption in favor of the position, that, as God foreknew the sin of Adam, he must have necessitated it, is seen to be destitute of proof.

The doctrine for which we have contended in regard to the foreknowledge of God, may be supposed by some to be out of harmony with the teaching of Calvinistic theologians. The contrary, however, may without difficulty be evinced. It is admitted that it is consistently denied by the supralapsarian Calvinists; and also that some sublapsarians have, with utter inconsistency,

maintained that God could not foreknow any sin which he did not efficiently decree. But we have shown* that the *consensus* of the Reformed Church, as expressed in its formularies, is clearly in favor of the view which we have advocated concerning the relation of God's decree to the first sin; and by necessary inference we conclude that it could not have grounded the foreknowledge of that sin in a decretive and causal relation which it denied. We refer, further, to a few names, which will be confessed to be of great weight, in regard to the question what the doctrine of Calvinism is upon the point in hand.

Augustine made the contents of God's foreknowledge wider than those of his efficient decree. He taught that "predestination could not be without foreknowledge, but that foreknowledge could be without predestination;" that "by predestination God foreknew those things which he himself would do; but he is able to know those things which he himself does not do."† Here, of course, he means not permissive, but efficient decree.

Calvin, we have seen, drew the distinction between efficient and permissive decrees, and between the relation of efficient decree to the sin of Adam and to the sins of sinners. He thus clearly states the view for which we have contended in regard to the nature of God's foreknowledge: ‡

"When we attribute prescience to God, we mean that all things always were, and ever continue, under his eye; that to his knowledge there is no past or future, but all things are present, and indeed so present, that it is not merely the idea of them that is before him (as those objects are which we retain in our memory), but that he truly sees and contemplates them as actually under his immediate inspection.

* SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW, October, 1878.

† Prædestinatio est, quæ sine præscientia non potest esse; potest autem esse sine prædestinatione præscientia. Prædestinatione quippe Deus ea præscivit quæ fuerat ipse facturus: unde dictum est, Fecit quæ futura sunt. Præscire autem potens est etiam quæ ipse non facit, sicut quæcumque peccata. *De Prædestinatione Sanctorum*, Cap. X., §§ 19, 20.

Præscientia quippe Dei eos quos sanaturus est, peccatores prænoscit, non facit. Nam si eas animas liberat a peccato quas innocentes et mundas implicuit ipse peccato; vulnus sanat quod intulit nobis, non quod invenit in nobis. *De Anima et ejus Origine*, Cap. VIII., § 7.

‡ *Institutes*, B. iii., C. xxi., § 5.

This prescience extends to the whole circuit of the world and to all creatures."

John Owen also distinguished between efficacious and permissive decrees; but he was entangled by the attempt to distinguish between sin as an entity and as a quality, and with Turretin illogically represented permissive decrees as making their objects certain; that is, that God decreed that some things may be and shall be at one and the same time. Like the same great author, also, he failed to mark a palpable distinction between making and proving a thing certain. Foreknowledge, from the nature of the case, never makes, it only proves, an event infallibly certain. It exercises no causal efficiency. Nevertheless, Owen furnishes the following just description of the divine foreknowledge, from which our conclusion logically flows:*

"God knows all things as they are, and in that order wherein they stand. Things that are past, as to the order of the creatures which he has appointed to them, and the works of providence which outwardly are of him, he knows as past; not by remembrance, as we do, but by the same act of knowledge wherewith he knew them from all eternity, even before they were. Their existence in time and being, cast by the successive motion of things into the number of the things that are past, denotes an alteration in them, but not at all in the knowledge of God. So it is, also, in respect of things future. God knows them in that *esse intelligibile* which they have, as they may be known and understood. . . . He sees and knows them as they are, when they have respect upon them of being future; when they lose this respect, by their actual existence, he knows them still as before. They are altered; his knowledge, his understanding, is infinite and changeth not. 'In God there is simple intuition, by which compound things are viewed simply, variable things, invariably, and successive things, simultaneously.'"

The philosophic John Howe is very express as to the matter before us. We give a brief extract from an able discussion by him of the question, How it is possible there should be any certain knowledge of events yet to come, that depend upon a free and self-determining cause: †

"It must be acknowledged that to whom anything is uncertain, it is a contradiction that *to him* it should be certainly known; but that

* *Works*, Goold's Ed., Vol. xii., p. 127.

† *Living Temple*, Pt. i., C. vi., § 8.

such things are uncertain to God needs other proof than I have met with. . . . But since we are sure many such things have been certainly foretold by God (and of them *such* as we may be also sure he never intended to effect), we have reason enough to be confident that such things are not unknowable to him. . . . Though he [Strangius] truly says that the Scotists' way of expressing how future contingents are present to God—that is, according to their objective and intentional being only—affords us no account *why* God knows them (for which cause he rejects it, and follows that of the Thomists, who will have them to be present according to their real and actual existence); I should yet prefer the deficiency of the former way before the contradictiousness and repugnancy of the latter; and conceive those words in the *Divine Dialogues* [More's] as good an explication of the manner of his knowledge as the case can admit (which, yet, is but the Scotists' sense), 'That the whole evolution of times and ages is so collectedly and presentifickly represented to God at once, as if all things and actions which ever were, are, or shall be, were at this very instant and so always really present and existent before him.' Which is no wonder, the animadversion and intellectual comprehension of God being absolutely infinite, according to the truth of his idea."

In regard to relation of the divine foreknowledge to the fall of Adam, he thus speaks:*

"God's prescience of the event (besides that no man knows what it is yet), whatever it is, it is wholly immanent in himself, as also his decrees; therefore could have no influence into the event, or be any cause of it; all depended, as hath been shown, on man's own will; and, therefore, if God did foresee that man would fall, yet he knew also, that *if he would, he might stand.*"

The conclusion at which we arrive from this special discussion is, that God's foreknowledge of Adam's first sin was not grounded in a decree which necessitated its occurrence, or rendered it unavoidably certain, and if so, the proof professedly derived from the opposite view in favor of the theory of Determinism as to the freedom of the will fails to be established.

We here finish our examination of the fundamental positions of Edwards and his school as to the will, viewed in relation to the estate of man in innocence and to the fall. The theory of Determinism has been laid upon the anvil of Adam's first sin, and struck by the hammers of Scripture, consciousness, and the

* *Works*, Tegg's Ed., Vol. i., p. 472.

fundamental beliefs of the race. Whether it has endured the blows the candid thinker must judge. In our humble judgment, it has failed to stand the test. We have endeavored to show that, theologically, it cannot, in its radical principle, be adjusted to the Calvinistic system; and that, philosophically, as well as theologically, it fails to answer the grand inquiry, How man's present moral condition came to be so determined. Considered in relation to man's natural fallen estate, it accounts for self-expression, but not for self-determination, and in relation to his fall from his estate of innocence, it accounts neither for self-expression nor self-determination. We have not written on the question as one involving the mere history of opinions, but as a living, pressing, supreme, tremendous issue. The agony and sweat of the soul have demanded a reply to the great query: Did God determine the present wretched moral condition of man? or did man determine it for himself by a free, unnecessitated, avoidable decision of his will? We inquired at the oracle of Determinism, and its response deepened our gloom. We inquired at the Oracles of God, and they thundered forth the answer: Man, by his first sinful volition, himself unnecessarily determined his mournful captivity to the law of sin and death. Great New Englander! Mighty master of metaphysical argumentation! First, spell-bound by his genius, which wielded over us the wand of a wizard, we bowed in allegiance to his sceptre, then doubted its legitimacy, and then declined subjection to its sway. We close with one of his own utterances, by which he appears to us indirectly but surely to refute himself:*

"This is the general notion, not that principles derive their goodness from actions, but that actions derive their goodness from the principles whence they proceed; and so that the act of choosing that which is good is no further virtuous than it proceeds from a good principle, or virtuous disposition of mind. Which supposes that a virtuous disposition of mind may be before a virtuous act of choice; and that, therefore, it is not necessary that there should first be thought, reflection, and choice, before there can be any virtuous disposition. If the choice be first, before a good disposition of heart, what signifies that choice?"

Here, then, is the great law of his philosophy as to the will:

* *Original Sin*, Pt. ii., C. i., § 1.

no volition has any moral value except as it is determined by a preceding moral principle or disposition—a moral spontaneity; and of course it is applicable to bad as well as good acts of choice. Let us then read the foregoing utterance in relation to bad acts of choice: This is the general notion, not that principles derive their badness from actions, but that actions derive their badness from the principles whence they proceed; and so that the act of choosing that which is bad is no further sinful than it proceeds from a bad principle, or sinful disposition of mind, which supposes that, therefore, it is not necessary that there should first be thought, reflection, and choice, before there can be any sinful disposition. If the choice be first, before the existence of a bad disposition of heart, *what signifies that choice?* Now, Edwards was maintaining against Taylor that Adam was created in righteousness, “with holy principles and dispositions.” *Whence, then, the sinful principle or disposition which determined the first sinful act of choice?* And if there was none, *what signified that choice?* We answer: there was no preceding sinful disposition which determined it; but, alas, that unnecessitated and avoidable act of choice, originated and determined by Adam’s will, had a significance which is marked upon the everlasting ages.

JOHN L. GIRARDEAU.

ARTICLE IV.

A PLEA FOR THE STUDY OF HEBREW.

It is a well established principle of the Presbyterian Church, that her ministry should be educated. This doctrine she holds in unison with most of the Reformed Churches. The well known arguments, behind which they have entrenched themselves on this point, need not be here enumerated. It may be stated, however, that the doctrine, if we may so term it, is one that is gaining ground. Even those evangelical Churches which have hitherto

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THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW,

VOL. XXXI.—NO. 1.

JANUARY, MDCCLXXX.

ARTICLE I.

THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL IN ITS THEOLOGICAL RELATIONS.

The articles which we published in this REVIEW for October, 1878, and January, 1879, on the subject of the Freedom of the Will in its Theological Relations, have encountered some criticism. Part of it is of so grave a character that we are under the necessity of replying. It is alleged that we are inculcating a "new theology," and that we are out of harmony with Calvin and the Calvinistic standards. We are sorry to be considered by any of our brethren as innovators in theology, for we profess to be genuine Calvinists and sincere adherents to the doctrines of the Westminster Confession; but we cannot say that we altogether regret the charge against us to the contrary, since it gives us the opportunity of still more fully vindicating the proposition with which we started—that the theory of Philosophical Necessity, as claimed by Edwards and the Determinist School to be one of universal and invariable application to all cases of moral agency, is out of accord with the Calvinistic system. We propose, in these remarks, in connexion with notices of the special difficulties which have been urged against our views, to show that we have taught the old theology—that we have maintained precisely the doctrines held by Calvin, and made symbolic in the Confessions

of the Calvinistic bodies. The assertion has been made by one of our respected critics that "the great theologian of the Reformation was as rigorous an advocate of Determinism as Edwards himself." We hope to be able to evince the great misapprehension of Calvin's views disclosed in this remark. We shall offer no apology for the fulness of our citations from his writings, since the specific nature of the allegation we are meeting demands that method of proof. To show that we are not departing from the tenets of the Reformer and the Reformed Churches, we must largely adduce their own testimony to the points under discussion.

1. It has been intimated that in affirming the power of otherwise determining, or liberty of contrary choice as to the alternatives of holiness and sin, for man in innocence, we have assigned it to him in his natural fallen condition. There are two ways in which the attempt might be made to prove this allegation: either by showing that in what we have written we have consciously and intentionally asserted the possession of the liberty of contrary choice as to sin and holiness by the unregenerate sinner; or that such a position is, notwithstanding what we have designedly said to the contrary, logically deducible from our premises.

We may safely appeal to our former discussion for proof that we expressly and repeatedly denied that such a power is possessed by man in his unregenerate condition, in relation to spiritual and supernatural things. It did not belong to the scope of that discussion to treat the subject of the will with professed reference to man's natural fallen estate. Its very end was to show that, assuming the inability of the unregenerate sinner to choose holiness, and the moral necessity upon him to choose sin, such could not have been his original condition, but must have been visited upon him as a penal infliction, in consequence of a decision for sin, which was unnecessitated and avoidable while yet he stood in innocence. And it was contended that, upon the supposition of such a decision by a will capable of determining itself *in utramque partem*, the complete bondage of the will under sin is a judicial result which was required by justice; but that any theory, which does not proceed upon that pre-supposition, furnishes an inadequate account of the freedom of the will, of the

genesis of man's present sinful and miserable condition, and of the righteousness of his punishment. In short, without such a supposition, it cannot be shown how man determined himself to that fixed moral spontaneity, which now with inevitable certainty he expresses.

We take occasion now to indicate more explicitly our views as to the state of the will in man's fallen and unregenerate condition.

We accept without qualification the teaching of Scripture, that the natural man is dead in trespasses and sins, and that before he can discharge a single spiritual function, he must be the subject of a miraculous and supernatural act, immediately performed by the Holy Ghost, by which he is made a spiritually living man. Believing, as Robert Hall says, that there are no degrees in death, we hold that the spiritually dead sinner is totally unable to do a spiritual act, or feel a spiritual emotion, or think a spiritual thought. This spiritual death extends to the whole man—to the understanding, the emotions, the conscience, and the will. There is no spiritual life in any of these faculties. The vases are still there, though cracked; but the precious liquor has all leaked out—the wine of existence is gone. Now we hold this to have been the instantaneous and necessary effect of the first sin, provided that sin was not the result of a concreated necessity of nature, but of an unnecessitated and avoidable decision of the will. In the case of a probationer, such as Adam was, the first deliberate decision of the will in favor of the good, apart from express covenant stipulation to that effect, would not confirm the soul in holiness. The intrinsic consequence of that first determination in favor of righteousness would be only to develop and strengthen the spiritual principle, but not to terminate the probation in an indefectible life. The habit of virtue would be to a certain extent consolidated, the character be advanced on the path of formation, but the contingency of fall would continue to throw its shadow before, and to warn the probationer against a failure to watch and pray. God did not tell Adam, that on the first day he refrained from eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, he should surely be justified and adopted. It was for

his gracious Maker to decide when the application of the test of character should issue in confirmation.

On the other hand, the first deliberate decision of the will in favor of evil would have the effect of at once confirming the soul in sin. This it would accomplish in two ways. In the first place, as life to the creature is the result of union and fellowship with God, and the very first sin would necessarily interrupt that communion, death must be the consequence. The soul cannot enjoy spiritual life which has broken its vital relation to Him who is the only source from which it is derived. The connexion is destroyed between the stream and the fountain of its supply. In the second place, the first instance of transgression would bring down upon the soul the sentence of the broken law, that judicial curse of God which withdraws original righteousness, renders the acceptance of personal obedience hopeless, and shuts up the sinner, without the intervention of grace, to perpetual continuance in sin and the doom of eternal death. As "every sin deserveth God's wrath and curse," and all mankind, descending from Adam by ordinary generation, are legally guilty of his first sin, they are born into the world with the same judicial consequences inflicted upon them for that sin as were entailed upon him. From birth, then, all men, without the interposition of recovering mercy, are under the moral necessity of sinning. In their federal head and representative they determined the complexion of their moral dispositions, and the necessity of expressing them by the spontaneous acts of the will. We have no hesitation in using the language of Edwards in relation to the fixed connexion between a sinful nature and the acts of the will. We see no reason for softening the term *necessity*, which expresses that connexion, into the term *certainty*. What is the relation of a spiritually dead soul to voluntary acts of sin but a necessary one, so far as its own intrinsic energies are concerned? Augustine and Calvin ordinarily use this expression, as the following examples, among others, will show:

"Hence, in the view of our corrupt nature, Augustine hesitates not to call those sins natural, which necessarily reign in the flesh wherever the grace of God is wanting."*

**Institutes*. B. II., c. I., §11.

“Therefore if the free will of God in doing good is not impeded because he necessarily must do good ; if the devil, who can do nothing but evil, nevertheless sins voluntarily ; can it be said that man sins less voluntarily because he is under a necessity of sinning ? This necessity is uniformly proclaimed by Augustine, who, even when pressed by the invidious cavil of Celestius, hesitated not to assert it in the following terms : ‘Man through liberty became a sinner, but corruption ensuing as the penalty has converted liberty into necessity.’ The thing not obscurely expressed is, that he is under a necessity of sinning.”*

We are even prepared to go further than some advocates of the doctrine of Determinism, and to assert that besides the inherent inability of the sinner, without regenerating grace, to perform spiritual acts, there is an external force, that is, an externally originated force, operating upon him which disables him spiritually. Principal Cunningham, for instance, after conceding some validity to the distinction between natural and moral ability, says :

“In accordance with these definitions and descriptions, it is contended that man may be said to have a natural ability, or to have no natural inability, to do what is spiritually good and acceptable to God, because there is no physical law, no superior controlling power, no external violence operating irrespectively of his own volition, that prevents him from doing it, or is the cause of his inability to do it,” etc.†

Now the illustrious author forgot that the judicial curse of God is a superior controlling power, an external force, which is a cause of the unregenerate sinner’s inability to do what is spiritually good, a force which deprives him of the ornament of original righteousness and drinks up the fountains of spiritual life. The shadow of God’s frown strikes a death-chill into the seat of life, and incapacitates the surviving natural faculties for the accomplishment of spiritual ends. And this blighting and disabling influence is justly exerted upon the sinner, because when he had spiritual ability he recklessly and wilfully threw it away. He is a spiritual corpse because he committed spiritual suicide. Being dead, he can do nothing in the spiritual sphere to recover himself. He depends on the almighty power of Christ to infuse new life into his soul, and on the almighty voice of Christ to call him from the grave. He must be born again, or lie an abortion in

**Institutes*, B. II., c. III., §5. †*Hist. Theology*, Vol. I., p. 600.

the womb of death. He must be created anew in Christ Jesus, or remain forever in the category of spiritual nonentity.

It follows from what has been said as to the reign of spiritual death in every faculty of the unrenewed sinner's soul, that he has no power of contrary choice as to the alternatives of sin and holiness. His will is spiritually dead, and can therefore exert no act of spiritual choice. The liberty of spontaneity remains—the sinner pleases to sin. But the liberty of deliberate election between the spiritually right and the spiritually wrong is clean gone. The will is the willing slave of sin. It is under a bondage to sin which is all the more inviolable because it is the spontaneous choice of the soul. No slave is so bound as he who wills not to be free. As to this matter we tread exactly in the tracks of Luther, Calvin, and the whole body of the Reformed Church. We utterly deny to man in his natural fallen condition the power of contrary choice as to spiritual things, the freedom to go in the way of holiness or the way of sin, which we ascribe to man in innocence. That sort of freedom was lost by the Fall, and it is the only sort of freedom which was so lost.

It has, however, been said that although we did not consciously intend to affirm the possession of the power of contrary choice by man in his fallen and unregenerate condition, that position would logically result from the theory we maintained. In the absence of proof, we are at a loss to conceive how this can be established. We can perceive how upon the principles of the Determinist, the law which is applied to one case must be applied to all; we can see, that, his philosophic hypothesis requiring the denial to man of the liberty of a self-determining will, or of contrary choice, on the ground of its impossibility, *that* liberty must be denied to man universally, in all circumstances and relations, whether naturally or spiritually considered, whether contemplated as unfallen or as fallen. But we attempted to establish no philosophical theory of universal and invariable applicability to men. If we had, as we explicitly contended that man in innocence had the power of contrary choice as to spiritual things, we must have acknowledged that the unregenerate sinner also possesses it. With Augustine, Calvin, and the Reformed Confessions, we ascribed the power of

contrary choice to Adam in spiritual things, not in the sense of an essential and inalienable attribute of humanity, but as an accidental, separable, contingent quality. It was necessary, not to his make, but to his peculiar relation to God's moral government as a non-elect probationer, who was under covenant arrangements which supposed his ability to stand and liability to fall. His possession of such a power we endeavored to prove, not upon any philosophical principles, but by the testimony of Scripture and the common agreement of the Church in all ages. We have been charged with making the case of Adam peculiar and exceptional, so far as this matter is concerned, whereas what is true of Adam as to the will, it is contended on the other hand, must be true of the race. This is extraordinary. Surely there were some features in Adam's case which were totally unlike those of his descendants. Was each one of them a federal head? Was each required to perform personal obedience as the condition of justification and adoption? Had Adam been justified, would not all his seed have been personally justified upon precisely the opposite principle to his? Would they not have been justified by a vicarious righteousness imputed to them? Was Adam elected to stand in holiness as were the elect angels, and as are some of his descendants through the mercy of God? And are we to blame for regarding him as also an exception in being endowed with the liberty of contrary choice in relation to sin and holiness? Holiness, to the extent in which it existed in him, was not an essential, it was an accidental and contingent quality of Adam's soul. That is proved by the fact that it was actually lost after being possessed, and that it may, through grace, be recovered. If so, Adam's will must have been separably related to holiness. What is that but saying that he may have chosen to retain it or not? And what is that but saying that he had the power of contrary choice as to holiness and sin? The peculiarity of his position was that he was not confirmed while he was in innocence. His case was not like that of the non-elect unregenerate sinner, nor that of the saint in Christ Jesus. If, therefore, his case was exceptional, it could not, to the extent of its having been so, be reduced to a general law of equal application to all human cases.

Our principles, then, we claim, do not necessitate the logical inference that if Adam possessed the power of contrary choice in relation to spiritual things, it must, as to those things, be an essential property of the race.

Having thus concisely but explicitly shown the revolutionary change which the Fall occasioned in man's spiritual condition, a change in which the power or liberty of deliberate election between the contrary alternatives of sin and holiness was completely lost, so that the will by its own fatal choice is now under a bondage to evil from which only the Son of God by his grace can make it free, we deem it proper, in order to meet misconceptions and misrepresentations of our position, to repeat what we formerly said by way of caution in reference to the meaning of the terms *power or liberty of contrary choice*. We do not employ them as equivalent either to the terms *liberty of indifference*, or *liberty of equilibrium*, with which they ought not to be, but often are, confounded. For an exposition of the difference between them, we refer to Müller's work on the Christian Doctrine of Sin.* What we mean is the power of choosing between contrary alternatives—the power of otherwise determining. It is the power or liberty of the will to incline to one or the other of two opposite directions, to elect one or the other of two opposite courses. This is the power of contrary choice which we ascribed to Adam in innocence, and which we utterly deny to his descendants, in relation to spiritual things, while in their unregenerate condition. There is a difference which cannot be overlooked between the liberty of spontaneity and the liberty of deliberate election between opposing alternatives. The former, we contend, was possessed by Adam not as a contingent quality attaching to him as an individual, but as a permanent attribute of the race. It consequently survived the storm of the Fall which wrecked the accidental holy qualities of Adam, and remained an imperishable, because an essential, property of human nature. If the spontaneity of the will were lost, the will itself would cease to be. When, therefore, the unregenerate sinner commits sin, he acts spontaneously. No compulsory force is exerted upon his will which drives it

*Vol. II., pp. 17, 21.

against its spontaneity. It acts from the necessity of that spontaneity, but not from the necessity of co-action. Spontaneous action and necessary action coincide in this case, precisely because the power of contrary choice—the liberty of deliberate election between the contrary alternatives of holiness and sin—is gone. The man goes only one way spontaneously, but he goes that way necessarily. He pleases to go that way, but he cannot please to go the opposite way. The liberty of spontaneity, then, existed in Adam in innocence, and it exists in man now. That sort of liberty was not lost.

But the liberty of deliberate election between sin and holiness is that liberty which Adam lost for himself and his posterity. No unregenerate sinner possesses it now in regard to spiritual things. It has vanished. We cannot here refrain from adverting to a consideration which, from a theological point of view, appears to us to be fatal to the theory of Determinism. The Church, following the plain teachings of Scripture, has always held that there was a *liberum arbitrium*, a certain free-will, which Adam possessed and which he lost when he lost himself. *Perdidit se et ipsum*. Now it is obvious that the liberty of spontaneity was not lost. It remains that the liberty of contrary choice was that which was originally enjoyed, and which was lost by the Fall. Principal Cunningham confessed his leanings to the doctrine of Philosophical Necessity, but in an elaborate discussion designed to prove the neutrality of the Calvinistic Formularies in relation to the controversy between Necessitarians and their opponents, strangely makes this strong statement:

“The practice of distinguishing, in the exposition of this subject, between the freedom of man's will in his unfallen and in his fallen condition, and indeed of viewing it distinctively with reference to the different stages or periods of his fourfold state—as unfallen, fallen, regenerate, or glorified—has prevailed in the Church in almost all ages. These views were fully brought out and applied by Augustine. They had a place in the speculations of the Schoolmen, as may be seen in Peter Lombard's Four Books of Sentences, and in the Commentaries upon it. They were embraced and promulgated by the whole body of the Reformers, both Lutheran and Calvinistic. They have a prominent place in the writings of the great systematic divines of the seventeenth century. They have a prominent place in the West-

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minster Confession—the ninth chapter, entitled ‘Of Free Will,’ being entirely devoted to the statement of them. And what is in some respects peculiarly interesting, the doctrine of the loss of man’s free-will by the Fall, and of the servitude of the will of fallen man to sin because of depravity, was held by Baius, Jansenius, and Quesnel, and their followers—the best men and the best theologians the Church of Rome has ever produced.”*

This is true and well said, however inconsistent with Dr. Cunningham’s leanings to Philosophical Necessity. Now we ask, what free will did man lose by the fall? Edwards and the Determinist school maintain that the sort of free will, if any, which man now possesses he always possessed—possessed before the fall; and that the sort of free will which he now has not, he never did have—did not have before the fall. He has lost no free will which he once had. That is clearly their doctrine, as might be evinced by an appeal to their writings, did our space permit. Spontaneity is the only species of liberty they allow, and that, according to their own teaching, is not lost. What freedom of the will, then, was lost? None, according to the Determinist theory. But the Scriptures and the Church alike teach that there was a free will which was lost by the fall. There is only one other kind—the liberty of contrary choice, the liberty of deliberate election between opposite alternatives, or of otherwise determining. That, therefore, was the liberty which was lost; and, consequently, it was originally possessed. We call attention to this point as at once establishing our position, that Adam possessed the power of contrary choice, and proving the inconsistency of the Determinist doctrine with the teachings of Scripture and the consent of the Church.

Our statement would not be complete did we not add, that although the power of contrary choice in relation to spiritual things has been entirely lost, so that the unregenerate man is altogether destitute of it, it still remains in regard to things natural and civil, and, in a certain degree, to things merely moral. The power to stand or not to stand, to walk or not to walk, and the like; the power to yield or not to yield obedience to civil requirements; and the power, to some extent, to indulge or not to indulge cer-

**The Reformers and the Theology of the Reformation*, p. 514.

tain immoral tendencies, to cultivate or not to cultivate certain merely moral habits: this power, in the natural and civil and merely moral sphere, cannot, we believe, be denied to men. Now this power, in the sphere designated, the Determinist denies to man. The sweep of his theory includes every possible case and relation of human agency. It excludes the possibility of the liberty of otherwise determining. It denominates it an absurdity and a contradiction. Intrinsically, it is an impossibility. When a man stands, he cannot do otherwise; when he walks, he must walk; when he yields obedience to civil government, he cannot decline to obey; when he swears, or drinks intemperately, he cannot, even in the early stages of the habit, refrain; when, like Socrates, he cultivates patience, or, like Scipio, continence, or, like Cato, probity, he acts necessarily, he could not do otherwise. He acts spontaneously in all these respects, but at the same time he acts necessarily—he could not otherwise determine. He has no power of contrary choice. The theory denies this power to man in every condition—to man as man; to man unfallen, fallen and unregenerate, regenerate, and glorified. We deny it to man as unregenerate, and with the further limitation—in relation to spiritual things. We also deny it to glorified saints, since they are determined by grace to holiness without any admixture of sin. In a word, the Determinist makes man as to his essence incapable of it as involving an impossibility; we represent it as a contingent power which may exist in some instances of human agency and not in others.

It is not our purpose to discuss these questions upon their merits, but, having stated our doctrine, to vindicate it against the allegation that it is out of harmony with the teachings of Calvin and of the Calvinistic standards. We design to show that the contrary is true, and that the position of the Determinist school, and not ours, is subject to the charge of being uncalvinistic. We do not concur with those who hold that the doctrines of Calvinism are not exclusive of the theory of philosophical necessity, as one of invariable and universal applicability to man; but shall endeavor to prove that both Calvin and the great Calvinistic symbols definitely take a side in this controversy, and that the

side, implicitly if not explicitly, opposed to Determinism. We have given the writings of Calvin a patient investigation in regard to this question, holding ourselves free to be impressed by the evidence we should encounter, whatever it might be, and we have risen from the search with the clear conviction that he held the views which we have expressed. We shall attempt, by quotations from his works, *usque ad nauseam*, to prove that he maintained the following positions: that the present necessity of sinning, which holds the will in utter bondage to spiritual evil, is grounded not in nature, not in man's original constitution as imperfect and defective, but in the corruption of nature flowing from the un-necessitated and avoidable decision of the will of Adam as the representative of the race in his first sin; that Adam possessed the liberty of contrary choice, or of otherwise determining, as to sin and holiness; that the present servitude of the will, if it could not thus be accounted for, could not be adjusted to our fundamental conceptions of the justice of God; that it is the penal result of a sin which man originally had the ability to avoid; and that men now possess the power of contrary choice in the sphere of things external and civil. If we can succeed in this endeavor, we shall have refuted the assertion that "the great theologian of the Reformation was as rigorous a Determinist as Edwards," and evinced the contrariety of his doctrines to that of Philosophical Necessity. We proceed to cite the words of Calvin:

"Many persons are surprised that Moses simply, and as if abruptly, relates that men have fallen by the impulse of Satan into eternal destruction, and yet never by a single word explains how the tempter himself had revolted from God. And hence it has arisen, that fanatical men have dreamed that Satan was created evil and wicked as he is here described. But the revolt of Satan is proved by other passages of Scripture; and it is an impious madness to ascribe to God the creation of any evil and corrupt nature; for when he had completed the world, he himself gave this testimony to all his works, that they were 'very good.' Wherefore, without controversy, we must conclude that the principle of evil with which Satan was endued was not from nature, but from defection; because he had departed from God, the fountain of justice and of all rectitude. But Moses here passes over Satan's fall, because his object is briefly to narrate the corruption of human nature; to teach us that Adam was not created to those multiplied miseries under which all his

posterity suffer; but that he fell into them by his own fault. In reflecting on the number and nature of those evils to which they are obnoxious, men will often be unable to restrain themselves from raging and murmuring against God, whom they rashly censure for the just punishment of their sin. These are their well known complaints, that God has acted more mercifully to swine and dogs than to them. Whence is this, but that they do not refer the miserable and ruined state, under which we languish, to the sin of Adam, as they ought? But what is far worse, they fling back upon God the charge of being the cause of all the inward vices of the mind, . . . as if the whole perverseness of our disposition had not been adventitious (*accidentalis*)."*

"I therefore readily subscribe to the exclamation of Augustine, 'O wretched free-will, which, while yet entire, had so little stability.'"†

"Fanatics torture this word *evil*, as if God were the author of evil, that is, of sin; but it is obvious how ridiculously they abuse this passage of the Prophet. . . We ought not to reject the ordinary distinction, that God is the author of the evil of punishment, but not of the evil of guilt."‡

"But the only good ground which the Manichees have, viz., that it were impious to ascribe the creation of anything bad to a good God, militates in no degree against the orthodox faith, since it is not admitted that there is anything naturally bad throughout the universe; the depravity and wickedness, whether of man or of the devil, and the sins thence resulting, being not from nature, but from the corruption of nature; nor at first did anything whatever exist that did not exhibit some manifestation of the divine wisdom and justice."||

"At present, however, we confine ourselves to a consideration of our nature in its original integrity. And, certainly, before we descend to the miserable condition into which man has fallen, it is of importance to consider what he was at first. For there is need of caution, lest we attend only to the natural ills of man, and thereby seem to ascribe them to the Author of nature; impiety deeming it a sufficient defence if it can pretend that everything vicious in it proceeded in some sense from God, and not hesitating, when accused, to plead against God, and throw the blame of its guilt upon him. Those who would be thought to speak more reverently of the Deity catch at an excuse for their depravity from nature, not considering that they also, though more obscurely, bring a charge against God, on whom the dishonor would fall if anything vicious were proved to exist in nature. Seeing therefore that the flesh is continually on the alert for subterfuges, by which it imagines it can remove the blame of its own wickedness from itself to some other quarter, we must diligently guard against this depraved procedure, and accordingly treat of the

* *Com. on Genesis*, ch. III., Calv. Soc. Trans. † *Ibid.*, ch. III., v. 6.

‡ *Comm. on Isaiah*, ch. XLV. 7.

|| *Institutes*, B. I., c. XIV., §3.

calamity of the human race in such a way as may cut off every evasion, and vindicate the justice of God against all who would impugn it."*

"Paul never could have said that all are 'by nature the children of wrath,' if they had not been cursed from the womb. And it is obvious, that the nature there referred to is not nature such as God created, but as vitiated in Adam; for it would have been most incongruous to make God the author of death. Adam therefore, when he corrupted himself, transmitted the contagion to all his posterity."†

"The blame of our ruin rests with our own carnality, not with God, its only cause being our degeneracy from our original condition. And let no one here clamor that God might have provided better for our safety by preventing Adam's fall. This objection, which from the daring presumption implied in it is odious to every pious mind, relates to the mystery of predestination, which will afterwards be considered in its own place. Meanwhile let us remember that our ruin is attributable to our own depravity, that we may not insinuate a charge against God himself the author of nature. It is true that nature has received a mortal wound; but there is a great difference between a wound inflicted from without, and one inherent in our first condition. It is plain that this wound was inflicted by sin; and therefore we have no ground of complaint except against ourselves. This is carefully taught in Scripture. For the Preacher says, 'Lo, this only have I found, that God made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.' Since man by the kindness of God was made upright, but by his own infatuation fell away into vanity, his destruction is obviously attributable only to himself.

"We say then that man is corrupted by a natural viciousness, but not by one which proceeded from nature."‡

"If any one will dispute with God, and endeavor to evade his judgment, by pretending that he [the sinner] could not have done otherwise, the answer already given is sufficient, that it is owing not to creation, but the corruption of nature, that man has become the slave of sin, and can will nothing but evil. For whence that impotence of which the wicked so readily avail themselves as an excuse, but just because Adam voluntarily subjected himself to the tyranny of the devil? Hence the corruption, by which we are held bound as with chains, originated in the first man's revolt from his Maker."||

"But if the inquiry be as to the first man, he, when he was created in integrity, fell of his own accord: and thence it came to pass that by his own proper fault he brought destruction upon himself and his seed. Now although Adam fell and ruined himself and his posterity not without the knowledge, and so not without the ordination of God, nevertheless that by no means either lightens his fault, or implicates God in his crime.

**Institutes*, B. I., c. XV., §1. †*Ibid.*, B. II., c. I., §6.

‡*Ibid.*, B. II., c. I., §§10, 11. ||*Ibid.*, B. II., c. V., §1.

For this is always to be considered, that of his own accord he stripped himself of the rectitude which he had received from God, of his own accord devoted himself to the bondage of sin and Satan, of his own accord rushed headlong to destruction. It is pleaded as an excuse for him, that his fall was decreed by God, and was therefore unavoidable by him. But voluntary transgression is sufficient and more than sufficient to ground guilt. Nor indeed is the secret purpose of God a proper and genuine cause of sin, but the free will of man. . . . When man discovers that the cause of his sin is within himself, what boots it for him to fetch a circuit and seek for it in heaven? The blame is obviously his own, inasmuch as he willed to sin. . . . The reason why God knowingly and willingly permitted man to fall by his own agency may be hidden from us, but it cannot have originated in injustice. This indeed must be held without controversy, that sin has always been hateful to him. . . . Although I say that he ordained it [the fall], I cannot concede that he was in a proper sense the author of it.*

"Pighius thus proceeds: 'If the apostasy of man is the work of God, the deliverance of Scripture is false, that all things which God made are good.' But I can righteously testify and frankly profess, that such a figment never entered into my mind. I everywhere assert that the nature of man was at first created in rectitude, so that the corruption, which he contracted for himself by his defection, could not be attributed to God; that the death, to which he, who had been competent to attain to life, had enslaved himself, was so induced by his own fault, that God cannot be regarded as its author. If I had ever said that it came to pass through the impulse of the Divine Spirit, that the first man alienated himself from God, and did not everywhere contend that he was impelled by the instigation of the devil and the proper motion of his own heart, I might perhaps deserve to be insulted by Pighius."†

"But what says Origen? [quoted by Pighius in his discussion of free will.] He pronounces those to be heretics who take away free will (*liberum arbitrium*) from man. If he speaks of the primeval condition of nature, he brings forward nothing which we ourselves cannot profess. If he makes no distinction between nature in its corruption and in its integrity, there is no pious man who will not affirm that he confounds the fundamental elements of the faith. . . . All the passages quoted by Pighius treat of man such as he was formed by the hand of God. As to the question, what he was after his fall and defection, they are altogether silent. . . . We, indeed, estimate man [in the discussion of the bondage of the will] not from the point of view of his creation

* *Consensus Genevensis*, Niemeyer's *Coll.*, pp. 267, 268. This is Calvin's *Tractatus de Æterna Dei Prædestinatione*.

† *Ibid.*, p. 268.

by God, but from that of the corruption which he contracted by his own proper fault."*

"When he would bring forward Tertullian, it is with the preliminary statement that his opinion concerning the freedom of the will is so clear that he who cannot see it must close his ears and eyes to the truth. But what is the sum of the testimony he adduces, except that man was created by God free (*liberum*) and having power over himself (*suæ potestatis*)? He is disputing against Marcion, whose opinion concerning the nature of man, as it is reproachful to God, so it is impious and profane. For he did not hold that man is evil by his own fault, but assigned the cause of his wickedness to God as the author of nature."†

"Nor indeed should Irenæus be heard, if, in opposition to the unanimous consent of the Church, he makes no distinction between nature corrupted and nature in its integrity: but if he only describes man as he was before the fall, it makes nothing against us, who refer the bondage of the will not to God, but to the fault of man."‡

"I come to Hilary: the first passage from whom describes the nature of man, without any mention of corruption. . . . But since, then, he had no other purpose than to deprive men of excuse, lest they throw back the blame of their sins upon God, it is no wonder if he recalls them to their first origin, where they may learn to accuse themselves and their own free will (*liberum arbitrium*) to which they owe it that they are evil."||

"He (Pighius) goes further: because Augustine would deny that any one sins in that which can by no means be avoided. He who examines the passage will see that he speaks concerning the beginning of sin, when indeed he will convince him that this necessity by which we are to-day oppressed had no other origin than the voluntary fall of the first man. . . . We place the origin of our depravity neither in creation, nor in the work of God, but in the fault of our first parent; because when he was created free (*liber*), he contracted his wretched condition of bondage by a voluntary defection."‡

"He who can distinguish between the first condition of nature as created and the corruption which supervened in consequence of sin, will, with no great pains, free himself of all difficulty."¶

These passages—and we can produce others—superfluously show that Calvin habitually made a great distinction between the necessity of sinning in our present fallen and unregenerate condition and the free and unnecessitated sin of Adam. He denies that the two cases are susceptible of common predication. He

**De Servitute et Liberatione Humani Arbitrii*, Opp. fol. ed. Amstelodami, Vol. VIII., p. 133.

†*Ibid.*, p. 134. ‡*Ibid.*, p. 134. ||*Ibid.*, p. 134. §*Ibid.*, p. 158. ¶*Ibid.*, p. 169.

insists that it is vital to hold that the case of Adam was exceptional and peculiar. Now this is in the teeth of the Determinist theory, which is logically compelled to reduce the two cases to the same law. They both come under the law of the efficient control of the volitions by the dispositions of the soul, either con-created or congenital. Adam was as really under the moral necessity of sinning as his unregenerate descendants. Nature in either case determines to sin. But Calvin affirms again and again that the necessity of sinning flows from nature as corrupted by man's free action, and not from nature as created by the hand of God. If so, there was, before the act which originated the corruption, no necessity of sinning; indeed, as he says, the first sin was avoidable. This is so obvious that it need not be pressed. In this respect, therefore, we have followed precisely in the steps of the Reformer. Now let us compare with this clear doctrine of Calvin, that man's first sin did not necessarily originate from his natural make and constitution, the position of President Edwards, that without a hindering intervention on God's part, Adam's nature could not but certainly and infallibly lead to sin. We will give the great metaphysician's own statement of the case:

"Yea, if it be supposed that good or evil dispositions are implanted in the hearts of men by nature itself (which, it is certain, is vulgarly supposed in innumerable cases,) yet it is not commonly supposed that men are worthy of no praise or dispraise for such dispositions, although what is natural is undoubtedly necessary."*

"If by the author of sin is meant the permitter, or not a hinderer of sin, and at the same time a disposer of the state of events in such a manner for wise, holy, and most excellent ends and purposes, that sin, if it be permitted, or not hindered, will most certainly and infallibly follow—I say, if this be all that is meant by being the author of sin, I do not deny that God is the author of sin. . . . And I do not deny that God's being thus the author of sin follows from what I have laid down." †

"Thus it is certain and demonstrable, from the Holy Scriptures as well as from the nature of things, and the principles of Arminians, that God permits sin, and at the same time, so orders things, in his providence, that it certainly and infallibly will come to pass, in consequence of his permission." ‡

"It was meet, if sin did come into existence, and appear in the world,

* *Inquiry*, etc., Pt. IV., §4. † *Ibid.*, Pt. IV., §9. ‡ *Ibid.*, Pt. IV., §9.

it should arise from the imperfection which properly belongs to a creature as such, and should appear so to do, that it might not appear to be from God as the efficient or fountain. But this could not have been if man had been made at first with sin in his heart, nor unless the abiding principle and habit of sin were first introduced by an evil act of the creature. If sin had not arose from the imperfection of the creature, it would not have been so visible that it did not arise from God, as the positive cause and real source of it."^{*}

Now let us look on this picture and then on that, and say whether they are the same. If so, contradictories may meet and kiss each other. Edwards says that sin resulted from the imperfect make of man's original nature; Calvin says that sin did not result from man's original nature. Edwards says that sin was rendered morally necessary by man's original nature; Calvin says that the moral necessity of sinning was not from man's original nature, but is now from his corrupt nature. So far the evidence does not sustain the proposition, that the great theologian of the Reformation was as rigorous a Determinist as Edwards himself, or that we have taught a new theology out of harmony with that of Calvin.

But it may be urged that Calvin and the Determinists agree that man at the first sinned spontaneously, and that they both hold that spontaneity is not inconsistent with necessity. To show, consequently, that Calvin maintained that Adam sinned voluntarily and spontaneously, is not to prove that he held that Adam did not sin by necessity. We proceed to adduce a class of passages which will effectually destroy this supposition, and show that the Reformer taught that Adam sinned by an election of his will which might have been otherwise; in other words, that Adam, besides spontaneity, had also the power of contrary choice, in relation to the opposite alternatives of sin and holiness. It will also be seen that the free will which Calvin ascribed to man in innocence, denied to fallen and unregenerate men as to spiritual things, and affirmed of men now as to natural things, is precisely that sort of free will which Edwards and the Determinist school pronounce impossible, contradictory, and absurd.

^{*}*Ibid.*, Pt. IV., §10.

"We must now examine the will, on which the question of freedom principally turns, the power of choice belonging to it, rather than to the intellect."*

"Thus the will (free will, if you choose to call it so,) which is left to man, is, as he in another place describes it, a will which can neither be turned to God, nor continue in God, unless by grace; a will which, whatever its ability may be, derives all that ability from grace."†

We have cited these passages to show that Calvin did not recognise the Determinist distinction between the freedom of the will and the freedom of the man, but in opposition to it, affirmed the residence of freedom in the will; and further, that as to the question under consideration, the ability of the man is exactly the ability of the will. In these respects, we have maintained the position of the Reformer in rejecting that of the Determinist. The free agency of the man is nothing different from the freedom of his will.

"It is proper to observe how these four things differ from each other: the will (*voluntas*) as free (*libera*), or bound (*serva*), or spontaneous (*spontanea*), or forced (*coacta*) . . . Freedom (*libertas*) and bondage (*servitus*) are irreconcilable, so that he who would affirm the one must deny the other. Hence, if the will of man is bound (*serva*), it cannot without impropriety be said to be free (*libera*). . . Where there is bondage (*servitus*) there is necessity. . . Now you perceive that spontaneous (*spontaneum*) and necessary (*necessarium*) can consist at one and the same time."‡

Here free will is palpably distinguished from spontaneity, and whereas spontaneity is affirmed to be consistent with necessity and necessity with bondage, and therefore spontaneity and bondage may consist; freedom (*libertas*) is declared to be inconsistent with bondage, and, therefore, with necessity. If, then, Calvin predicates free will of man in innocence, and of natural fallen man as to natural things, he does not mean the liberty of spontaneity which consists with necessity, but the liberty of deliberate election between contrary alternatives which is inconsistent with necessity. He clearly affirms that unregenerate men act spontaneously, when they sin necessarily. He as clearly denies that they have freedom of the will as to spiritual things. Spontaneity

**Institutes*, B. II., c. II., §26. †*Ibid.*, B. II., c. III., §14.

‡*De Servit. et Liberat. Hum. Arbit.*, ut sup., p. 133.

and free will are, therefore, by him contradistinguished from each other. Now the only kind of freedom which the Determinists allow to man, under any circumstances, is spontaneity. If, then, Calvin concedes a sort of freedom, which is not spontaneity, to man under certain circumstances, he holds a view diametrically opposed to the fundamental tenet of Determinism. Let us interrogate him on the point.

“The holy man [Irenæus] loudly protests, that man was not evil by nature, that is, by the creative act of God, but was made in the possession of free will (*liberi arbitrii*), and received a soul capable of good and evil. Since it is evident that he treats of the first estate of man while he was yet in his integrity, how does that make against us, who place the bondage of the will only in the corruption and depravation of nature? In a certain place Irenæus says among other things: Corn and chaff received their nature from their make; but man was made reasonable and in this respect like God, since free in his will (*liber in arbitrio*) and master of himself (*sux potestatis*) he himself was a cause to himself (*ipsum sibi causam esse*), so that at one time he might become corn, but at another chaff. Wherefore, says he, he is the subject of just condemnation. We [Calvin] affirm that this happened to us all, through the fall of our first parent, and hold that in this the whole Church agrees.”*

“He [Pighius] quotes two passages from Basil, the former of which contains nothing else than a description of human nature, such as it was created by God, in order that men may be prevented from transferring the blame of their evils to God. At first, therefore, he denies that sin was innate (*innatum*, that is, concreated,) in the substance of man, but happened (*accidisse*) to him by his own fault; which we [Calvin] not only confess, but diligently maintain. Afterwards, he says that virtue is voluntary and not from necessity; but that free will (*liberum arbitrium*) belongs to us. Here Pighius shouts, as if the victory were won. But I [Calvin] deny that these words are to be understood of our present condition, but only show how man was made at his first origin. In express terms he explains what man was at his creation: he does not mention the corruption which ensued upon the fall; but when he wishes to assign the cause of wickedness, he thus speaks: ‘Whence is man evil? From his own proper will. Whence the devil evil? From the same cause. For he likewise had a free life in himself, and a free will (*liberum arbitrium*) situated in him either of remaining with God, or of being estranged from him.’ . . . But that I may keep silence, it is sufficiently clear that the nature of the soul is considered in its integrity, as ought to be done when definitions are furnished.”†

**Ibid.*, p. 134. †*Ibid.*, p. 135.

"I deny that all those deliver a clear and established doctrine concerning free will (*de libero arbitrio*), who do not at the same time add what has perished of this liberty (*libertate*) through Adam's fall, and what believers may recover through regenerating grace."*

"They [Irenæus and Tertullian] therefore teach that man was created free (*liberum*): we [Calvin] do not deny that; but we affirm that he fell into slavery, because he degenerated from his first estate."†

"Pighius lays down the proposition, that man was made in the possession of free will (*liberi arbitrii*). We [Calvin] assent (*annuimus*); nor have we waited until he should demand this assent, but have always avowed it."‡

"Pighius subjoins a definition of sin there laid down [in a passage cited from Augustine]: 'That there is a will (*voluntas*) to retain or pursue what justice forbids, and thence it is a matter of choice to abstain (*liberum est abstinere*); although if there be no freedom (*si liberum non est*) neither is there will (*voluntas*)' . . . According to the testimony of the author himself, who certainly had the right to interpret what he said, this definition is not adapted to any other than the first sin of Adam; because, through his fall at first from the Lord we have been plunged into a miserable bondage. Hence infer with what face Pighius, with tragic outcries, taunts me with this passage. But Augustine says that 'the thing is familiar to all, that no one is worthy of blame or punishment who fails to do that which he could not do.' . . . At the same time he testifies that he is a perverse interpreter of his words who would apply this to all sins; that he indeed was not able to determine otherwise than that man could not be justly condemned, except he had sinned with a free will (*libera voluntate*); but that now a part of the condemnation is that bondage under which we are held captive in mind and will, until we are liberated by the gratuitous kindness of Christ."||

"We see here that a profane philosopher [Aristotle] confesses, 'that it is not always in the power of man to be good; yea, that he can be nothing but evil; and yet that what he is, he is through the will (*voluntate*) and not by violence: because in the first instance a free election (*libera electio*) was in his own power (*penes ipsum*), by which he delivered himself to the service and bondage of lust.' And indeed this is the proper philosophy of Christians, that our first parent at the same time corrupted not only himself but all his posterity, and that thence we derive the *habitus* which is rooted in our nature."‡

"Augustine says: 'The first man had not that grace which prevented him from willing to be evil, but he had grace, which, if he had willed to abide in it, would have prevented him, and without which even with free will (*libero arbitrio*) he could not have been good; but nevertheless through

**Ibid.*, p. 135. †*Ibid.*, p. 137. ‡*Ibid.*, p. 139.

||*Ibid.*, p. 140. §*Ibid.*, p. 153.

free will it was in his power to abandon it. . . Nor was the power of free will a small one, since he was so assisted, that without that aid, he would not abide in the good; but that assistance he might relinquish, if he so willed. . . Why then is Pighius angry with me, if I avail myself of the patronage of Augustine, which he so liberally offers me?"*

"We assert that the human race, having lost the liberty (*libertate*) which it had received at creation, fell into miserable bondage. In this condition of bondage, we deny that man is endued with the free (*libera*) power of choosing as well good as evil, so that he can apply himself to whichever alternative he pleases (*ad utrumlibet.*)"†

"He [Augustine, whom Calvin quotes with approbation] says: 'Free will (*voluntas libera*) with which he was created, was given to the first man without any sin, and he reduced it into bondage to sin; but our will when it was the slave of sin, was liberated by him who said: If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.'"‡

"Finally, I not less calmly than cheerfully acquiesce in this opinion of Augustine: 'That God, who created all things good, and knew that it more pertained to his almighty goodness to bring good even out of evils, than not to permit evils to exist, so ordered the life of angels and men that he might show in it, first, what their free will (*liberum arbitrium*) could do, then, what the kindness of his grace and the sentence of his justice could do.'"||

"Adam, therefore, might have stood if he choose, since it was only by his own will that he fell; but it was because his will was pliable in either direction (*in utramque partem flexibilis*), and he had not received constancy to persevere, that he so easily fell. Still he had a free choice (*libera electio*) of good and evil; and not only so, but in the mind and will there was the highest rectitude, and all the organic parts were duly framed to obedience, until man corrupted his good properties and destroyed himself. Hence the great darkness of philosophers who have looked for a complete building in a ruin, and fit arrangement in disorder. The principle they set out with was, that man could not be a rational animal unless he had a free choice (*libera electio*) of good and evil. They also imagined that the distinction between virtue and vice was destroyed, if man did not of his own counsel arrange his life. So far well, had there been no change in man. . . At present it is necessary only to remember that man at his first creation was very different (*longe alium*) from all his posterity. . . At first there was soundness of mind and freedom of will (*voluntas libera*) to choose (*ad eligendum*) the good.'"‡

"We grant that, as man was originally constituted, he could incline to either side (*potuerit ad alterutram partem inclinare*), but since he has

**Ibid.*, pp. 159, 160. †*Ibid.*, p. 161. ‡*Ibid.*, p. 176.

||*Consensus Gener.*, Niemeyer, p. 269. §*Institutes*, B. I., c. XV., §8.

taught us by his example how miserable a thing free will (*liberum arbitrium*) is, if God works not in us to will and to do, of what use to us were grace imparted in such scanty measure?"*

These passages clearly prove that Calvin affirmed for man in innocence the power of contrary choice—the liberty of inclining to either of opposing alternatives. He plainly—in *terminis*—declares that, although Adam freely elected to sin, he might have done otherwise—he might have elected to stand. If this be Determinism, white is black, or we are dazed. And if we are out of harmony with Calvin in holding that Adam had the power of contrary choice, we have not been able to follow a guide in a broad road at noon-day. The truth is, we derived our doctrine from him, in great measure, and have faithfully stuck to him until this hour. But, copious as our citations have been, we have not finished. We would sooner part with most things than our good Calvinistic name, and must exhaust the means we have of protecting it. We propose to show, by further testimony, that to the only freedom of will which Determinists allow, Calvin was unwilling to concede the title; that he threw contempt upon the liberty of spontaneity, and sharply distinguished it from freedom of will; that, besides spontaneity which in Adam was not fixed, there was that freedom of will which involves the power of otherwise determining; and that it was not spontaneity, but that freedom of will which is distinguished from it, which was lost by the Fall. If these positions can be made good, it will be seen that it is the Determinists, and not we, who are out of harmony with “the great theologian of the Reformation.”

Let us again hear Calvin :

“In this way, then, man is said to have free will (*liberi arbitrii*), not because he has a free choice (*liberam electionem*) of good and evil, but because he voluntarily does wrong, and not by compulsion. This is true: but why should so small a matter have been dignified with so proud a title? An admirable freedom (*egregia vero libertas*)! that man is not forced to be the servant of sin, while he is, however, a voluntary slave; his will being bound by the fetters of sin.”†

“Let us observe that the power of free will (*liberi arbitrii*) is not to be considered in any of those desires which proceed more from instinct

**Ibid.*, B. II., c. III., §10.

†*Ibid.*, B. II., c. II., §7.

(*essentiæ inclinatione*—determination of essence) than mental deliberation (*mentis deliberatione*).”*

“Thus such a free will (*tale liberum arbitrium*)—if you choose to call it so—is left to man, etc.”†

“The second step in the reasoning is vicious, because it leaps from voluntary (*voluntario*) to free (*liberum*); whereas we have proved above that a thing may be done voluntarily, though not subject to free choice.”‡

“What does Augustine here teach? That the will of man is indeed free (*liberam*), but only to evil. But this epithet [says Calvin] is not properly attached to it, since it is the slave (*serva*) of iniquity.”§

“They collect that sin can be avoided, if it is voluntary; and I deny the validity of the argument, because the inference is made from voluntary (*voluntario*) to free (*liberum*).”¶

“I would call it free (*liberum*), if the term could be accepted among us as synonymous with spontaneous (*spontaneo*).”¶¶

“Let us define necessity. Pighius will not concede to me that it is a fixed and established stability, where a thing cannot be otherwise than it is. . . . Since he [God] continues stable, he is in some sense a necessity to himself—is not forced from without; nor does he even force himself, but spontaneously and voluntarily inclines to that which he does by necessity.”**

This last passage, especially, brings out the ordinary doctrine of Calvin, that spontaneous voluntary action may consist with necessity. He never opposes spontaneity to moral necessity. He only opposes it to co-action or compulsion—a force acting against the will. He explicitly distinguishes freedom of will (*libertas voluntatis*) from this spontaneity (*spontaneitas*.) He is unwilling to grant that the latter is any freedom of the will, in a proper sense. The specific difference between them, which he designates, is that spontaneity may consist with necessity, while freedom of the will cannot. Now as he constantly attributed freedom of will (*libertas voluntatis*), in his definite sense of it, to Adam, he affirmed for him, while in innocence, that exemption from necessity which is its differentiating property. He was free (*liber*) in the sense that he could choose either holiness or sin. He had the power of deliberate election between conflicting alternatives, not merely spontaneous dispositions. In a word, he had, according to Calvin, the power of contrary choice.

* *Ibid.*, B. II., c. II., §26. † *Ibid.*, B. II., c. III., §14.

‡ *Ibid.*, B. II., c. V., §1. § *De Servit. et Liberat. Hum. Arbit.*, p. 149.

¶ *Ibid.*, p. 152. ¶¶ *Ibid.*, p. 152. ** *Ibid.*, p. 152.

On the other hand, the Determinist denies to Adam the power of contrary choice (Calvin's *libertas voluntatis*). The only form of action which he concedes to him is that of spontaneity—of doing as he pleased; and he maintains that it was of necessity that he pleased to sin. This, we urge, rejects the difference as to freedom of will between Adam and his natural fallen descendants, which is asserted not only by Calvin, but by the unbroken *consensus* of the Church. For if unregenerate men have the sort of liberty which Adam had, they are not different, but alike. No freedom of the will was lost, for there is none other, according to the Determinist, but that of spontaneity, and that is now possessed—a liberty inconsistent only with coercion, but not with necessity. What then, we ask, *was* lost?

If the answer to this demand be returned, that the spontaneous love of holiness was lost, and nothing remains but the spontaneous love of sin—the only answer possible, so far as we can conceive—we rejoin:

1. According to the Determinist, spontaneity and necessity always coexist. He who acts spontaneously acts necessarily. But if Adam, according to the supposed concession, had the spontaneous love of holiness, he was under the necessity of choosing holiness; otherwise his spontaneity, as motive, would not have controlled his volition. But he did not—he chose sin. He was then both necessarily and contingently related to holiness; which is a contradiction.

2. If he chose to sin—and he did—then, as his sin, according to the Determinist, was a necessity, since he could not have done otherwise, he was actuated by two necessary influences of contradictory character—the spontaneity leading to holiness and the spontaneity leading to sin. He was, therefore, necessarily determined to holiness and necessarily determined to sin: which is a contradiction.

3. If, to meet the difficulty, it be said, that Adam, like the regenerate man, had a twofold spontaneity—one leading to holiness and the other to sin, we reply: (1.) That the contradiction already emphasized emerges, namely, that as, according to the Determinist, spontaneity and necessity imply each other, Adam

would have been necessarily determined to holiness and sin at the same time. (2.) That such a dual spontaneity must either have been concreated with Adam or not. If it was concreated with him, it is admitted that God was the efficient producer of a spontaneity necessarily issuing in sin: which is monstrous. If it was not concreated with Adam, it was the product of his own agency, and then two difficulties emerge: *first*, that the will would have produced a spontaneity, which is contradictory to the position of the Determinist; for he makes motives efficiently control the acts of the will. Now he contends that the motives spring from the spontaneity of the soul. Consequently, the spontaneity efficiently controls the acts of the will. But according to the supposition in hand, the sinful spontaneity of Adam, as not concreated with him, must have been produced by an act of his will. What, then, efficiently controlled this act of the will? Nothing. The supposed act is, therefore, itself nothing, since it is an effect without a cause. And so the supposition is destroyed by the logic of Determinism. And yet, as we have before shown, this is the way in which President Edwards accounts for the introduction of the first sinful principle into a nature previously holy; that is, a way which absolutely contradicts his fundamental law, that the will cannot determine the principles of the soul, but is determined by them, and derives from them all the significance of its acts! This is, to us, something truly wonderful. It shows to what expedients a great intellect was reduced in the impracticable attempt to adjust the philosophy of Determinism to the critical, regulative, far-reaching case of the first human sin—the *peccatum originale originans*. It could not have been produced except by a preceding principle of sin; it preceded and produced that principle! It is caused by a sinful principle; it causes the same sinful principle! It is cause and effect at the same time. *Secondly*, if a twofold spontaneity—holy and sinful, was not concreated with Adam, it follows that a holy spontaneity which *was* concreated with him necessarily led to the production of a sinful spontaneity, which is an absurdity of absurdities, upon the Determinist scheme itself; or that the sinful spontaneity was produced by an arbitrary act of the will, which is equally absurd,

upon that scheme. *Thirdly*, the supposition of a dual spontaneity would suppose a schism in the moral nature of Adam, a fissure in his soul between two conflicting and irreconcilable principles, and that is an hypothesis which finds no countenance either in the teachings of Calvin or the *consensus* of the Church. It is the spawn of Manichæism. *Fourthly*, the hypothesis of a twofold spontaneity would be tantamount to that of contrary choice, which is rejected by the Determinist; for a holy spontaneity would incline the will in one direction, and a sinful in the opposite. The only difficulty would be that, on the principles of the Determinist, one set of motives would effectually neutralise the other, and the will would stand stock-still, like the ass between two bundles of hay. *Fifthly*, if the supposition of a dual spontaneity, holy and sinful, be discarded, a return must be made to a single one; and as the pious Determinist himself does not hold that a sinful one was created by God, the history of man must have begun with a holy spontaneity. Now, however feeble it may at first have been, as it exclusively occupied the territory of the soul, it must, upon the principles of Determinism, have controlled the will; and it seems impossible to show how, upon those principles, it could have been lost.

These considerations appear to us to prove conclusively that the attempt to bring the doctrine of the Determinist into harmony with that of Calvin, in regard to the sort of freedom which was lost by the Fall, breaks down; namely, by the supposition that both teach the loss simply of spontaneous holiness. For, in the first place, as we have shown, this supposition is, upon his own principles, incompetent to the Determinist. In the second place, he denies the existence of such a thing as freedom of the will, as internal to man—as a part of his subjectivity; whereas Calvin affirms it, and designates that as the freedom which was lost by the Fall. In the third place, Calvin maintained, what the Determinist cannot consistently do, the loss of a holy spontaneity by the Fall; and accounts for it on the ground of the possession by a mutable will of the power of election, by which it might determine to abide in holiness, or fall away into sin: a power of contrary choice which the Determinist utterly denies, and which,

in relation to the contrasts of sin and holiness, is precisely that freedom of the will (*liberum arbitrium*) which was lost by the Fall, and the loss of which has reduced man to the moral necessity of choosing only one alternative—the fatal one of sin. So far from having been as rigorous a Determinist as Jonathan Edwards, in regard to man in innocence, Calvin taught that in that estate he possessed a freedom of will other than that of spontaneity, and inconsistent with necessity; that is, the liberty of contrary choice, which the Determinist wholly denies. And in affirming that power in Adam, we, therefore, have trod in his footsteps. We have not, in this respect, maintained a theory which, as has been alleged, “is perfectly irreconcilable with his views.”

We pass on now to show by quotations from his works, that Calvin held the view for which we have contended, and for which we have been criticised, that the present disabled condition of man, in which his will is in complete bondage to sin, is to be accounted for on the ground of its being *penal* and not original.

“Thus they (philosophers) always presuppose in man a reason by which he is able to guide himself aright. From this method of teaching we are forced somewhat to dissent. For philosophers being unacquainted with the corruption of nature, which is the punishment of revolt (*defectionis pœna*), erroneously confound two states of man, which are very different from each other.”*

“For, when it is said that the sin of Adam has made us obnoxious to the justice (rather judgment; Latin: *judicio*, French: *jugement*) of God, the meaning is not that we who are in ourselves innocent and blameless are bearing his guilt, but that since by his transgression we are all placed under the curse (*maledictione*), he is said to have brought us under obligation.”†

“For since he [Augustine] had said, ‘that no ground of blameworthiness (*culpæ rationem*) could be discovered, where nature or necessity governs (*ubi natura dominatur aut necessitas*),’ he cautions us that this does not hold except in regard to a nature sound and in its integrity (*sanæ et integræ*); that men are not subject to necessity (*necessitati non subjacere homines*), but as the first man contracted it for them by his voluntary fault. ‘To us,’ says he, ‘nature is made a punishment (*facta est pœna*); and what was the just punishment of the first man is nature to us. Since therefore necessity is the punishment of sin, the sins which thence arise

**Institutes*, B. I., c. XV., §§6, 7. †*Ibid.*, B. II., c. I., §8.

are justly censured, and the blame of them is deservedly imputed to men; because the origin is voluntary (*voluntarium est principium*).’ Now then what cause has Pighius for scorning and deriding the solution furnished by me [Calvin]?’*

“Another question is, since God is the author of nature, how comes it that no blame attaches to God, if we are lost by nature? I answer, there is a twofold nature: the one produced by God, and the other is the corruption of it. This condemnation (*damnatio*) therefore which Paul mentions does not proceed from God, but from a depraved nature; for we are not born such as Adam was at first created, we are not ‘wholly a right seed, but are turned into the degenerate’ offspring of a degenerate and sinful man.’†

These testimonies might be multiplied, but our space is shortening, and those here adduced, though few, are sufficiently clear to prove that Calvin taught what we have inculcated—that the necessity of sin under which we now groan is not the result of our first natural constitution, but is a penal infliction upon us for having, by an unnecessitated decision of the will in Adam, dissolved the bond of life between us and God, and subjected ourselves to his curse. The remarkable passage which we have cited from his great treatise on the Bondage and Liberation of the Human Will, in which Calvin subscribes to Augustine’s opinion, is of itself sufficient to convince any candid mind that the Reformer was not a Determinist, and that we have faithfully stated his doctrine.

In proof of the generally admitted fact, that Calvin, like Luther and Melancthon,‡ held that man has free will—not merely spontaneity, but the liberty of contrary choice—in relation to things external, civil, and merely moral, we must content ourselves with producing a single but explicit utterance: “He (Pighius) says, that we had recanted half of our doctrine, because we attributed to man free will (*liberum arbitrium*) in things external and in civil business (*in rebus externis et civilibus negotiis*).”||

Here the distinction is drawn between things natural and things spiritual. What he absolutely denies in regard to the

**De Servit. et Liberat. Hum. Arbit.*, p. 151.

†*Comm. on Ephesians*, II. 3.

‡*Augsburg Conf.*, Art. XVIII., *Corp. et Syntag. Confessionum*.

||*De Servit. et Liberat. Hum. Arbitrii*, p. 123.

latter, he allows in respect to the former, namely, the power of otherwise determining or of electing between opposite alternatives. We have adduced abundant evidence from his writings to show that Calvin by free will (*liberum arbitrium*, or *libertas voluntatis*) did not mean spontaneity. He admits a spontaneous power of the will in the unregenerate, and denies to them freedom of will in the proper sense. In asserting, therefore, the existence in unregenerate men of freedom of will *quoad naturalia*, he must have designated a different freedom from that which he allows to them, and the same with that which he refuses to them, *quoad spiritualia*. What could that be but the liberty of election between contrary courses?

The point to which we here invoke attention is, that as Calvin affirmed for man the liberty of contrary choice in relation to *some* things, viz., things external and civil, he maintained a doctrine which is diametrically opposed to the position of the Determinist, that the liberty of contrary choice is impossible to men in relation to *any* things; and further, that as he asserted the existence of that power in man *now*, he did not consider it as a peculiar property of Adam. And so there is no support in his doctrine for the view, that Adam's case was so entirely removed from the field of our consciousness and observation that we are debarred from considering it as in relation to the question of the will. But here is a case which falls under the scope of present consciousness and observation; and we submit that the judgment of Calvin, as well as of the Reformers in general, was that this case exhibits the possession by man, under limitations, of the power of contrary choice. The truth is, that it is this power in the natural sphere which conditions, in great measure, the possibility of merely moral culture, and the penal inflictions of human government. The evidence from this particular quarter, then, fails to sustain the allegation that Calvin was a Determinist, and that we have taught doctrine inconsistent with his views.

The only consideration which seems to mar the completeness of the evidence which has been adduced as to Calvin's doctrine of the will, is that he lends an apparent countenance to the Determinist tenet, that the volitions are efficiently controlled, in the

last analysis, by the dictates of the understanding—the same substantially with the *lubentia rationalis* view of Turretin and others. In regard to this, we would observe:

1. That if Calvin did maintain that view, it was inconsistent with the great volume of his teaching in reference to the will. It would be a special hypothesis which could not be adjusted to the catholic genius of his views. We should therefore feel warranted in rejecting the special tenet, and accepting the bulk of his teachings, as representative of his true position.

2. That we have not discovered the terms, *lubentia rationalis*, nor any reference to the doctrine signified by them, in his treatise on Predestination, or in his discussion of the Bondage of the Will. If in the Institutes he alluded to the thing, although he did not use the name, it was done exceptionally and very slightly. But,—

3. We are decidedly of the opinion, after carefully looking into the matter, that Calvin, in the passage in the Institutes* in which he mentions the regulative influence of the intellect upon the will, did not have his eye upon the question of the psychological relation between the two faculties—the only one peculiarly considered by the Determinists—but spoke of the moral relation between them. The question before his mind was not, Is the will, in its acts, efficiently controlled by the representations of the intelligence? But it was, *Ought* the will, in its acts, to be governed by the judgments of the intellect? The case, we are satisfied, which Calvin was enforcing was this: the intellect gives the law of truth, as the conscience furnishes the law of duty. And as the will is under obligation to conform to the standard of morality erected in the moral nature, it is also bound to adjust itself to the standard of truth in the intellectual. This was the relation between the faculties instituted at creation, and so long as man stood in innocence, the will freely obeyed the law of truth in the intelligence and the law of duty in the conscience. And so ought it to be now, although it is vastly different. But if the psychological question had been propounded to Calvin, Is every act of the will, in fact, necessarily controlled by a dictate of the

* B. I., C. XV., §§. 7, 8.

understanding? he must, to have been logically consistent with himself, have returned the answer, that the first sin of man disproved such an hypothesis; for the first volition to sin could not have been efficiently caused by a holy judgment, and all the judgments of the intellect were, in man's primitive condition, conformed to the law of truth.

We close our citations from Calvin's works, in reference to the particular point before us, with a passage which is simply extraordinary, in view of the attempt to quadrate his doctrine of the will with that of Philosophical Necessity as held by President Edwards. It exhibits a radical difference, touching the very nature of the inquiry as to the freedom of the will, between these illustrious men. Let us hear from Edwards his statement of the case:

"The plain and obvious meaning of the word *freedom* and *liberty*, in common speech, is power, opportunity, or advantage, that any one has, to do as he pleases. Or, in other words, his being free from hinderance or impediment in the way of doing or conducting, in any respect as he wills. And the contrary to liberty, whatever name we call that by, is a person's being hindered or unable to conduct as he will, or being necessitated to do otherwise. . . . To talk of liberty, or the contrary, as belonging to the very will itself, is not to speak good sense, if we judge of sense and nonsense by the original and proper sense of words. . . . There are two things that are contrary to this which is called liberty in common speech. One is constraint: the same is otherwise called force, compulsion, and coercion, which is a person's being necessitated to do a thing contrary to his will. The other is restraint, which is his being hindered, and not having power to do according to his will. . . . Let a person come by his volition or choice how he will, yet, if he is able, and there is nothing in the way to hinder his pursuing and executing his will, the man is fully and perfectly free, according to the primary and common notion of freedom."*

Here with the formality of definition Edwards limits freedom to the unforced and unimpeded execution, in the external sphere, of our internal resolutions—the unhindered outward expression of our inward spontaneity. Now let Calvin state his view of the case:

"The power of the human will is not to be estimated by the event, as some unskilful persons are absurdly wont to do. They think it an ele-

**Inquiry*, etc., Pt. I., Sec. V.

gant and ingenious proof of the bondage of the human will, that even the greatest monarchs are sometimes thwarted in their wishes. But the ability of which we speak must be considered as within the man, not measured by outward success. In discussing the subject of free will, the question is not, whether external obstacles will permit a man to execute what he has internally resolved, but whether in any matter whatever he has a free power of judging and of willing. If men possess both of these, Attilius Regulus, shut up in a barrel studded with sharp nails, will have a will no less free than Augustus Cæsar ruling with imperial sway over a large portion of the globe.*

Is it not manifest that the identification of Calvin's doctrine of the will with the Determinism of Edwards cannot be effected? These two definitive statements of the very question at issue are as contradictory as are the members of the proposition: A is not Not-A. Either freedom is outward or inward. A middle supposition is excluded. We must make our election between the two contradictories. We go with Calvin; and we have gone with him all along.

We have admitted, in this discussion, that the only form of liberty allowed by Determinists is spontaneity. We speak here of the current doctrine of Calvinistic writers who in the main avow Determinist principles, who accept the doctrine of Philosophical Necessity with certain modifications of their own. Among these modifications is the view that he who has spontaneity has liberty. They do not disjoin free action and spontaneous action. On the contrary, they identify them. But such was not the unmodified position of the modern Coryphæus of that school. Edwards did not consider spontaneity, unimpeded subjective action, as freedom. He limited freedom to the external sphere, the unforced or unimpeded carrying into outward action of necessary volitions. This is the only liberty he assigns to man. If that was Calvin's doctrine, outward and inward are the same. Our brother who alleges that Calvin was as rigorous a Determinist as Edwards, and that our views cannot be reconciled with those of the Reformer, says: "The definition of freedom is ever before us in the plain proposition, that the person in question may act as he pleases." That is exactly the position of Edwards, but it is also

**Institutes*, B. II., c. IV., §8.

exactly the opposite of Calvin's. We are content to leave it to the judgment of the candid reader to determine whether Calvin and Edwards can be reconciled, and whether in differing from the latter we have not maintained the ground of the former.

The second branch of the allegation we are considering is, that in affirming the liberty of contrary choice, or of otherwise determining, for man in innocence, we have made an attempt to rehabilitate the Arminian theory of the will, and have inculcated a new theology which is in conflict with the articles of our faith as set forth in our standards. We regret that the room left us will allow only a brief answer to this allegation. We think that we are entitled, without discourtesy, to say, that, as in our articles on this subject we endeavored to fortify our position by citations from some of the most prominent symbols of the post-Reformation Church, the allegation now under consideration ought to have been accompanied by a disproof of the relevancy of the testimony we adduced. As that was not done, we call attention to the clear utterances in support of our views by the formularies of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches which are recited in those articles. We proceed to interrogate the standards which are distinctively Calvinistic in reference to the points in which it is charged that we depart from them. Those, the testimony of which we shall bring forward, are, the Gallic, the Scotch, and the Second Helvetic Confessions, the Canons of the Synod of Dort, the *Formula Consensus Helvetica*, and the Westminster Confession. They will be admitted to be Calvinistic formularies.

Gallic Confession: "We believe that man, created in purity and integrity, and conformed to the image of God, fell away from the grace which he had received by his own fault (*sua ipsius culpa*). . . Likewise although he be endued with a will which is moved to this or that (*ad hoc vel illud*), nevertheless, since it is entirely captive under sin, he has absolutely no liberty to seek good, except as he may receive it from grace and by the gift of God."*

Here we notice: 1. That it is affirmed that man who had no imperfection in his natural make which could lead to sin, fell by his own fault. He could not, therefore, have sinned by a neces-

*Niemeyer, *Coll.*, p. 332.

sity of nature, as the Determinist maintains, and a necessity operating through a natural imperfection, as Edwards contends. He was by his natural furniture qualified to stand, and the inference is, that he might have stood if he had so willed: an inference which the Determinist utterly denies. 2. This passage intimates that a will which may incline in different directions, which was originally possessed by man, is yet possessed by him, but only as to things which are not good, in the sense of spiritual and saving. This cannot be reconciled to the Determinist view.

Scotch Confession; "We confess and acknowledge that this our Lord God created man, that is to say, our first parent Adam, in his image and likeness; to whom he gave wisdom, dominion, righteousness, free will (*liberum arbitrium*) and a clear knowledge of himself: so that in the whole nature of man no imperfection could be marked."

"We confess that the cause of good works is not our free will (*liberum arbitrium*), but the Spirit of our Lord Jesus."*

Here we see that the free will which man received from God at creation he lost by the fall, in relation to good works. This is opposed to the Determinist position, which, first, denies that man can possess, under any circumstances, a free will (*liberum arbitrium*), for it pronounces freedom of the will an absurdity; and, secondly, denies that man ever lost that which he could never have possessed.

Second Helvetic Confession: "We teach upon this subject, which has always produced many conflicts in the Church, that the condition or state of man must be considered in a threefold manner: In the first place, what (*qualis*—what sort of being) man was before the fall, without doubt upright and free (*liber*), who both had power to remain in the good, and decline to the evil (*qui et in bono manere et ad malum potuerit declinare*); but he declined to the evil, and involved in sin and death both himself and the whole race of mortals, as has before been said. In the next place, it is to be considered what man was after the fall. His intellect was not taken away from man, his will was not torn away from him, nor was he entirely changed into a stone or stock, but they were so altered and impaired in man, that they cannot any more do what they were able to do before the fall. The intellect indeed is obscured, but the will (*voluntas*) from having been free (*ex libera*) is made the servant of sin. For it serves sin not unwillingly, but willingly (*non nolens, sed volens*); for, indeed, it is said to be will (*voluntas*, willingness)

**Ibid.*, pp. 341, 346.

not unwillingness (*non noluntas*, not not-will). Therefore in regard to evil or sin, man was not forced (*coactus*) either by God or by the devil, but did evil of his own accord (*sua sponte*); and in this respect it is the product of a will most free (*in hac parte liberrimè est arbitrii*)."*

The third aspect of the subject relates to the regenerated condition of man, with which the present question is not directly concerned. This testimony is clear in reference to the possession by man in innocence of the power of contrary choice, of otherwise determining. He could have stood in the good, says this venerable standard; he could not have so stood, says the Determinist; for he did sin spontaneously, and his spontaneous action was necessary. We have adhered to the doctrine of this grand old formulary, which is not only thoroughly Calvinistic, but thoroughly Presbyterian.

We come now to the Canons of the Synod of Dort:

"Man in the beginning was created after the image of God with a true and salutary knowledge of his Creator and of spiritual things in his mind, and was adorned with righteousness in his will and heart (*voluntate et corde*) and with purity in all his affections, and so was holy in all his faculties (*totus sanctus*); but by the instigation of the devil and his own free will (*libera sua voluntate*) he severed himself from God, and stripped himself of those excellent gifts."

In the Rejection of Errors, appended to the chapter from which the preceding extract is taken, the venerable Synod, among other errors, "rejects that of those"

"Who teach: 'That spiritual gifts, or good habitudes, and virtues, such as goodness, holiness, righteousness, could not have had a place in the will of man when he was first created, and hence were not separated from it at the fall.' For this conflicts with the description of the image of God which the Apostle furnishes. Eph. iv. 24, where he represents it as consisting of righteousness and holiness, which certainly have a place in the will."†

Here this great Synod of Calvinistic divines affirm that man, at creation, had an ample furniture of gifts to enable him to meet the requirements of his probation. He was lacking in no part: he was *totus sanctus*. It is true that he was defective in the sense that he was not confirmed in holiness by the determining grace

**Ibid.*, p. 479. †*Ibid.*, pp. 708, 703.

of God, as we have before indicated; there was an intrinsic mutability in his will, as we shall see that the Westminster Confession specifies; but he had a sufficient supply of gifts and strength from grace to enable him to resist the tendency to evil which might arise out of this mutability of will and to overcome it. The difference between this view and that of the Determinist is, that in the one case no necessity of sinning is affirmed as springing from this defect, but, on the contrary, it is maintained that the mutable will might have chosen to stand in holiness; while in the other it is contended that, without the determining intervention of grace, the imperfection of man's constitution led of necessity, led unavoidably, "certainly, infallibly," to sin. It ought, moreover, to be noticed that the Synod makes the will itself a seat of spiritual gifts and a holy *habitus*, and clearly implies that, when spiritual life was lost by the fall, sinful dispositions inhered in the will. This is contrary to the regulative view of Determinism, that the will is the mere servitor and instrument of the other faculties, the dispositions of which lie back of it and efficiently control its acts. And if it be said that the will, in the nomenclature of the Synod, included the emotions, the answer is obvious: 1. That if that be so, the emotions are not represented as being, exclusively of the will, the subject of regulative dispositions; 2. That the language of the Synod explicitly distinguishes the heart (*cor*) from the will (*voluntas*), and consequently it could not have employed the term "will" generically, as synonymous with "active powers."

We cite next the *Formula Consensus Helvetica*:

"As 'known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world,' so in time, of his infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, he created man, the glory and crown of his works, after his image, and consequently upright, wise, and just; subjected him, when created, to a covenant of works, and freely promised him his fellowship, friendship, and life in it, if he should conduct himself obediently to his will. Moreover, that promise annexed to the covenant of works was not merely the continuation of earthly life and happiness, but chiefly the possession of life eternal and heavenly, that is, in heaven, if he should run a course of perfect obedience, a life to be passed, with unutterable joy, in communion with God, as well in the body as in the soul. . . None of us assent to the

opinion of those who deny that the reward of celestial blessedness was proposed to Adam in the event of his obeying God."*

We have here a glowing description of those glorious qualities with which man was magnificently endowed at creation, which makes it impossible to suppose that he had not power to stand in the service of his God. And yet this view, which we have also steadily maintained, is what the Determinist denies. He affirms that the sin of Adam was unavoidable. What contradictories could be more pronounced? Let it be noticed, also, how plainly the *Formula Consensus* intimates that Adam might have obeyed the Covenant of Works, and secured eternal life and bliss, which of course the Determinist refuses to admit, at least must logically refuse to admit. This perspicuous formulary unquestionably sustains our view—which we have proved to have been that of Calvin—that Adam had the ability to stand, although he was liable to fall; and that, as he might have stood, he possessed the power to have determined otherwise than he did, when he decided for sin.

We tire of adducing testimony which shows redundantly, that the *Consensus* of the Reformed Church is in the teeth of the Determinist philosophy, in its application to that sin from the womb of which all other sins are born, which deluged the earth with woes, and opened the gates of hell for myriads of our race. But the allegation, that we are out of harmony with our own formularies, must be met; and we conclude the appeal to symbolic authority with a testimony which, in our former discussion, we deemed too familiarly known to be expressly cited—that of the Westminster Standards:

"After God had made all other creatures, he created man male and female, with reasonable and immortal souls, endued with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, after his own image, having the law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfil it; and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject unto change. Beside this law written in their hearts, they received a command not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; which while they kept they were happy in their communion with God and had dominion over the creatures."†

**Ibid.*, pp. 732, 733. †*Conf. of Faith*, c. IV., §2.

“Having the law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfil it.”*

“Man in his state of innocency had freedom and power to will and to do that which is good and well-pleasing to God; but yet mutably, so that he might fall from it.”

“Man, by his fall into a state of sin and death, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation.”†

“Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the estate wherein they were created, by sinning against God.”‡

“God gave to Adam a law, as a covenant of works, by which he bound him and all his posterity to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience; promised life upon the fulfilling, and threatened death upon the breach of it; and endued him with power and ability to keep it.”§

It has been not unfrequently said that the Westminster Standards are neutral in regard to the question between Supralapsarians and Sublapsarians, and in relation to the controversy about Philosophical Necessity. We are not now directly concerned about the former of these affirmations, although indirectly we are; for we are thoroughly satisfied of the correctness of Sir James Mackintosh's opinion, that no Calvinistic Determinist can logically refuse to be a Supralapsarian; and the brother whose criticisms we are now considering is, we think, an instance of its truth. He supports his Determinism against theological objections, grounded in the Sublapsarian view, by boldly appealing to Supralapsarian principles. We admire his consistency, if we cannot his doctrine. He does not, as some others, avow a Sublapsarian theology and a Determinist philosophy, between which there is as much harmony as between Joab and Amasa.

We take issue, however, very distinctly with the assertion of the neutrality of the Calvinistic symbols in general, or of the Westminster Standards in particular, in reference to the Determinist controversy. Principal Cunningham has an elaborate discussion to prove this thesis. If we had room we would like to subject his argument to a searching examination, but we have not; and must restrict what we have to say further to a few concise comments on the passages cited from the Westminster Stand-

**Larg. Cat.*, Q. 17. †*Conf. of Faith*, C. IX., §§2, 3.

‡*Shorter Cat.*, Ques. 13. *Larg. Cat.*, Ques. 21.

§*Conf. of Faith*, C. XIX., §1.

ards, in which, we are confident, their inconsistency with the principles of Determinism, so far as the question of the will is concerned, will be made to appear.

In the first place, these standards unmistakably declare that man at first had freedom of will; that our first parents were left to the liberty or freedom of their own will; and that the will of man is endued with a natural liberty. Here it is plainly asserted that freedom or liberty is a property of the will. Now the Determinist flatly denies this. He contends that freedom is a property of the man, and not of the will. The man is a free agent, but the will is not free. Edwards ridicules the notion that the will can be free. Are we dreaming when we say that these views are palpably opposed to each other? Are is and is not the same thing? Is an affirmative proposition neutral in relation to its negative?

In the second place, the standards affirm that man in innocency had freedom to will and to do, etc. They assert the freedom of the man both in willing and in doing. Now the Determinist affirms that freedom or liberty consists only in doing as one has willed, not in willing and doing. We have already cited the definition of Edwards and the admission of our critic to prove this. Here, then, we have again two affirmations that are utterly opposed to each other.

In the third place, the standards expressly declare that man at first had power to fulfil or keep the law of God. The Determinist denies that he had such power. For if he had, he might have kept the law and been justified. But he was under a necessity of sinning resulting from the fixed operation of God's fore-ordaining purpose through the imperfection of his make. Man therefore could not have had a power to fulfil the law which might have defeated God's purpose. Now then we have the propositions before us: Man had power to keep the law; man had not power to keep the law. Can the former of these be neutral to the latter? Or can they agree? Only when *est* and *non est* can be reconciled or be neutral towards each other.

In the fourth place, the standards employ the terms liberty of the will, power of the will, ability of the will, interchangeably.

They evidently make no difference between them. But Determinists insist on a difference between ability and liberty. We encounter then another contradiction.

In the fifth place, the standards assert, as to man in innocence, that there was a possibility of transgressing, thus implicitly affirming that there was a possibility of not transgressing. The Determinist asserts that there was a necessity of transgressing. Here is another contradiction. The Determinist affirms the impossibility of not transgressing, which adds still another contradiction to the growing catalogue.

In the sixth place, the standards evidently represent the will, in consequence of its mutability—its liability to change, as the seat of the cause which produced the first sin. The Determinist denies this, but lodges the mutability primarily in the nature, extraneously to the will. The will must be held to be the mere instrument used by the other faculties; hence the origin of the first sin must have lain back of the will. In this we descry another contradiction. In fact, the standards take the common sense ground that the nature of the soul must include the spontaneous disposition of the will, while the consistent Determinist represents it as excluding that disposition. The will is no sharer of the nature; it is extra-natural, and the mere hand of the nature! We can see how the nature lies back of and influences the decisions or acts of the will—the volitions; but then the nature includes the *habitus* of the will itself. This is the view taken by the standards and rejected by consistent Determinists.

In the seventh place, there is an irreconcilable difference between the doctrine of our standards and that of Determinism, as expounded by President Edwards, in regard to the question whether man, in innocence, possessed the power of otherwise determining than he actually did, that is, the power of contrary choice in relation to the alternatives of holiness and sin. We need not state particularly the Determinist position on this question. It is familiar to all that it wholly denies the possibility of such a power. Edwards pronounces it absurd. Adam who did actually choose sin could not have chosen not to sin. His sin was unavoidable, as the result of a philosophical necessity oper-

ating through his spontaneity upon his will. This we have denied, and for doing so are criticised as being in opposition to our standards. Now let us collect the statements which bear upon the point: Man was made in the image of God, endued with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, had the law of God written on his heart and power to fulfil it. So says the Confession in one place. In another it declares that God endued man with power and ability to keep the law. He had "the law of God written on" his "heart, and power to fulfil it." So says the Larger Catechism. Again, the Confession says that man had freedom and power to will and to do that which is good and well-pleasing to God; and further, that he hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good. Man had power to fulfil the law; power and ability to keep it; freedom and power to will and to do what was right; and ability of will to spiritual good—for if he has lost that ability, he must have had it to lose. Here, then is power, ability, freedom—more. ability and freedom of will, to choose holiness. He who can deny that the standards affirm that man had that power and freedom, can deny the plainest statements. But on the other hand, it is a fact that man did choose sin. How can the fact be accounted for? The standards say that being left to the freedom of his will, he fell; that his power to fulfil, to keep, the law was possessed under a possibility of his transgressing, because he was left to the liberty of his own will, which was subject to change; that he had freedom and power to will and to do what was right, mutably, so that he might fall from it. He might stand, yet he might fall; he might will and do right, yet he might will and do wrong; he might choose holiness, yet he might choose sin. When then he did sin, might he not have done otherwise? If so, although the terms *power of contrary choice* are not used—and we care for the thing, not the words—the power itself is so plainly asserted that he that runs may read. To sum up the matter: the standards say that Adam in innocence had the power of otherwise determining than he did; the Determinist says that he had not that power. The two doctrines are contradictory and mutually exclusive. We must make our election; and as, when we found Calvin and Edwards opposed to

each other, we went with Calvin, so now we go with the Calvinistic standards rather than with the Deterministic philosophy. The difficulty is not that we have departed from Calvin and the Calvinistic formularies, but that we have too faithfully employed their doctrine in regard to the determining effect of man's first unnecessitated decision of the will for sin upon human guilt and corruption—a doctrine which dissipates the metaphysical speculations of Determinism as the rising sun dispels a morning mist.

We close with two brief but striking testimonies from illustrious Calvinists, whose shoes we would be willing to bear. The first is from Dr. John Witherspoon, a successor of the great Edwards in the presidential chair at Princeton:

"It is remarkable that the advocates for necessity have adopted a distinction made use of for other purposes, and forced it into their service: I mean moral and natural necessity—they say natural or physical necessity takes away liberty, but moral necessity does not—at the same time they explain moral necessity so as to make it truly physical or natural. That is physical necessity which is the invincible effect of the law of nature, and it is neither less natural nor less unsurmountable if it is from the laws of spirit, than it would be if it were from the laws of matter."*

The other testimony is from Dr. Thornwell, whose admiration for Calvin amounted to a passion, and who made the *Institutes* his text book of theological instruction.

"The theory of Edwards breaks down. (1.) It does not explain guilt: it does not rid God [of the charge] of being the author of sin. (2.) It does not explain the moral value attached to character. (3.) This theory explains self-expression, but not self-determination. Now a just view must show how we first *determine*, and then habitually express ourselves. In these determinations is found the moral significance of these expressions. Otherwise my nature would be no more than the nature of a plant. . . . The province of the will [in man's state of innocence] was to *determine*, that is, to root and ground these principles as a fixed nature. There was power to do so. When so determined, a holy necessity would have risen as to the perfection of our being. There was also the possibility of determining otherwise—a power of perverting our nature, of determining it in another direction. . . . In the moral sphere, and especially in relation to single acts, this freedom is now seen in man."†

* *Works*, Vol. IV., *Lecture on Divinity*, XIII., p. 89.

† *Coll. Writings*, Vol. I., pp. 250, 251.

We are not a Libertarian, nor do we pretend to erect a philosophy of the will. No Necessitarian affirms more positively than we do the dreadful fact of the necessity which holds the will of the unregenerate man in chains of bondage to sin. But we protest against the employment of this fact as a basis for a tremendous philosophical generalisation under which all the other facts of man's moral history—the fact of the first human sin and the fact of man's present agency in the merely natural sphere—are to be reduced. The scheme of Philosophical Necessity, especially in the hands of Edwards, is an instance of brilliant thinking, and owed its religious application to a laudable intention; but the Calvinistic Theology, grounding itself in the sure word of prophecy, may well say to the advocates of that system, *Non tali auxilio nec defensoribus istis!*

We think we can, without arrogance, claim that we have proved: that Calvin was not "as rigorous an advocate of Determinism as Edwards himself"; that we have closely adhered to his doctrine of the will; that, in the views we have maintained, we have not contravened, but represented, the great Calvinistic symbols, and that, consequently, we have not inculcated "a new theology."

We had hoped to be able to discuss other points in the allegation (which we have considered only in one aspect), especially the indictment of us for not being Supralapsarians as well as Determinists, and for departing from Calvin and the Calvinistic standards in advocating Sublapsarianism, and the existence particularly of a permissive decree in relation to man's first sin. The consideration of these points we must reserve for another opportunity.

[NOTE.—We take occasion here to correct an error in the first Article of this series on the Will. It occurs on page 621, Vol. XXX.: "The question has often been discussed whether desire belongs to the feelings or the will. Hamilton, in his Lectures, which were his earliest productions, assigns it to the former category, but in his Notes to Reid, to the latter." Through inadvertency of some sort, "former" was placed where "latter" ought to have been, and *vice versa*. The reference is given in a foot note to the passage in Hamilton's Reid, which is: "This is virtually to identify Desire and Will, which is contrary to truth and our author's own doctrine." The intention was to say that Hamilton in his Lectures

assigned desire to the will, but in his Reid to the feelings. We were led to suppose this, because in his Lectures he classed desire with will, in contradistinction from the feelings, and in his Reid sharply discriminated desire from will. A more attentive examination of his position has convinced us that he made the Conative Powers generic, with Desire and Will contained under them as species; and, consequently, that in excluding desire from the feelings, he did not assign it to the will specifically, but to the Conative Powers: and that in refusing to refer it to the will, he did not class it with the feelings.]

J. L. GIRARDEAU.

ARTICLE II.

RATIONALISM IN THE CHURCH *versus* RATIONALISM WITHOUT.

Idleness, faithlessness to duty, and discontent, are prone to lay the blame of failure at the door of "the times"; to exalt the past at the expense of the present, and to croak over the degeneracy of these latter days as compared with the purity and power, the vigor and virtue of days gone by. The writer of this article in the outset distinctly disavows such a tendency. He firmly believes that men give tone to the times and not the times to men; that the human race, as a race, is as teachable, as ready to receive and apply the truth as it ever has been. Whenever a teacher rises up with the credentials of his commission in the truth of his message, in the earnestness of its delivery and in that self-abnegation of life which attests the singleness of his motive, he lacks not listeners, and one age gives as good audience as another. There are occasional exceptions to be met with here and there in the long line of teachers, whose excellence makes them the contemporaries of all time; all men claim them and all countries recognise them; but these are rare, and the exception is not so much in the pupils as in the teacher. The great average of the world is just as wise, just as pure as ever it was; and while some particular species of error may be more prominent in one age than in the preceding, yet on the whole, truth is equally as

THE SOUTHERN
PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW,

VOL. XXXI.—NO. 2.

APRIL, MDCCCLXXX.

ARTICLE I.

LECKY'S HISTORY OF EUROPEAN MORALS.

History of European Morals. From Augustus to Charlemagne.
By WM. EDWARD HARTPOLE LECKY, M. A. Third Edition,
revised, in two volumes. New York: D. Appleton & Co.

It may seem rather late in the day to notice this work of Mr. Leckie—a work which has been for years before the public, and has passed through several editions in this country as well as in England. But the fact that new editions are demanded is evidence that the book continues to be read, and if still read, its statements and arguments ought still to be subjected to critical examination.

Certainly it is no light undertaking which Mr. Lecky sets before himself. His history extends over a vast tract of time; and whilst it passes by changes merely political or social, it presents that aspect of the European world, the faithful portraiture of which requires of the historian the exercise of some of the noblest and rarest qualities of intellect and heart. To be satisfactory, such a history must embrace an accurate delineation of the moral facts which gave its own character to each of the successive periods constituting the whole term surveyed; and what involves far greater difficulty—it must explain these facts, bring-

ARTICLE VII.

THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL IN ITS THEOLOGICAL RELATIONS.

The charge has been made against our views, as maintained in former discussions in the pages of this REVIEW, touching the will of Adam in relation to his first sin, that they are out of harmony with the doctrine of Calvin and the Calvinistic standards. It consisted, in substance, of two particular allegations: 1. That our position that the first sin of man was the result of an unnecessitated and avoidable decision of the will, as contrary to the theory of Determinism or Philosophical Necessity, was uncalvinistic. This allegation we endeavored to refute in the last number of this REVIEW. It was shown, by a very full reference to the writings of Calvin and the Formularies of the Reformed Church, especially the Westminster standards, that in departing from the Necessitarian philosophy as applied to the first sin of the race, we had closely adhered to the great Reformer and the Symbols of the Calvinistic churches. We venture to express the hope that the exposition then elaborately furnished will call attention to the difference, so little noticed and yet so important, between Calvinism as a doctrinal system and the philosophical hypothesis of Determinism.

2. The second allegation is, that we have been equally uncalvinistic in our position in regard to the relation of the divine decree to the first sin of man. This we promised, with the leave of Providence, to consider at some future time, and we now proceed, in reliance upon God's help, to redeem the pledge. It is necessary, in order to avoid confusion and misapprehension, to clear the way by stating the points in reference to which there is no controversy between our critic and ourselves. It were worse than idle to contend about issues that have only an imaginary existence. We both profess to be Calvinists, and, as a matter of course, there must be much ground which will be conceded to be common betwixt us.

In the first place, there is no dispute between us in regard to

the scope of the divine decrees. We both accept the statement of the Westminster Assembly's Shorter Catechism, in which the decrees of God are defined to be "his eternal purpose according to the counsel of his will, whereby, for his own glory; he hath fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass"; and also hold that whatsoever he has fore-ordained "he freely and unchangeably fore-ordained." We differ, it appears, concerning the nature of this fore-ordination; our critic considering it as exclusively efficacious, and we distributing it into efficacious and permissive. There is a corresponding agreement and difference touching the scope of God's providence, as executive of his decrees.

In the second place, there is no difference between us in reference to the absolute and sovereign nature of the divine decrees as related to the acts of creatures. Whether they may be conditioned one by another is a question which has not so far been raised in this discussion. Particularly is there no divergence of view in respect to the absolute and unconditional nature of the special decree of Election; both maintaining the position, that it is in no degree grounded in, or conditioned by, the foresight of faith and good works and perseverance in the same. We would be at one in asserting that this decree is wholly efficacious. Nor is there any disagreement as to the fact of Reprobation; but there is, as to its relations—we affirming that the sin which it supposes was permissively, our critic, that it was efficaciously, fore-ordained; in other words, we denying, and he affirming, that the first sin was necessitated by the divine decree.

In the third place, we have no controversy either as to the fact or the scope of the divine fore-knowledge, both holding that it includes all things—beings, events, and acts. The difference between us concerning the relation of God's fore-knowledge to his decrees will enter into the matter of the ensuing discussion.

In the fourth place, there is no debate betwixt us—although our brother has intimated the contrary—in regard to the extension of the principle of cause to every event that has occurred or can occur. We agree that an uncaused event would be equivalent to the contradiction of an uncaused effect. We have never dreamed of denying, and in our previous articles expressly said

that we did not deny, that everything which comes to pass must have a cause for its existence. We differ as to the nature of second causes: we affirming that some are necessary and others are contingent, and the reviewer obliterating this distinction and maintaining that all second causes as media through which the divine efficiency exerts itself are characterised by necessity. He limits the term *contingent* to events, and by a contingent event understands one which has no cause. We extend the term to causes, and by a contingent cause mean one which may or may not produce a particular effect; and by a contingent event, one which may or may not be produced by its appropriate cause. The Confession of Faith asserts that the "contingency of second causes" is not taken away by God's eternal ordination, but rather established.*

Let it be observed, then, that we do not differ as to the scope of God's decrees as terminating on whatsoever comes to pass; nor as to their absolute nature as related to all beings, acts, and events; nor as to the scope of the divine knowledge as embracing all possible and actual things, past, present, and future; nor as to the extension of the law of cause to every thing which begins to be, either in the realm of matter or in that of mind. Let us look now at the precise state of the question which remains to be discussed. In the prosecution of the argument intended to show that the Determinist philosophy, or, as it is frequently termed, the doctrine of Philosophical Necessity, breaks down in its application to the first sin of the race, and therefore fails to ground the guilt of mankind and to acquit God of the imputation of being the author of sin, we were led to consider the relation of the divine decrees to the Fall. We maintained that God neither decreed efficiently to produce the sin of Adam, nor efficaciously to procure its commission, nor to render it unavoidable by a con-created necessity of nature; but that he decreed to permit it; so that while he did not determine to prevent it, which he might have done, he, in that sense, willed its occurrence rather than its non-occurrence; yet so moreover that it was committed by a free, that is, an unnecessitated and avoidable decision of man's will. The reviewer

* Chap. III., § 1.

arraigns the orthodoxy of this position, by denying the legitimacy of the distinction between efficacious and permissive decrees, by affirming that all decree is efficacious and necessitates the occurrence of every thing which begins to be, and by contending that unless all events were made certain by efficacious decree, some events would be uncertain to God himself, and his foreknowledge of them would be impossible. The exact question, therefore, in the continuation of our defence, is, Have we taken uncalvinistic and untrue ground in contending that God, in decreeing to permit the first sin of man, did not *make* its occurrence certain, or, in other words, did not necessitate its commission?

We propose, first, to vindicate the distinction, which the reviewer impeaches, between efficacious and permissive decree, particularly as applicable to man's first sin. It is impossible to mistake his position in this matter. He charges that we take refuge "under the cover of permissive decrees"; attempts explicitly to prove that "the notion of" permissive decrees is inconsistent with the doctrine of fore-ordination, and the fact of the certainty of future events; and boldly maintains the view that the will of God is the sole efficient cause of all that comes to pass. Whatever may be our difference with him, we must give him the credit of consistency in the maintenance of this tenet. He does not profess sublapsarian principles and use supralapsarian arguments. He intrepidly plants himself on the unmodified ground of the Necessitarian in philosophy, and the Supralapsarian in theology. The argument is short and lucid. God is the efficient cause of all things; sin is a thing; therefore, God is the efficient cause of sin. It is true that he endeavors to disjoin the moral quality of sin from the act of sin, and thus to represent man as the author of the quality, and God as the author of the act. Fairness compels us to accredit to him this distinction; and we shall notice it in a subsequent part of these remarks. But at present we must "stick to our last"—the distinction between efficacious and permissive decrees, which we affirm and the reviewer denies. We regard it as vital, and he as worthless. We shall adopt a brief, but conclusive method of proving that we are not uncalvinistic upon this point. If we can succeed in showing,

by an appeal to their own writings, that the distinction in question is held, not by the host of Sublapsarians—that would be conceded—but by the Supralapsarians themselves, we will have fairly proved that the reviewer has not even a minority of Calvinists on his side. This we proceed to do. Our first reference is to one who may be taken to be among the Supralapsarians what Leibnitz pronounced Hobbes to be in relation to the Nominalists—*nominalibus ipsis nominaliorem*. We need scarcely say that we allude to the learned Moderator of the Westminster Assembly—Dr. Twisse. We give several passages so as to show that we cite his catholic doctrine:

“1. According to my ordering of the decrees divine: In no moment of nature or reason is the decree of damnation precedent to the decree of permitting infidelity [unbelief], or leaving the infidelity of some men uncured, to wit, by denying them faith, by denying the grace of regeneration. But the decrees of creating all in Adam, of permitting all to fall in Adam, in bringing all men forth into the world in the state of original sin, of leaving this original sin uncured in them, and last of all of damning them for their sins, etc.

“2. According to the Contra-Remonstrants' tenet [tenet], I answer: Many of them do not maintain that infidelity is consequent to the decree of damnation, but in the foresight of God precedent rather; as appears by the British divines their *Theses de Reprobatione*, and Alvarez professeth the same. The denial of grace and so the permitting of natural infidelity to remain uncured they make consequent (as it seems) to a negative decree of denying glory. And to the decree of permitting infidelity they make the foresight of infidelity subsequent; and this foresight of infidelity they make precedent to Reprobation, as it signifies the decree of damnation. And thus far I agree with them: that in no moment of nature, or sign of reason, did God ordain any man to damnation but for sin; and consequently in no moment of nature, or sign of reason, did the decree of damnation go before the foresight of sin or infidelity.”*

“I willingly grant that the determination of the end doth necessarily involve the means, that not only precede but procure the end. But I will utterly deny that sin is the means of damnation; we say rather that permission of sin is the means, whence notwithstanding it follows not that sin shall come to pass unavoidably, but rather avoidably, whether we consider the free will of man or the decree of God; for every particular sinful act is a natural thing, and undoubtedly man hath free will as to do, so to abstain from doing, any particular act. And albeit God hath

**Riches of God's Love*, Oxford, 1653, Bk. I., p. 69.

determined that these particular sinful acts (instance the particular outrages committed against the holy Son of God by Herod, Pontius Pilate, together with the Gentiles and people of Israel) shall come to pass by his permission; yet seeing withal he hath ordained them to come to pass contingently, that follows that they shall come to pass in such a manner as joined with a possibility of not coming to pass; otherwise they should come to pass not contingently but necessarily."*

"All that he [Dr. Twisse's opponent] hath to say to excuse his shameless crimination . . . is only this, that our divines maintain the decree of damnation to precede the foresight of sin. Yet this is untrue of the most part of them; who permit both the foresight of sin original before reprobation from grace, and of sin actual before the decree of damnation. I willingly confess, for my part, that I concur with neither; and if I should, I would withal make the decree of permitting of sin to precede the decree of damnation, for which I see no reason; but yet I do not make the decree of permitting sin to follow the decree of damnation. I hold these decrees to be simultaneous, thus: that God at once decrees both to create men, and to suffer them to fall in Adam," etc.†

"God will have the good things of the world, whether natural, moral, or spiritual, come to pass by his working of them; only evil things he will have come to pass by his permitting them."‡

It is not our business to attempt a reconciliation of Dr. Twisse's contradictory statements—that sin when permitted is avoidable, conceived either in relation to man's free will or to God's decree, and that at the same time it must come to pass in consequence of God's permission. All that we wish to show is the fact, that this eminent Supralapsarian recognised and enforced the distinction between efficacious and permissive decrees—between God's working and permitting—a distinction ridiculed by our reviewer. Our next witness shall be the celebrated William Perkins:

"Sin is governed of God by two actions: the first is an operative permission. I so call it because God partly permitted sin and partly worketh in it. . . . Every quality or action, so far forth as it is a quality or action, is existing in nature and hath God to be the author of it. . . . In respect of the breach of the law itself, God neither willeth, nor appointeth, nor commandeth, nor causeth, nor helpeth sin, but forbiddeth, condemneth and punisheth it; yet so as withal he willingly permitteth it to be done by others, as men and wicked angels, they being the sole authors and causes of it. And this permission by God is upon a good end: because thereby he

**Ibid.*, Book II., page 24. †*Ibid.*, Book II., page 30.

‡*Ibid.*, Book II., page 55.

manifesteth his justice and mercy. . . God's second action in the government of sin is, after the just permission of it, partly to restrain it more or less, according to his good will and pleasure, and partly to dispose and turn it," etc.*

"The inward cause [of sin] was the will of our first parents. . . But it may be objected that if Adam were created good, he could not be the cause of his own fall, because a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit. *Answer*: I. Freedom of his will is fourfold; first: freedom to evil alone. This is only in wicked men and angels, and is indeed a bondage. The second is freedom to good alone; and that is in God and the good angels by God's grace. The third is freedom to good in part, joined with some want of liberty by reason of sin; and this is in the regenerate in this life. The fourth is freedom either to good or evil indifferently; and this was in Adam before his fall, who, though he had no inclination to sin, but only to that which was acceptable to God, yet was he not bound by any necessity, but had his liberty freely to choose or refuse either good or evil. And this is evident by the very tenor of God's commandment, in which he forbids Adam to eat the forbidden fruit; and thereby showing that he, being created righteous, and not prone to sin, had power to keep or not to keep the commandment; though since the Fall both he and we after him cannot but sin. Wherefore Adam being allured by Satan, of his own free accord changed himself, and fell from God. Now then as the good tree changed from good to evil brings forth evil fruit, so Adam by his own inward and free motion changing from good to evil brings forth evil fruit.

"As for God, he is not to be reputed as an author or cause any way of this sin, for he created Adam and Eve righteous, endued them with righteous wills, and he told them what he would exact and what they could perform. . . Some may say, Whereas God foresaw that Adam would abuse the liberty of his will, why would he not prevent it? *Answer*: There is a double grace: the one to be able to will and do that which is good; the other to be able to persevere in willing and doing the same. Now God gave the first to Adam and not the second; and he is not to be blamed of us, though he confirmed him not with new grace, for he is debtor to no man to give him so much as the least grace; whereas he had already given a plentiful measure thereof to him. . . There is a double liberty of will. One is to will good or evil; this belongs to the creature in this world, and therefore Adam received it. The other is to will good alone. That he wanted, because it is reserved to the life to come. . . Although he [God] did foresee man's defection, yet is he free from all blame in not preventing it. For with him there be good causes of permitting evil. And though God be no cause of man's fall, yet must we not imagine that it came to pass by chance or fortune, whereas the least things that

* *Works*, London, 1635, p. 156.

are come to pass with God's providence. Neither was it by any bare permission, without his decree and will; for that is to make an idle providence. Neither did it happen against the will of God, he utterly nilling it, for then it could not have been, unless we deny God to be omnipotent. It remains therefore that this fall did so proceed of the voluntary motion of Adam, as that God did in part ordain and will the permitting of it."*

"We must make distinction between sin in itself and the permission thereof; and between the decree of rejection and actual damnation. Now the permission of sin, and not sin itself properly, is the subordinate means of the decree of rejection. For when God had decreed to pass by some men, he withal decreed the permission of sin, to which permission men were ordained; and sin itself is no effect, but only the consequent of the decree; yet so as it is not only the antecedent, but also the efficient and meritorious cause of actual damnation."†

We next cite two brief but explicit passages from the learned Dr. Gill:

"Everything that comes to pass in this world, from the beginning to the end of it, is pre-ordained; everything good and bad: good, by his effective decrees, that is, such by which he determines what he will do himself, or shall be done by others; and evil things, by his permissive decrees, by which he suffers things to be done; yea, things contingent, which with respect to second causes may seem to be or not be, as the free actions of men."‡

"The decree of election may be distinguished into the decree of the end, and the decree of the means. The decree of the end, respecting some, is either subordinate to their eternal happiness; or ultimate, which is more properly the end, the glory of God. . . The decree of the means includes the decree to create men, to permit them to fall," etc.||

The only other British theologian who shall be summoned to testify is the able and rigid Supralapsarian—John Brine:

"God decreed to condemn no man but for sin, or without the consideration of sin. And though sin certainly follows upon God's decree to permit it, his decree to permit it gives not being to it, and therefore he is not the cause of it. . . The being of sin follows upon God's will to permit it. 'Tis not what he effects, but what he permits, and therefore though its being is certain yet men act it freely and without any compulsion. . . God's decree of the being of sin gives not being to it, and therefore God cannot justly be considered as the author of it. The divine decree to permit man to sin has no influence upon his will in sinning. . . Though sin certainly follows upon God's decree of the permission of it, yet the

**Ibid.*, pp. 160, 161. †*Ibid.*, p. 238.

‡*Body of Divinity*, London, 1796, Vol. I., p. 255. ||*Ibid.*, p. 267.

will of man freely and not necessarily chooses sin. . . He [Baxter] adds, 'God suspends his own operation, so as not to necessitate the will.' This is very impertinently observed; for it is not apprehended [by Supralapsarians] that the will is necessitated to make the evil choice it does in sin. . . God must have willed the being of sin . . . but, as we say, with a will permitting, not effecting."*

Even Theodore Beza, one of the few continental Supralapsarians of note, grants, to some extent,† the distinction in question. He opposes an unwilling permission of sin on God's part—and in this all Calvinists would agree with him—but appears to allow a willing permission: "For even," says he, "if you should betake yourself to permission, the only asylum of some in this discussion, you must come back to this, either to deny the omnipotence of God if he unwillingly permitted, or to confess that he willed to permit (*volentem permisisse*)."‡ The absurd doctrine, that the Almighty unwillingly permits anything to come to pass, we relinquish to the tender mercies of the Supralapsarian. Beza may rend it to his heart's content. And so with the tenet of a bare permission—*nuda permissio*. But the question is, whether even the Supralapsarians did not acknowledge a distinction between a decree to effect and a decree to permit. And that Beza, uncompromising as he was, conceded that distinction even in the relation of decree to the sins of the wicked, let the following passage testify. After justly exploding the distinction between permission and will (*permissio et voluntas*), he says:

"It remains, therefore, that what he permits, he wills to permit. . . God hardens whom he will, not indeed by engendering (*ingenerando*)

* *Works*, London, 1746, Vol. I., pp. 311, 327, 334, 337.

† "The Supralapsarians have always been a small minority among Calvinistic divines, and have had to defend their views against the great body of their brethren. . . In addition to Beza the most eminent men who defended Supralapsarian views in the sixteenth century were Whitaker and Perkins. . . Supralapsarianism has not again been advocated by any very eminent theologian in England except Twisse. The eminent men who most elaborately and zealously defended Supralapsarianism in the seventeenth century were Gomarus, Twisse, and Voetius. . . That the great body of the members of the Synod [of Dort] were Sublapsarians is certain." Cunningham's *Reformers*, pp. 363, 366, 367.

‡ Comm. in Rom. xi. 11.

some new wickedness in them, in like manner as he efficiently produces (*effects: efficit*) new strength in the elect whom he changes; nor even by compelling them, since no one sins except willingly: but first indeed by more and more abandoning them already corrupt, and then by efficaciously delivering them, as a most righteous judge, to the lusts of their own hearts and also to Satan.'*

It would be as well a needless task as an infiction upon our readers to cite the authority of Sublapsarian theologians or formularies in support of the distinction between a decree to effect and a decree to permit. We have sufficiently proved that it is a Calvinistic determination, by showing that it was held even by the Supralapsarians themselves; and in the light of this fact we confess that the allegation that we have been uncalvinistic in maintaining it, passes our comprehension, except in accordance with the adage, *lucus a non lucendo*—we are uncalvinistic for agreeing with all Calvinists!

But it will be said that although the Supralapsarians allowed the distinction between effectuation and permission, they, at the same time, held that the decree to permit the first sin was necessarily followed by the commission of that sin. We do not deny that such a position was maintained by most if not all of them; on the contrary, we cannot see how it could be logically avoided as a consequence from their fundamental and characteristic assumption, that the decree to elect and reprobate preceded the decree to create. If, as they hold, God determined to glorify his mercy and justice in the salvation and destruction of men before they were conceived as created or fallen, creation and the fall were necessitated in order to the attainment of that end. Hence it is, we presume, that the two late American theologians, Hodge and Thornwell, threw out of account the element of permission in their estimate of the Supralapsarian scheme. Their analysis and discussion of that system would be unfair, were they not justified in treating as an illogical and irrelevant interjection into it of a merely nominal permission of the Fall. Their statement of the order of the divine decrees from the Supralapsarian point of view was: Predestination, Creation, the Fall, Redemption, and Voca-

**Com. in Rom. ix. 18.*

tion; not Predestination, Creation, Permission of the Fall, etc. All their arguments against the scheme are based upon the supposition, that it involves the necessitation of the Fall as a means to an end. Still it must be admitted, that the Supralapsarian divines themselves expressly contended for the decree to permit the Fall. We have, therefore, legitimately quoted them as distinguishing formally between the decree to effect and the decree to permit. It is not our purpose, just at this point, to expose the fatal contradiction which emerges in the very bosom of the scheme; nor to refute the scholastic hypothesis by which its advocates endeavored to remove that contradiction and to reconcile permission with necessitation, namely, that God efficiently produced the act of the first sin as a positive entity and therefore good, but he permitted man to produce the evil quality which belonged to the act. We design just now to examine Calvin's position in regard to this matter, both because it is a question intrinsically interesting to every Calvinist, and because it bears directly upon the intimation that we have departed from his doctrine.

We take occasion here to say that while we cherish the profoundest admiration for the writings of the illustrious Reformer, and rejoice when we can support our positions with the weight of his great name, we cannot regard his works as exclusively the norm of Calvinism. Connect the latter part of the sixteenth century with the seventeenth, as he himself does in another place, and we concur with Dr. A. A. Hodge, who, in his very able work on the Atonement, in speaking to the question, What is Calvinism? says: "The title Calvinism has—whether with propriety or not, nevertheless as a fixed fact—been given to a definite system, which possesses an identity of character and of history independent of any single man that ever lived. . . . We lay it down, therefore, as a canon, which no student of historical theology will care to deny, that the common consent of the Reformed Churches during the seventeenth century, as witnessed in their creeds and in the writings of their representative theologians, is the standard of Calvinism."* We are obliged to as-

* Pp. 391, 392. We are of opinion that his remark in reference to Calvin that "all the world knows that as a predestinarian he went to the length of Supralapsarianism" needs to be qualified.

sign to the writings of Calvin a principal place as a factor in the production of the system which bears his name; but one's difference from some of his doctrines does not necessarily rule the dissentient out of the Calvinistic ranks. We have shown that we have inculcated precisely his views in regard to the freedom of the will. We now proceed to inquire what was his position as to the order of the divine decrees, and as to the object of predestination, so far as man is concerned. Was Calvin a Supralapsarian or a Sublapsarian? Whatever may be the interest which may be conceived to attach to this question, it is one the consideration of which the requirements of this discussion exact from us. Nor are we reluctant to encounter it, from the conviction that it is obsolete and needless. We by no means think so. Calvin, we are satisfied, has been greatly misunderstood and misrepresented. It is of consequence that his opinions, especially in regard to the subject of the divine decrees, constituting as they do, to a large extent, the differentiating element of the Calvinistic body, should be clearly understood and exhibited. We are inclined to think that much confusion and much trouble would have been saved, if Calvin's doctrine had always been distinguished from that of his contemporary and successor, Theodore Beza. Indeed, we think it questionable whether, if Beza had not taught Supralapsarianism at Geneva, Arminius would have been bold enough to inculcate Arminianism at Leyden. We have been led to think so from an attentive examination of the Conference between Arminius and Francis Junius. Even Dr. Cunningham, although, as we have seen, he considered the controversy of but little consequence, could use such language as this; "Beza, then, in his explicit advocacy of Supralapsarianism, went beyond his master. We do not regard this among the services which he rendered to scriptural truth; especially as we are bound in candor to admit, that there is some ground to believe that his high views upon this subject exerted a repelling influence upon the mind of Arminius, who studied under him for a time at Geneva."*

The question is not a new one. It has been discussed by

* *Reformers, etc.*, p. 366.

Sublapsarians, Supralapsarians, and Arminians; by the first two of these classes from a desire to possess the support of Calvin's authority for their respective views, by the last for the purpose of bringing his name into public reproach. But canvassed as it formerly was, we have our doubts whether the evidence in the case was exhaustively presented. At least the sublapsarian claim to Calvin's support can be more amply sustained than by the citations from his writings which were collected by Turretin. It may be expedient, for the sake of clearness, to state the difference between the supralapsarian and the sublapsarian doctrines. The peculiar position of the Supralapsarian is, that out of the mass of men conceived as not yet created, but as to be created—*ex pura massa*—God from eternity predestinated some to salvation and some to destruction. The peculiar position of the Sublapsarian is, that out of the mass of men conceived as already fallen and corrupt—*ex corrupta massa*—God from eternity predestinated some to salvation and some to destruction. There is a third position held by some Supralapsarians, namely, that the object of predestination was man conceived as created, but not yet fallen. But the main issue is between the advocates of the first two which have been mentioned. We begin our attempt to show that Calvin held, although not nominally, yet really, the sublapsarian doctrine, with the well known passage from Turretin :

‘That Calvin followed the opinion received in our churches touching the object of predestination can be very clearly collected from many places, especially in his book *On Eternal Predestination*, p. 978. ‘When the discussion is concerning predestination,’ says he, ‘I have always steadfastly taught, and to this day teach, that it begins hence: that all the reprobate, who died and were condemned in Adam, were justly left in death.’ And afterwards: ‘It becomes us to touch upon this question only sparingly, not because it is abstruse and hidden in the inmost recess of God's sanctuary, but because an idle curiosity is not to be promoted, of which excessive speculation is at once the nursing and the nurse. The discussion of the other part is attended with greater profit, namely, that from the condemned offspring of Adam God elects whom he pleases, and whom he pleases reprobates. Upon this doctrine, which contains in itself the assertion of the corruption and guilt of human nature, I the more freely insist, as one which is not only more conducive to piety, but one also which is more strictly theological.’ So *Institutes*

Book III., Ch. XXII., §§1 and 7, and Ch. XXIII., §3: 'If all are chosen out of the corrupt mass, it is no wonder that all are subject to condemnation.' So also he thinks that Paul in the ninth chapter of Romans speaks of the corrupt mass, in commenting upon which passage, among other things, he says: 'It is true that the proximate cause of reprobation is, that all are accursed in Adam.' In this judgment of the great theologian, which corresponds with Article XII. of the Gallican Confession, and also with the deliverance of the Synod of Dort, we entirely concur, and are of opinion that all who would think soberly ought to concur."*

To these testimonies we add others, in order to show that these were not exceptional utterances of Calvin, but represent his uniform teaching.

"He [Pighius] laughs at Augustin and those like him, that is, all the pious, who imagine that God, after he had foreknown the ruin of the whole human race in the person of Adam, destined some to life and others to destruction."†

"But Pighius still insists that they [the reprobate, according to Calvin's doctrine] were made, not found, worthy of destruction; as if indeed it were true, that I teach that those who perish were destined to death in the eternal purpose of God, of which the reason is not apparent. I answer, that here three things must be taken into consideration: first, that the eternal predestination of God which determined what would come to pass concerning the whole human race, and concerning every individual man, was fixed and decreed before Adam fell; in the next place, that Adam himself was devoted to death on account of the desert of his defection; lastly, that all his posterity were so condemned in the person of him already ruined and shut up to despair, that God might adjudge worthy of the honor of adoption those whom he thence gratuitously elects."‡

"Paul taught that out of the ruined mass (*ex perditā massa*) God elects and reprobates those whom he pleased." §

"It can scarcely happen, indeed, but that the human mind should be agitated when first it learns that the grace of God is denied to so many of the unworthy as he pleases, and in like manner granted to the unworthy. But we should remember that since all had been condemned with equal justice, it would be by no means right or just that God should be bound by law so that he should not have mercy upon any whom he pleased."¶

*Loc. IV., Ques. IX., S. XXX.

†*Consensus Genevensis*, Niemeyer, p. 253.

‡*Ibid.*, p. 267. §*Ibid.*, p. 269. ¶*Ibid.*, p. 270.

In the treatise on Eternal Predestination, from which we have made the foregoing quotations, Calvin more than once cites with approval passages from Augustin in which the sublapsarian doctrine is expressly maintained. We have, however, thought it sufficient to adduce his own opinion. But he also does the same thing in his great discussion of the Bondage and Liberation of the Human Will in answer to the Romanist Pighius. We give an instance or two:*

“From the mass of perdition which was constituted through the first Adam none could be separated, except because they have this gift which they receive from the grace of God. Moreover whom he elected them he also called.”

“Those who will not persevere, and so will fall from faith, are not separated from the mass of perdition by the foreknowledge and predestination of God, and therefore are not called according to his purpose.”

We give a few passages from his Commentaries:

“Let this, therefore, be the first proposition, As the blessing of the covenant doth separate the people of Israel from all other nations; so also the election of God discerneth the men of that nation, while he predestineth some unto salvation and other some unto condemnation. The second proposition is, That there is no other foundation of that election than the mere goodness of God, and also mercy, since the fall of Adam. . . Therefore, when he saith that both of them [Esau and Jacob] had then done neither good nor evil, it is also to be added, which he presumeth, namely, that both of them were the sons of Adam, by nature sinners, endued with no crumb of righteousness.”†

“How childish is the attempt to meet this argument by the following sophism: ‘We were chosen because we were worthy, and because God foresaw that we would be worthy’! We were all lost in Adam; and therefore had not God through his own election rescued us from perishing, there was nothing to be foreseen.”‡

“It may be asked, As Adam did not fall before the creation of the world, how was it that Christ had been appointed the Redeemer? for a remedy is posterior to the disease. My reply is, that this is to be referred to God’s foreknowledge; for doubtless God, before he created man, foresaw that he would not stand long in his integrity. Hence he ordained, according to his wonderful wisdom and goodness, that Christ should be the Redeemer, to deliver the lost race of man from ruin.”||

“Whereas the whole human race deserves the same destruction, and

* *Opp.*, Amsterdam, Vol. VIII., p. 155. † *On Rom.* ix. 11, Calvin Society’s Trans. ‡ *On Gal.* i. 4. || *On 1 Peter*, i. 2.

is bound under the same sentence of condemnation, some are delivered by gratuitous mercy, others are justly left in their own destruction."*

We have, we frankly admit, encountered a passage which cannot be adjusted to this body of testimony. It occurs in Lecture CLXX. on the Twelve Minor Prophets, being a commentary on Malachi i. 2-6.

"As to reprobation, the cause of it is sufficiently manifest in the fall of Adam, for, as we have said, we all fell with him. It must still be observed that the election of God is anterior to Adam's fall; and that hence all we who are rescued from the common ruin have been chosen in Christ before the creation of the world, but that *others justly perish though they had not been lost in Adam*; because God appointed Christ the head of his Church, in order that we might be saved in him, not all, but those who have been chosen."†

We confess that we are puzzled as to the meaning of this passage. The first part seems to teach the sublapsarian doctrine, and the last, if it mean anything, the supralapsarian. We do not see how either party to the controversy can claim the passage as in its favor.

We have attentively considered Twisse's elaborate and ingenious argument in opposition to the claim of the Sublapsarians, fortified by citations from his writings; that Calvin held their view;‡ and while we have been obliged to admire his profound scholastic learning, and have gained from his discussion valuable information in reference to the distinctions concerning the divine decrees which entered as important elements into the controversies of the time, we have failed to be convinced by his reasoning. In the first place, Twisse seems to have been compelled to limit himself to a negative criticism of the passages from Calvin which the Sublapsarians adduced in favor of their doctrine. There seemed to be few, if any, positive testimonies to the supralapsarian view which it was in his power to cite. The presumption, arising from this consideration, is certainly against him. In the second place, there is, to our mind, an intrinsic weakness in the arguments he urges which could only be fully exhibited by such a

*On Gen. xxv. 23.

†*Commentaries*, Calvin's Society's Trans., Vol. V., p. 479.

‡*Vindiciæ, De Prædest.*, Lib. i., P. i., C. ii.

protracted analysis of them as we have not the space to furnish. We give one specimen. He distinguishes between election and reprobation as eternal and as temporal, the latter being the execution of the former.* Having introduced this distinction he uses it to blunt the point of the passages in which Calvin seems to enounce the sublapsarian view of an election and reprobation in the order of thought presupposing and proceeding from the fallen mass of mankind, by simply construing Calvin's words as having reference to temporal and not eternal election and reprobation. And of course it would be admitted on all hands that the execution of those decrees in time presupposes a fallen mass out of which the elect are called, and in which the reprobate are judicially left. But, 1. The temporal execution of these decrees must correspond with their eternal idea in the divine mind. We see not how anything is gained by the distinction. 2. The temporal election of which Twisse speaks cannot be distinguished from calling. The office discharged by them is the same; and surely Calvin was wont to discriminate between an eternal election and a vocation in time. 3. We fail to apprehend the distinction between Twisse's temporal election and reprobation, and the providential execution of the eternal decrees of election and reprobation. Decrees and providence are, in a certain sense, confounded. 4. The analogy of Calvinistic usage does not sanction the distinction under consideration, and that usage, we are apt to think, was stamped by Calvin's writings. In the third place, Turretin, in the passage cited above from his *Theological Institutes*, says that Calvin held the opinion received in the Reformed Churches—that is, the sublapsarian. It seems almost impossible to conceive how the uniform type of doctrine concerning predestination in the Reformed Churches could have been sublapsarian, had not Calvin sanctioned that view of the decrees. The great majority of the divines who sat in the Synod of Dort were Sublapsarians, and the same was true of those who composed the Westminster Assembly, of which Dr. Twisse himself was the Moderator, until his death devolved that office upon

* "Hæc Calvini verba de electione temporali, quæ nihil aliud est quam æternæ electionis executio." etc. *De Prædest.*, L. i., P. i., C. ii.

another. It seems wholly improbable that, in the course of a century, only a few exceptional theologians of the Reformed Church represented the opinion of the great doctrinal leader of that body, while the mass of the ministers and churches had abandoned it. So far as to the question of Calvin's Sublapsarianism.

It cannot be expected that one would find this question nominally and expressly handled in the formularies that antedated the Synod of Dort, for the reason that it had not up to that time assumed definite shape. We are aware that they have been claimed by some Sublapsarians as favoring their doctrine; but regarding their testimony as incapable of being clearly pleaded on either side, we refrain from citing it. The Canons of the Synod of Dort are sufficiently explicit in relation to the question. Says Canon VII. of Chapter I.:

"Election is the unchangeable purpose of God, whereby, before the foundations of the world were laid, from the whole human race, fallen by its own fault from primeval integrity into sin and destruction, according to the most free pleasure of his own will, out of mere grace, he elected to salvation in Christ a definite multitude of individuals, neither better nor more worthy than others, but lying with others in a common misery."*

Canon X. of Chap. I. says that election consists in this: "That he [God] called some certain persons out of the common multitude of sinners," etc.†

Canon I. of the same Chapter says:

"Since all men sinned in Adam, and were made subject to the curse and death eternal, God would have done injustice to none if he had willed to leave the whole human race in sin and under the curse, and to damn them on account of sin."‡

In its "Rejection of Errors" the Synod specifies that of those.

"Who teach: That God of his mere righteous will decreed (*decrevisse*) to leave no one in the fall of Adam and in a common state of sin and damnation."||

Here Twisse's distinction cannot be pleaded between the eternal decree to leave, and the temporal leaving of, men in the fallen mass. The Synod in rejecting the error, namely that God decreed to leave no one in the fallen mass, affirmed the op-

* Niemeyer, p. 694. † *Ibid.*, p. 695. ‡ *Ibid.*, p. 693. || *Ibid.*, p. 700.

posite truth, to wit, that God did decree to leave some in the fallen mass; that is to say, the eternal decree of reprobation, in the divine mind, presupposed the decree to permit the Fall.

The striking testimony of the *Formula Consensus Helvetica* Dr. Charles Hodge, in discussing the subject of Supralapsarianism,* did not deem it necessary expressly to cite, as he seemed to regard it as well-known that it contains "a formal repudiation of the supralapsarian view." But as the question before us is concerned about the doctrine of the Calvinistic standards, we feel bound to quote the language of that great formulary:

"Before the foundations of the world were laid, God, in Christ Jesus our Lord, formed an eternal purpose, in which, out of the mere good pleasure of his will, without any foresight of the merit of works or of faith, unto the praise of his glorious grace, elected a certain and definite number of men in the same mass of corruption (*in eadem corruptionis massa*), and lying in a common blood, and so corrupt in sin, to be, in time, brought to salvation through Christ the only Sponsor and Mediator, and through the merit of the same, by the most powerful influence of the Holy Spirit regenerating, to be effectually called, regenerated and endued with faith and repentance. And in such wise indeed did God determine to illustrate his glory, that he decreed, first to create man in integrity, then to permit the fall of the same, and finally to pity some from among the fallen, and so to elect the same, but to leave others in the corrupt mass, and at length to devote them to eternal destruction."†

So much for the testimony of those pronounced Calvinistic formularies, the Canons of the Synod of Dort and the *Formula Consensus Helvetica*. The Westminster Standards, we are prepared in candor to admit, do not seem to us explicitly to affirm the sublapsarian doctrine. We think, however, that they imply it. As an offset to the opinion of Dr. Cunningham, that there is an "omission in the Confession of any statement that might be fairly held to contain or to imply a denial of Supralapsarianism,"‡ that of Dr. Charles Hodge may be mentioned, who, after

* *Syst. Theol.*, Vol. ii., p. 317. † Niemeyer, p. 731.

‡ *Reformers, etc.*, p. 369. We have a profound respect for Dr. Cunningham, as one of the greatest men that the Scottish churches have produced, and owe him a special debt of gratitude for his masterly discussions of church questions; but to "err is human," and we have sometimes been obliged to pause and examine his statements. For instance, in his *Historical Theology* (Vol. I., p. 82), he attributes to Calvin the doctrine

observing that Twisse, the prolocutor of the Westminster Assembly, was a zealous Supralapsarian, but that the great majority of its members were on the other side, says: "The symbols of that Assembly, while they clearly imply the infralapsarian view, were yet so framed as to avoid offence to those who adopted the supralapsarian theory."* He then proceeds to adduce passages from which, in his judgment, the sublapsarian doctrine is logically deducible.

But let it be supposed that the Westminster standards are neutral in regard to this question, that is to say precisely, that they leave the question an open one, whether the object of election and reprobation was man considered as unfallen or considered as fallen,—let this be supposed, and it will follow that one who holds the sublapsarian view, as we do, could not be adjudged to be out of harmony, as to that matter, with those standards. And it will further be true, that, as those Calvinistic formularies which speak professedly upon the question are sublapsarian, and the great body of Calvinistic theologians take the same view, he who maintains the sublapsarian doctrine is positively in harmony with the standards of Calvinism. Supralapsarianism has never been made symbolic, while Sublapsarianism has been definitely incorporated into some of the Calvinistic Confessions. Upon what ground, then, can it be fairly maintained that we have inculcated a "new theology," involving a departure from the standards of Calvinism?

It will perhaps be asked, Why this attempt to prove Calvin and the Calvinistic confessions to have been sublapsarian? First, because we have in the preceding discussion occupied sublapsarian ground, and in this respect our agreement with Calvin and the Calvinistic standards is made apparent; secondly and chiefly, for the reason that if Calvin and the Calvinistic symbols are proved to have been sublapsarian, the presumption is a powerful

"that Christ descended into hell—in this sense, that after death he went to the place of the damned, and shared somehow in their torments;" whereas the fact is that, in one of the most eloquent and affecting passages of the Institutes (B. II., C. XVI., §§ 10–12), he expressly contends that Christ descended into hell in this sense—that he endured the pains of hell during his last passion in the garden and on the cross.

* *Syst. Theol.*, Vol. III., p. 317.

one that they could not have maintained the supralapsarian position, that God by his efficient decree necessitated the commission of the first sin. If Calvin was a sublapsarian in one respect, it is likely that he was in all. And if upon investigation it be discovered that while he held the sublapsarian order of the divine decrees, he also taught the supralapsarian doctrine that God so predetermined the first sin that its production became a necessity, as a means to an end, it will be shown that the Reformer was inconsistent with himself, and we would be at liberty to elect which of the incongruous doctrines we would receive. The consequence would be that neither the Sublapsarian nor the Supralapsarian could be said to be out of harmony with his teachings. We are entitled, then, to carry with us this presumption, in further inquiring whether the doctrine that the first sin was made necessary by efficacious decree was held by Calvin, and is a normal element of the Calvinistic system. This we understand the reviewer to affirm; and accordingly he pronounces our position upon this point novel and heterodox, namely, that God did not by an efficient decree necessitate the first sin, but that his foreordination of it was permissive.

In order that the issue may be distinctly apprehended, and that it may appear that we do not misconceive the reviewer's doctrine, we quote his own words:

"The apprehension of certainty in relation to the future implies, to our created intelligence, a pre-determination."

"According to the laws of thought with which we ourselves are endowed by the Creator, we cannot conceive of certainty which is not established by antecedents. But before creation all antecedents must have been in the mind of the Almighty. His volitions, therefore, are the fountains of his creative acts. His purposes alone established the certainty of these wonderful events. Resolutions formed by an infinite mind must be accompanied by a positive assurance of the acts to which they relate. This consciousness is not the result of calculation or inference. It is not an impression of overwhelming probability, but an intuition that the purposes of such a mind, unrestricted by conditions, will be fulfilled. The purpose is a cause of infinite efficiency, and the effect is immediately apprehended as a certain result."

"The certainty and necessity of all events within the scope of God's foreknowledge must include even the volitions of his creatures. . . Sin

sustains a twofold relation : a moral one to the motives that have actuated the culprit, and an historical and providential one to the decrees of God. It is the moral relation which imparts to it its true heinousness. The historical relation has no moral features, but simply connects it as a link with the vast chain of antecedents and consequents which the wisdom of God has established. This is the best rational solution which our minds can frame consistently with our premises."

"What kind of a cause do we mean when we speak of the cause of volition? God is the only First Cause recognised by theistical philosophers. We must therefore mean that our inquiry refers to a second cause. But second causes are always in their turn effects. Now this theory [the one criticised] makes the second cause of volitions a new first cause. It supersedes the Deity."

"Attention should first be directed to the decree itself. This is called a purpose, and a purpose implies active volition. . . We are expressly informed that 'God executes his decrees in the works of creation and providence.' It was his purpose, therefore, not only to permit others to execute them, but to provide for them by acts of his own. The creation of man was one of the means he employed for this end, and the condition and circumstances in which man was placed were according to his wise foreordination. The object of the decree was the end, the subsequent acts were the means. Now if the end was certain, as the object of God's decree—one of the all things that come to pass—the decree and the means must have been efficient. There is no escape possible. The efficiency of the decrees of God is as certain in the one case as in another. In some cases it is direct, as when he said, 'Let there be light, and there was light.' In other cases it is through his own appointed means, as when Adam fell. The efficiency of the means is essential to the certainty of the result."

These statements show the reviewer's doctrine to be: that all divine decrees are efficient; that all events, being efficiently decreed, must be effected by God; and, consequently, that Adam's first sin, as it was an object of efficient decree, was necessary and unavoidable, and was, in a certain sense, effected by God himself. In short, God is the sole efficient cause in the universe, and all second causes are but means through which he effects his purposes. Now is this the doctrine of Calvin? We are aware that it is imputed to him by his enemies, and the changes endlessly rung upon it. But if it be his doctrine, we have read him to little purpose. In the attempt to settle this question, the path must be cleared of irrelevant issues.

In the first place, the question is not whether the Reformer held the relation of the divine decrees to all events that come to pass. Of course he taught that, and every Calvinist believes with him. It would be a mere waste of time to talk upon that point. Let us then think it away.

In the second place, the question is not what Calvin taught as to the relation of the divine decrees to the sins of the wicked. We insist upon it, that that question, as irrelevant, be not involved in the discussion. That Calvin held that efficacious decrees, in a sense terminate on the sins of the incorrigibly wicked, we have already freely conceded, and expressed our assent to his doctrine on the subject. The significance of this consideration would be destroyed, if indeed Calvin recognised no difference between the relation of the divine efficiency to the sins of the wicked and the first sin of a being previously innocent. But we have shown, in a former discussion, that he did emphasize the difference. We are not alone in that view. Scott, the able Continuator of Milner's Church History, saw the distinction and signalled it as necessary to an intelligent judgment in regard to Calvin's teaching concerning the relation of God's efficiency to sin.* But if what the Reformer taught as to the influence of decree upon the wicked be left out of account, the great bulk of his writings on the subject of election and reprobation will lie beyond the pale of the present investigation.

In the third place, the question is not, whether Calvin held that God, through the natural constitution which he conferred upon Adam at creation, necessitated the commission of his first sin. In our article in the last number of this REVIEW we proved, by copious citations from his works, that he did not hold that view, but that, on the contrary, he maintained that God gave him a nature and endowed him with grace which amply capacitated him to stand in holiness and win eternal life for himself and for his seed.

In the fourth place, the question is not, whether Calvin inculcated the view that God's foreknowledge of the first sin proved its certainty as an historical event. That a necessity of infalli-

*Vol. III., p. 583.

bility, as it has been sometimes termed, or a necessity of consequence, as at other times it has been denominated, existed between God's foreknowledge of the sin and its occurrence—that such a necessity was held by Calvin, and by Calvinists in general, there can be no doubt; and therefore there need be no discussion as to that matter. For that is a species of necessity which is related to knowledge and not to causal efficiency. The knowledge of the event being supposed, its certainty follows as a logical consequence; but the knowledge exerts no productive influence in bringing the event to pass. The question, therefore, is not, whether the occurrence of the first sin was, in relation to God's all-perfect knowledge, necessary in the sense of being infallibly known, or in the sense of a logical consequence from the proposition: God foreknew the occurrence of the sin.

What then is the question? It is, precisely, whether Calvin's doctrine was, that God efficaciously decreed the first sin, and whether, by consequence, he, in pursuance of that decree, providentially effected it? As we have no disposition to state the question disadvantageously to the reviewer, let us narrow it still further: Was it Calvin's view that God decreed to effect, and therefore providentially effected, the first sin, regarded as an act, an entity, or, as the reviewer expresses it, an historical event, while he permitted man to infuse the bad quality into the act, or to fail in producing the good quality which ought to have been attached to it?

We will first adduce and examine the most prominent passages in his works which seem to place him on the affirmative of this question. We will begin with those which appear to teach that God decreed to create man for destruction.

"It is impossible to deny that God foreknew what the end of man was to be before he made him, and foreknew, because he had so ordained by his decree."*

"Though, by the eternal providence of God, man was formed for the calamity under which he lies, he took the matter of it from himself, not from God, since the only cause of his destruction was his degenerating from the purity of his creation into a state of vice and impurity."†

"Those therefore whom he has created for dishonor during life and

**Institutes*, B. III., C. XXIII., §7. †*Ibid.*, §9.

destruction at death, that they may be vessels of wrath and examples of severity, in bringing to their doom, he at one time deprives of the means of hearing his word, at another by the preaching of it blinds and stupefies them the more.'*

It must be admitted that in these passages the language of Calvin is not perfectly definite; and as we were not his private secretary we have no desire to dogmatise in regard to its meaning. But it is fair to interpret him in these utterances in accordance with the whole analogy of his teachings; and guided by that canon, we are led to the opinion that the evidence, as a whole, does not favor the view that he here maintained that God first decreed to condemn men for their sins, and then decreed to create them for that purpose—that is, that in the divine mind, the decree to condemn preceded the decree to create. In support of this construction of his language we submit the following reasons:

In the first place, we have seen that Calvin really taught the sublapsarian view of the order of the divine decrees, and the object of predestination. This was his catholic doctrine. If so, he would be inconsistent with himself, if, in the passages cited, he inculcated the opposite view. The presumption is against that supposition—so strongly against it that the language of these extracts must be shown to be unambiguous in order to sustain it. But that this is difficult to be done will appear from our next consideration.

In the second place, it is far from evident that by the term *create* which is the hinge of his meaning in these passages, Calvin means *decree to create*. When the Reformer says that God foreknew the end of man, before he *made* him, it does not follow that he meant to say that God foreknew the end of man, as one of salvation or destruction, before he *decreed to make* him. The two propositions are very different. And it must also be borne in mind that Calvin treated the hypothesis of the traduction of souls with contempt, and held tenaciously that of their immediate creation. If that view be taken into connection with his doctrine of the federal imputation of Adam's guilt to his posterity, it is clear that he maintained that God creates the descendants of

**Ibid.*, B. III., C. XXIV., §12.

Adam, as qualified by the guilt so imputed to them. This "he foreknew" before their actual creation; in this light, "man was formed for the calamity under which he lies," and "was created for dishonor during life and destruction at death." This is at least a possible construction of his language in these utterances; and as it brings him into harmony with himself in his general teaching, it would seem to be a fair and legitimate construction. But if it be, there is no necessity to interpret him as meaning that God created man, as innocent, in order to glorify himself in his destruction; and then it would not follow, that he meant to affirm that the divine decree effectuated the sin and ruin of man. He seems to imply—at least he may have implied—that God decreed to create mankind, as guilty in Adam, and therefore as "vessels of wrath and examples of severity." There is certainly a distinction between a decree to create unto destruction men conceived as guilty in a representative, and a decree to create the representative, conceived as innocent, unto destruction. That distinction, we think, Calvin affirmed.

In the third place, if the several contexts from which these passages have been extracted be closely examined, with an eye to the whole analogy of Calvin's doctrine, we think that the construction which we have intimated will be seen to be not without justification from at least a part of their contents. A regulative conception in his mind, in reference to the case of reprobated beings, appears to have been that of subjects of government condemned by a judge, whose sentences proceed upon the presupposition of guilt. For example, he says expressly: "Let us in the corruption of human nature contemplate the evident cause of condemnation (a cause which comes more closely home to us) rather than inquire into a cause hidden and almost incomprehensible in the predestination of God."* On the other hand, Calvin held another regulative conception, namely, that of the sovereignty of God in ordaining whatsoever comes to pass; and when he speaks under the influence of that conception, he appears to teach that God causally determined the occurrence of sin in the first instance.

**Institutes*, B. III., C. XXIII., §8.

The question, whether these two apparently conflicting classes of utterance can be harmonised, will be considered as we proceed.

In the fourth place, it would be easy to cite numerous passages in which Calvin, in answer to the acute antagonists who pressed him with the objection that he made God the author of sin, maintains strenuously that evil did not come by creation. If so, how could he have consistently taught that God decreed to create man for evil? Many of these passages we have already adduced, and therefore will not now cite them.* We have before us two remarkable statements to the same effect, in the treatise on the Bondage and Liberation of the Will, but our space does not permit their insertion.† Bishop Davenant, a member of the Synod of Dort, and one of the brightest ornaments of the Church of England, in defending the illustrious Reformer against the criticisms of the Jesuits, says:

“I affirm that the opinion of Calvin is most truly contained in these two propositions: 1. That the consideration of a foreseen fall did not occur to God when predestinating as a cause. . . 2. The other proposition which I oppose to the censure of the Jesuits, and which I assert to be according to the mind of Calvin, is this: The consideration of sin foreseen offered itself to God when predestinating, by way of an annexed condition, which is inherent in all whether elect or reprobate. . . Blind is the man who sees not that the corrupt mass in these cases [in passages from Calvin and Augustin] is the ground of predestination, so that from it are selected vessels of honor through election, and in it vessels are left to dishonor through reprobation.”‡

We take Davenant's meaning to be, that Calvin's doctrine was: that, strictly speaking, there was no cause of predestination but the good pleasure of God's sovereign will; for he may have decreed, or may not have decreed, as he pleased, to create man, to permit the fall, and from the mass of mankind, conceived as fallen, either to save all, or to doom all to perish, or to elect some to salvation and to reprobate others—to the glory of his name. He was a cause to himself. Neither foreseen merit nor demerit in the creature was a cause of his sovereign determination. But on

*SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW, January, 1880.

†*Opp.*, 1667, Vol. VIII., pp. 126, 127.

‡*Determinationes*, Allport's Trans., Quest. 26.

the supposition that he pleased to decree as he did, the conception of the fall conditioned, and, in that sense, grounded in the divine mind the decrees of election and reprobation. The common guilt and ruin of mankind, induced by their own fault, were presupposed in the determination to save some and leave others to perish. This, we take it, was Calvin's meaning when he said, as he was wont, that corruption was the cause of condemnation. It did not efficiently produce, but it conditioned, the decree to condemn.

We must, however reluctantly, arrest the discussion at this point, in the hope that a favoring providence may enable us to complete it at another time.

THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

VOL. XXXI.—NO. 4.

OCTOBER, MDCCCLXXX.

ARTICLE I.

THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL IN ITS THEOLOGICAL RELATIONS.

The question which we considered in our last article in this REVIEW (April, 1880), was, whether our position that the first sin was not necessitated by an efficacious decree of God is uncalvinistic and untrue. We showed that the Supralapsarians themselves maintain the distinction between efficacious and permissive decree in relation to the first sin, and hold that God did not effect that sin, considered as sin, but permitted it. We next showed that Calvin was a Sublapsarian, so far as the order of the divine decrees and the object of predestination are concerned. But the question occurred, whether he held the view that God necessitated the first sin by an efficacious decree, and, more particularly, whether he decreed to effect, and therefore actually effected, the first sin, regarded as an act or an historical event, while he permitted man to infuse the evil quality into the act, or, to fail in producing the good quality which ought to have existed. That was the particular question under discussion when we were compelled to bring the article to a close, and we now proceed with its consideration. Having remarked that we proposed to adduce and examine the most prominent passages in the writings of the Reformer which seem to place him on the affirmative of

this question, we began with those which appear to teach that God decreed to create man for destruction, and from which the inference has been drawn that Calvin held the necessitation of the first sin by divine decree. Having evinced the improbability of such a construction of that class of passages, we next take up those from which the inference might with some plausibility be deduced, that, in Calvin's view, the causal efficiency of God was implicated in the production of the first sin, considered as an act or event.

Before quoting Calvin's language, however, we deem it necessary to observe that we have nowhere in his writings discovered the distinction between an act, as act, which God effects, and the quality or want of quality of the act for which man is accountable, which is fundamental to the doctrine of Supralapsarians and the advocates of the privative character of sin. The distinction which he makes, and which he often uses, is a different one. Let us explain. An act may be regarded in a twofold aspect—as to its matter and its form. The matter, or what is the same thing, the material cause, of an act, is the act itself; the form, or the formal cause, of an act, is that which distinguishes it from all other acts whose matter is the same, viz., the subjective inducements leading to, and the end contemplated by, the act—in a word, its motive or intention. Now the Supralapsarian and the maintainer of the privative character of sin hold that the matter of sin is given by God, but the form by man. Calvin's distinction, on the other hand is, that the matter is given by man, but that the form is partly given by man and partly by God. We shall have occasion to note this difference between the doctrine which we are considering and that of Calvin as we proceed. At present we call attention to it for the purpose of showing that no passages, so far as we know, can be adduced from the Reformer's writings in which the supralapsarian distinction between sin as act and as quality is formally affirmed; in which he maintains that God is the author of sin, considered as an act, but man, of the sinful quality attached to the act.

The passage, in which he seems most clearly to obliterate the distinction between the divine effectuation and permission of sin,

is the well-known one in the Institutes. We give those parts of it which are strongest:

"From other passages in which God is said to draw or bend Satan to himself, and all the reprobate to his will, a more difficult question arises. For the carnal mind can scarcely comprehend how, when acting by their means, he contracts no taint from their impurity, nay, how, in a common operation, he is exempt from all guilt, and can justly condemn his own ministers. Hence a distinction has been invented between doing and permitting (*agere et permittere*), because to many it seemed altogether inexplicable how Satan and all the wicked are so under the hand and authority of God, that he directs their malice to whatever end he pleases, and employs their iniquities to execute his judgments. . . . It seems absurd that man should be blinded by the will and command of God, and yet be forthwith punished for his blindness. Hence recourse is had to the evasion that this is done only by the permission, and not also by the will (*voluntate*), of God. He himself, however, openly declaring that he does this, repudiates this evasion. That men do nothing save at the secret instigation (*nutu*) of God, and do not discuss and deliberate on anything but what he has previously decreed with himself and brings to pass by his secret direction, is proved by numberless clear passages of Scripture."

Having mentioned some of these passages, all of which have reference to the works of the wicked, he adds:

"Those who have a tolerable acquaintance with the Scriptures see, that with a view to brevity I am only producing a few out of many passages, from which it is perfectly clear that it is the merest trifling to substitute a bare permission (*nudam permissionem*) for the providence of God, as if he sat in a watch-tower waiting for fortuitous events, his judgments meanwhile depending on the will of man."*

Upon this passage and others of a similar character we would offer the following remarks: 1. The title of the chapter in which the passage cited occurs, and the whole drift of the discussion, show that Calvin is treating of the relation of God's agency to the sins of the wicked. Now we have before alleged proof that Calvin did not treat the relation of God's will to the sins of the wicked as entirely the same as its relation to the first sin. He made a distinction between the sins of those already sinners and the first sin of a being previously innocent, and a corresponding distinction in God's decrees—distinctions as obvious to common

**Inst.*, B. I., C. xviii., §1, *Calv. Soc. Trans.*

sense as they are demanded by justice. Now unless it can be shown that this representation of Calvin's views is incorrect, and that he treated the two cases as the same, involving the same relation to the decree and providence of God, the passage before us proves nothing as to the effectuating agency of God in the production of the first sin. It must, of course, be granted that there are points of similarity between the cases, points in which the relation of divine decree and providence to them is the same. God bounds and governs the sins of the wicked; he orders, disposes, and directs them, so that they accomplish his holy purposes and promote the glory of his name. In like manner he bounded and governed, ordered, disposed, and directed the first sin. Both sorts of sin are objects of his fore-ordaining will and his controlling providence. Concerning this there is no dispute as to Calvin's doctrine or the faith of the Reformed Church. But the question now at issue is, whether Calvin taught that the divine efficiency is exerted in the same way in relation to the sins of the wicked and the first sin of Adam. The school whose views we are canvassing hold that God produces sin considered as an act, but man the evil quality inhering in the act; that is to say, God produces the sin materially considered, and man the sin formally considered. The matter is God's, the form man's. The divine causality is thus made to appear as the immediate efficient of the matter of sin. Calvin's doctrine, as we have indicated, is different from this. He assigns the matter of sin to man, and so makes him the immediate efficient of sin, materially considered. Let us hear him upon this point :

"They will have it that crimes ought not to be punished in their authors, because they are not committed without the dispensation of God. I concede more—that thieves and murderers and other evil-doers are instruments of divine providence, being employed by the Lord himself to execute the judgments which he has resolved to inflict. But I deny that this forms any excuse for their misdeeds. For how? Will they implicate God in the same iniquity with themselves, or will they cloak their depravity by his righteousness? They cannot exculpate themselves, for their own conscience condemns them: they cannot charge God, since they perceive the whole wickedness in themselves, and nothing in him save the legitimate use of their wickedness. . . . While the matter (*materia*) and guilt of wickedness belongs to the wicked man, why should it

be thought that God contracts any wickedness in using it at pleasure as his instrument?"*

"Though their perdition depends on the predestination of God, the cause and matter of it is in themselves."†

"For though, by the eternal providence of God, man was formed for the calamity under which he lies, he took the matter of it from himself, not from God, since the only cause of his destruction was his degenerating from the purity of his creation into a state of vice and impurity."‡

In his treatise entitled *Instructio adversus Libertinos* Calvin professedly discusses the question of the nature of God's agency in the sins of the wicked. The maxim of the fanatical sect against whom he wrote was: *Deus efficit omnia*; and they abused it to the perpetration of every species of wickedness under the sanction of the divine name. The question of God's efficiency in relation to sin was therefore fairly before the Reformer's mind. He expounds the various modes of operation employed by God in his administration of the affairs of the world. When he comes to the question of the mode in which he governs the wicked, and uses them as his instruments in the accomplishment of his purposes, he says:

"There is a great difference between the work of God and the work of a wicked man when he uses him as his instrument. For the wicked man is incited to the perpetration of his crime by his own avarice, or ambition, or envy, or cruelty, without contemplating any other end. Therefore from that root, that is, the affection of the mind and the end which it regards, the work takes its quality, and is deservedly judged as evil. But God has altogether another end in view, namely, that he may exercise his righteousness in preserving the good; may exhibit his grace and goodness towards believers; but may also chastise the ill-deserving. See then in what manner we must distinguish between God and men, so that in one aspect of the same work we may contemplate righteousness, goodness, and judgment, and in another the wickedness of the devil and unbelievers. . . . For all things take their quality from the purpose and will of the author."||

When, then, the question of the relation of the divine efficiency to the sins of the wicked was that which he was professedly discussing, he did not draw a distinction between sin as an act and as a quality, and affirm with the Supralapsarians and the advo-

**Inst.*, B. I., C. xvii., § 5. †*Ibid.*, B. III., C. xxiii., § 8. ‡*Ibid.*, § 9.

|| *Opp.*, Amstel., 1667, p. 385.

cates of the privative character of sin, that God is the producer of sin, as act, and man, of sin, as quality. And this is all the more noteworthy because the writings of Augustin, who maintained that distinction, were familiar to Calvin, and the authority of that illustrious father was very frequently invoked by him. The distinction which he makes is one between the formal qualities of a wicked work which receive their denomination from the ends contemplated—man seeking his own gratification in performing it, and God the glory of his name and the good of his people, in ordaining, governing, ordering, directing, and using it. The work of God—*opus Dei*—of which Calvin treats, is the acts of God concerning the sinful acts of men rather than the production of those sinful acts. But if he did not maintain the supralapsarian distinction in regard to the sins of the wicked, much more is it probable that he did not hold it in reference to the first sin of Adam.

In that part of his treatise on Eternal Predestination in which he discusses the subject of Providence, he makes a distinction between the proximate and remote cause of sin—*causa propinqua* and *causa remota*. The agency of the sinner is the proximate, that of God the remote, cause. It cannot, we conceive, be gathered from this discrimination that he intended to represent God as the efficient, though remote, cause of sin. It is true that he was accustomed to designate sinners as instruments of the execution of God's will, and a cursory reader might infer from this language that he held the sinner to be the instrument in the production of sin, while God is the real producer. But Calvin's language implies a distinction between an instrument in the accomplishment of an end, and an instrument in the performance of an act. God uses the sinner for the former purpose. He employs both the sinner and his acts for the execution of his plans. It is not that the human actor is efficiently used in the production of the human act, but the actor and the act are used for the attainment of the divine end. We do not mean to say that Calvin denied the exercise of an efficacious influence by God upon the wicked, determining them to the commission of particular acts of sin. He certainly affirmed, continually and emphati-

cally, the exertion of such an influence. And this leads us to inquire, What, precisely, was his doctrine upon this point of the relation of the divine efficiency to the sins of the wicked?

He taught, first, that man by the exercise of his free will sinned against God, and so fixed upon himself a moral necessity of sinning; secondly, that the judicial curse of God, induced by this wilful transgression, punitively inflicts upon him this necessity of sinning; thirdly, that God judicially withdraws the Spirit of his grace from the incorrigibly wicked; fourthly, that the current of sinful inclination, running thus by a moral and judicial necessity towards sin in general, is efficaciously determined by the will of God in certain specific directions. This is done in two ways: in the first place, God righteously shuts up the sinner, by the arrangements of his providence, to the commission of special acts of wickedness to which he is inwardly impelled by his own corrupt nature, so that those acts become necessary. In the second place, God, by an internal influence upon the mind, bends—*flectit* is Calvin's word—the will of the sinner towards the perpetration of particular forms of iniquity, so that the general inclination to sin, for which he is responsible as his own product, is by the divine power determined in special directions. As these are the acts of God, as an efficient cause, they are the necessary results of his efficacious decree. Under this explanation fall the sins of Pharaoh in refusing to let Israel go, of Satan and the human instruments of his malice in persecuting Job, of Shimei in cursing David, of the lying spirits and the false prophets in extending ruinous counsel to Ahab, and of Judas in betraying, and the Jews and Romans in crucifying, Christ.

This efficacious influence upon those who are already sinners is not the same as the efficient causation of sin. The wickedness of the sinner is not produced by God; it is only determined by him in certain specific directions, for the accomplishment of definite ends which were eternally foreordained. The case is different in regard to the first sin. An efficacious determination, by a divine influence, of the will of Adam to the commission of that sin, would have involved the divine production of the sin. In one case, God finds man a sinner and shuts him up to special

manifestations of an existing principle of wickedness; in the other, he finds man innocent, and shuts him up to the performance of an act which originates the existence of wickedness.

It deserves, further, to be considered as lending confirmation to the view we have given of Calvin's doctrine, that he carefully distinguished between this efficacious influence of God upon the wicked, which operates upon wickedness as an existing thing, having its root in the free causality of the sinner, and the efficacious grace of God, which generates the principle of spiritual life and implants holy dispositions in the heart of the regenerate. In the latter case, we have the efficiency of God immediately producing holiness and working in the saint to will and to do holy acts; but in the former, such an efficiency producing sin and working in the sinner to will and to do sinful acts is not asserted by Calvin. In a word, God is not the principle and cause of sin as he is the principle and cause of holiness. Evil is to be attributed to God not as a created corruption, but as a judicial infliction. The evil of punishment is God's; the evil of wickedness, as the cause of punishment, is man's. Calvin's position is, that the operation of the divine power upon the sins of the wicked is not creative, but judicial; and that God uses his righteous judgments upon their perpetrators, together with the results which flow from their infliction, for the accomplishment of his wise and holy ends in the general administration of his providence.

We are now prepared to estimate the true force of Calvin's language when, as in the passage cited, he rejects the distinction between "doing and permitting." He justly scouts the notion of a bare permission, an idle permission—*otiosa permissio*—a mere inoperative sufferance of sin, as not to be ascribed to God, who exercises an efficacious influence in relation to the sins of men. At the same time, the "doing" which he attributes to God, in contradistinction from such a permission, although efficacious, is not the effecting—the causal—production of sin itself.

That this was the Reformer's doctrine concerning the relation of the divine efficiency to the sins of the wicked, we would fain believe, is so patent to every careful reader of his works, that we shall make no labored appeals to them in order to establish the

fact. If this be conceded, it will be obvious that, up to this point, we have not been out of harmony with his teachings as to the relation of God's decree to sin. It has been thought necessary to furnish this exposition, for the purpose of vindicating our claim, that his views in regard to the relation of God's efficient causality to the sins of the wicked should not be made a gauge of his position as to its relation to the first sin, and thus of disentangling the main question of one of its chief embarrassments.

We come now to the real question in dispute: What did Calvin teach as to the relation of the divine efficiency to the first sin? Did he so efficaciously decree its commission as to render it unavoidable and necessary? Having efficaciously decreed the occurrence of the sin, did he efficiently cause its commission? We have seen that Calvin did not affirm the causal efficiency of God in the production of even the sins of the wicked, although they are the result of a moral and judicial necessity. It appears to us entirely unnecessary, therefore, to discuss the question, whether he held an efficient production by God of the first sin of a being previously innocent and under neither an intrinsic nor a judicial necessity of sinning, which he denied in regard to the sins of the wicked. It is out of the question that he could consistently have maintained that view, as it is a fact susceptible of proof from his writings that he did not. But the Supralapsarian contends that while man was responsible for the evil quality attached to the first sin, or the absence of the good quality which ought to have existed, God was the producer of the sin, considered simply as an act. We have seen, also, that Calvin did not adopt that distinction. There is, therefore, no necessity to raise the question whether he held that God decreed efficaciously to produce the first sin as an act, and, in pursuance of that decree, providentially effected the act. But he did maintain an efficacious operation of God in relation to specific sins of the wicked which necessitates the commission of those sins. May he not have maintained a necessitation, for the same reason, of the first sin? The question, then, which may fairly claim attention is, whether he held that God, in any way, to use the terms of Twisse, decreed *efficaciter*

procurare—efficaciously to procure—the occurrence of the first sin, and so necessitated its commission.

First, he held that God decreed to permit the first sin. This we have in previous articles proved by quotations from his writings, and, if it were necessary, could adduce much more evidence of the same sort. But why endeavor to show that he maintained a view which even the Supralapsarians universally admit? Surely he did not go further than they—he did not out-Herod Herod.

Secondly, he held that God did not decree barely, idly, inoperatively, to permit the first sin. It was not to be a thing of mere sufferance or toleration. God was not “sitting in a watch-tower” waiting for the act of man, and suspending his decisions upon its problematical occurrence. The decree was not one of naked otiose permission.

Thirdly, he held that God willed the occurrence of the first sin. He says, as we have already seen, that it took place in accordance with the will of God, because he had the power to prevent it, and did not. He must, therefore, have willed the occurrence of the sin in preference to its non-occurrence.

Now, what was the force of this will? Did it necessitate the commission of the sin, in the sense of efficaciously procuring it? Calvin’s own words must furnish us the light we require upon these questions. We have already cited the passage in his Commentary in Genesis. The core of it we have just given above. In that passage he reasons thus: God permitted the sin. But he foreknew that it would occur, unless he prevented it. He did not will to prevent it, although he might. He therefore willed the occurrence of the sin; not positively, by his efficaciously bringing it to pass, through an influence exerted upon the will of Adam; but negatively, by withholding determining grace from him, which would have secured his standing by preventing the sin. Now, we submit, that this was indeed God’s willing the occurrence, rather than the non-occurrence of the sin, but it was not his willing efficaciously to procure its commission. It is perfectly clear that, according to this statement, what God decreed was non-action, not efficacious action, on his part. He did not decree to effect, or efficaciously bring to pass, the sin, but simply

not to prevent it. We cannot see how such a decree could be construed into a determination to make the sin necessary and unavoidable, except upon one supposition, to wit, that God did not furnish Adam with sufficient grace to enable him to stand; we say not determining grace, for that would have made the sin impossible, but sufficient grace, so that although the sin was possible, it might have been avoided. Now, Calvin holds that Adam was endowed with this sufficient grace. How, then, could God's not having communicated determining grace have efficaciously necessitated the sin? Determining grace *would* have prevented it, and that God did not give; but sufficient grace *could* have prevented it, and that God did give. It amounts to this: God decreed to make Adam's sin possible; consequently, he did not decree to make it certain, for possible and certain, as to causal power, though not to knowledge, are inconsistent terms. But having made the sin possible, and knowing that although Adam might not sin if he pleased, he would in fact please to sin, if the sin were not made impossible by determining grace, God did not decree to make it impossible. The decree, however, not to make it impossible is not the same as a decree to make it necessary. There are three conceivable suppositions: either God decreed to make the sin impossible, or he decreed to make it possible, or he decreed to make it necessary. Calvin's doctrine is that he decreed to make it possible. If so, it was not his doctrine that he decreed to make it necessary. Let us hear other testimonies from Calvin. He quotes, with approval, the following passage from Augustin:

"Nothing comes to pass, except the Almighty wills it to come to pass, either by permitting it to come to pass, or by doing it himself. It cannot be doubted, that God does well when he permits to come to pass, whatsoever evil comes to pass. For he does not permit this except by a righteous decision. Although, therefore, evil things, so far as they are evil, are not good things, nevertheless it is a good thing that there should not only be good things, but evil things as well. For, except this were a good thing, that there should be evil things, in no way could they be permitted by an omnipotent being who is good; to whom, without doubt, it is as easy to do what he wills, as it is easy not to permit what he does not will to exist."*

* *Consensus Genevensis*, Niemeier, p. 230.

"In ordaining the fall of man, God had the best and most righteous end in view, from which the name of sin is most remote. Albeit I say that he so ordained it, yet I will not concede that he was its proper author. That I may not be tedious, what Augustin teaches I perceive to have been entirely fulfilled, that in a wonderful and ineffable manner that was not done apart from his will, which at the same time was done against his will, because it could not have come to pass had he not permitted it. Nor, assuredly, did he unwillingly permit it, but willingly. The principle which he there assumes cannot be gainsayed."*

"Man was placed in such a condition, when he was first created, that by falling of his own accord, he himself became the cause to himself of his own destruction; yet, nevertheless, it was, in the admirable counsel of God, so ordained, that by this voluntary ruin there should be matter of humility to the whole human race. Nor, indeed, if it so seemed fit to God, does it follow that man did not precipitate himself into the fall, seeing that in himself he was endowed with a right nature and was formed in the image of God."†

"God foresaw the fall of Adam: he had the power to prevent it: he did not will to prevent it. Why did he not so will? No other reason can be given, except that his will tended in a different way. . . Those whom he elects God supports with invincible fortitude in order to their perseverance. Why did he not furnish Adam with the same, if he willed that he should stand in safety?"‡

From these passages we collect the following positions as held by Calvin: First, that there are some things which God decreed to permit to be done, and some things which he decreed to do himself. Here is a clear distinction between permissive and efficacious decree. The first sin falls into the category of things which God permitted to be done, and not into that of things which he does himself. Secondly, that God was not the author of the first sin. Consequently, he could not have produced it. Man was the author, the efficient cause of the sin, and therefore subjected himself to just punishment for its commission. Thirdly, God's permission of the sin is not to be opposed to his will ordaining its occurrence. But how was God's will concerned in its occurrence? In this way: he did not will, as he might have done, to prevent its occurrence, by giving determining grace to Adam, such as he gives to his elect. But Adam was endowed

* *Ibid.*, p. 268. † *Ibid.*, p. 251.

‡ *De Occul. Dei Providentia, Opp.*, Amstel., 1667, p. 636.

with sufficient strength to stand. While, therefore, God, foreseeing the abuse by Adam of his natural endowments, did not efficaciously decree to prevent it, he must, in that sense, have willed the sin to occur, rather than not to occur; but he did not efficaciously decree to effect the sin himself, or efficiently to procure its commission, and therefore did not himself actually effect it, or efficiently procure its commission. Fourthly, it must be added, that Calvin taught that the will of God in regard to the sin was not passive and inoperative, but was an active will, in the sense that it limited and governed, ordered, directed, and used it for the promotion of his own most wise and holy purposes. What God permits to be done, as well as what he does himself, is subject to the control of his ordaining will.

So far, notwithstanding certain expressions which to the Sublapsarian seem to be exaggerated, Calvin's doctrine as to the relation of the divine efficiency to sin is consistent with itself, and, when fairly interpreted, sustains our position in regard to that subject. But we desire to be just in expounding his whole doctrine, and we are free to say that we have met a few passages which it is not so easy to adjust to the bulk of his teachings, or to the view we have maintained. They seem to teach a necessitation of the first sin by the will of God.

"Nor, indeed, is there any probability in the thing itself, viz., that man brought death upon himself merely by the permission and not by the ordination of God; as if God had not determined what he wished the condition of the chief of his creatures to be. I will not hesitate, therefore, simply to confess with Augustin that the will of God is necessity, and that everything is necessary which he has willed; just as those things will certainly happen, which he has foreseen (*De Gen. ad Lit.*, Lib. VI., Cap. 15)."*

"At first blush that saying of Augustin seems harsh (*De Gen. ad Lit.*, Lib. VI., Cap. 15), that the will of God is the necessity of things; also what he adds (Cap. 18) for the sake of explanation: that God so framed inferior causes, that from them that, of which they are causes, might take place, but should not be necessary; yet he has concealed profounder and remote causes in himself which render necessary what, so far as inferior causes are concerned, is only possible."†

There is another passage, upon which we cannot just now lay

* *Inst.*, B. III., C. XXIII., § 8.

† *Cons. Gener.*, Niemeyer, p. 305.

our hands, in which Calvin says, in effect, that what is unnecessary, intrinsically considered, that is, so far as man's internal nature is concerned, is extrinsically necessary, that is, so far as God's will is involved.

We are not perfectly sure of Calvin's meaning in these passages. We could understand them, and perceive their consistency with his views as we have already collected them, if he meant the necessity of infallibility or logical consequence, or if he meant the necessitation of specific acts of sin in the case of the wicked by the efficacious will of God. But we must admit that, in these passages, he seems to maintain that the decree of God in some way rendered the first sin necessary and unavoidable. If this be his meaning, we must confess that, in this particular respect, our doctrine is inconsistent with his, and that at this point we must part with our venerable guide; and we proceed modestly to assign our reasons for the divergence. There are only two conceivable suppositions in this case: either, first, that God efficaciously procured or brought to pass the commission of the first sin; or, secondly, that God himself effected that sin.

Let us consider the first supposition: that God efficaciously procured the commission of the first sin. In the first place, if this were Calvin's meaning, he is, in this matter, inconsistent with himself. What was his carefully enunciated doctrine as to the nature of God's decree in relation to the first sin? It was, that God decreed not to prevent the sin, although he might have prevented it, and that, in that sense, he willed it to be, rather than not to be. Now, to say that he did not prevent it, when he might have prevented it, is the same thing as to say that he permitted it, when he had the power not to permit it. He did not unwillingly permit it; he willingly permitted it. But to hold that God willingly permitted the sin, and efficaciously caused its commission, is to hold inconsistent positions. We are at liberty to make our choice between the incongruous alternatives. We prefer the doctrine cautiously and often stated, that God decreed to permit the first sin, when he could have prevented it, to that which is less formally and frequently intimated, namely, that

God necessitated it by an efficacious determination. We appeal from Calvin, as Supralapsarian, to Calvin, as Sublapsarian.

In the second place, let it be remembered that Calvin's elaborately established doctrine was, that so far as man's nature at creation was concerned, so far as his ability to stand and freedom of will to elect holiness were involved, the first sin was unnecessary and avoidable. This even the Supralapsarians concede. But in the passages last adduced he seems also to teach that, notwithstanding these intrinsic considerations derived from man's nature and furniture, God's decree, by an efficacy exerted in the extrinsic sphere, made the sin necessary and unavoidable. Now, either this efficacious influence was confined to the sphere external to man's subjectivity, or it was not. The first of these suppositions appears evidently to be that which Calvin makes. Let us consider the mode in which, of necessity, it must have operated. The external means through which its force would have been exerted were the temptation of the devil, the presentation of the forbidden fruit, and the correlation of the bodily senses with that fruit. But, according to Calvin's express admission, the internal forces of man's nature were adequate to resist the influence exercised by these external forces. He could have endured temptation, and have been blessed in enduring it. It is, therefore, upon his principles, impossible to conceive how an influence proceeding *ab extra* could have efficaciously procured the commission of the sin. The will of man which was indued with strength to stand must have been affected by an efficacious influence immediately exerted upon it in order to impart efficacy to the external forces operating upon it. But if the supposed efficacious influence were confined to the external sphere, then, *ex hypothesi*, no efficacious influence was exercised in the internal sphere of man's subjectivity. The distinction between the intrinsic avoidableness of the sin and its extrinsic unavoidableness is both inconceivable and impossible. It involves a contradiction.

If the other alternative be assumed, namely, that the efficacious influence which necessitated the sin was not confined to the external sphere, but, beginning from without, crossed the boundary line of man's subjectivity and operated directly upon his

nature, it would follow that God gave man grace to stand, and himself by an irresistible force overcame that grace; which amounts to this, that God rendered man both able and unable to stand, which is a flat contradiction. If it be said, that God at first made man able to stand, and then by an efficacious influence exerted upon his nature overcame and destroyed that original ability, the questions at once arise, 'Wherefore was the original ability bestowed, if it was at once to be removed? Where was the use, what the office, of such ability? It never was called into exercise. At the first moment of conflict with temptation, when it might have strengthened Adam to resist it and to maintain his integrity, it ceased to exist because extinguished by an efficacious influence from God, which determined the will to the commission of the sin. Further, the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. If he gave Adam ability to stand, he would not have taken back that gift without a sufficient reason for its withdrawal. That reason could only have been found in the sin of Adam. But, according to the supposition we are considering, the gift of ability was resumed before the first sin was committed, inasmuch as it held that he was unable to stand, for the very reason that God efficaciously determined him to fall. The first sin was grounded in a disability inflicted by God, and therefore could not possibly have grounded the disability itself. It is but trifling with the perfections of God—with his immutability at least—to say that he first communicated to Adam ability to stand, and then efficaciously neutralised that ability before Adam's first sin was committed.

We cannot, in view of these considerations, adopt either of the alternatives mentioned: that an efficacious influence procuring the commission of the first sin operated purely in the sphere of external circumstances, or, that it passed out of the external sphere into the subjective nature of man, and determined it to the production of sin. And as these are the only conceivable modes in which such an efficacious influence could be exerted, we are obliged to refuse our assent to the position that God's decree necessitated the first sin by efficaciously procuring its commission.

We have remarked that the view, apparently maintained by Calvin, that God by his decree necessitated the first sin involves two suppositions: either that God efficaciously procured the commission of the sin; or, that he himself effected it. We have shown that the first of these suppositions cannot be substantiated; the second remains to be discussed.

In the two testimonies cited from the Institutes and the treatise on Eternal Predestination, it will be noticed that Calvin, in affirming that the will of God is necessity, and that as he willed the occurrence of the first sin it was necessary, appeals for confirmation of that view to the same passage of Augustin. Now it is well known that the eminent father whose authority he invoked held that as God is the efficient cause of all things, he must have been the efficient cause of sin, since sin is a thing. But in order to free the divine causality from the taint of moral evil, he adopted a distinction between sin as an act and sin as a quality of the act. The act he affirmed to be a simple entity and therefore a good thing. Consequently God without contracting any taint, immediately effected sin, considered as an act. It follows that the act was necessary. But inasmuch as a sinful quality is a thing which, upon his principles, would have to be referred to God's efficiency for its production, he went further, and, to relieve his theory of this difficulty, took the ground that sin, considered qualitatively, is a mere privation. It is nothing positive; it is a defect of a positively good quality which ought to exist and does not. God's efficiency is, therefore, not implicated in its occurrence. On the other hand, Augustin, as we have seen, held—and Calvin concurred with him—that there are some things which God does himself and some things which he permits to be done by others. Into the category of things which he permits to be done by others sin falls. If sin be not what he here intended to specify, what is there more than it which God permits to be done by others and does not do himself? Sin then, is a thing which God does not do himself, but permits to be done by others. Now either sin both as act and quality was a thing which God permitted to be done by others and did not do himself, or it was not. If it was, sin as an act was not done by God himself, and his other position is contradicted,

viz., that sin, as an act, is done by God himself. If it was not, then his meaning is that sin as a quality was permitted to be done by others. If so, as a thing which is done is an effect which must have been produced by some efficient cause, sin as a quality was an effect produced by an efficient cause and an efficient cause other than God himself; and that is contradictory to his position that God is the only efficient cause of all things that are done; and also to his view that sin is a mere privation, and therefore not a thing done by an efficient cause. Moreover, if it be said that sin is not a thing which was done, but merely the privation of a thing which ought to have been done, it would follow that sin is nothing, and therefore had no cause. The only method of avoiding this conclusion is by holding that sin is the effect of a deficient cause; and that extraordinary hypothesis we shall subject, as we go on, to a careful examination.

In the course of this discussion it has been remarked that we have nowhere in his writings encountered the distinction, as formally made by Calvin, between sin considered simply as an act and sin considered as a quality. But let it be supposed that he acted under the influence of that distinction as made by Augustine and with which he must have been acquainted, in consequence of his familiarity with the works of that great man. Under that supposition, the meaning of Calvin, when he says that although the first sin was not rendered necessary by any reasons intrinsic to the nature of man, it was necessitated by the fore-ordaining will of God, was that God decreed to effect the sin, simply as an act, and hence the occurrence of the sin was necessary; while it was in the power of man, so far as his natural endowments were concerned, to avoid producing the evil quality of the sin. We repeat it, that we are slow to believe that this was Calvin's view; but if it was, it is, in our judgment, out of harmony with his perspicuously stated doctrine concerning the nature of the divine decree in relation to the first sin, and concerning the ability of man to have avoided the commission of that sin, which sprung from the rich and ample endowments that were concreated with his being. We are satisfied that our views are in harmony with the general strain and tenor of his teachings, and that this has been proved by an ap-

peal to his writings. We are not bound to follow him in utterances which are exceptional and incapable of logical adjustment to his system; and the special tenet in which he appears to follow Augustine we regard as belonging to that category. This tenet is precisely that of the Supralapsarians; and we embrace the opportunity to discuss it, which is thus afforded us by the legitimate demands of our argument.

Let it then be noticed, that it is universally admitted by the supralapsarian theologians, that God is not the efficient producer of sin, as sin. So far as an act or event is evil, it is attributable to the creature; only so far as it is good, is it efficiently caused by the Creator. It is their doctrine that God effects the act or event, as simply act or event, and that he permits the evil quality, or the defect of a good quality, which characterises the act or event. But inasmuch as the efficacious decree which necessitates the act or event, necessitates likewise its qualities as inseparable concomitants, the permission of the latter supposes their necessitation. The act or event cannot occur without these accidents, and therefore the accidents, although in themselves only permitted, are necessitated by virtue of their necessary connexion with the entity in which they inhere. It is in this way that they consider permission as equivalent to necessitation. There is no other way, to our minds, in which the paradox can be explained, that, although God only permitted the sin of the first man and of the angels, as sin, he at the same time made its commission necessary and unavoidable. He did not necessitate it, in itself considered, but simply as an accident of a necessary act or event. In what other mode can the extraordinary proposition be understood: God did not efficaciously decree to produce the first sin, as sin, he only decreed to permit it; but the sin became a necessity in consequence of his decree to permit it—the sin must have occurred because permitted. The hypothesis is intended to show how God can be the efficient cause of all things, and yet not be directly and causally implicated in the production of evil.

Having endeavored to elucidate, as fairly as we could, the meaning of those who maintain this position, we proceed to evince its untenableness; and inasmuch as ecclesiastical history proves

that Calvinists have been divided upon this question, we shall no longer appeal to authority, but discuss the matter upon its merits.

1. This hypothesis is contradictory of the fundamental principle which it was invented to support, namely, that God is the efficient cause of all things—beings, acts, and events. Either the sinful quality of Adam's act in eating the forbidden fruit—that which gave the act its denomination as sinful—was something or it was nothing. If it was something, it must, as an effect, have had an efficient cause. Either that efficient cause was God or Adam. If God was the efficient cause, the position is abandoned—that God does not effect, but only permits, sin, as sin. If Adam was the efficient cause, the principle is contradicted that God is the only efficient cause of all things. If, on the other hand, it be said that the sinful quality of Adam's act in eating the forbidden fruit was nothing, it would follow that there was no sin in that act, that the act was a good one, although God had said, *Thou shalt not eat of it*; that all other sins which took their origin from this are nothing; and that for nothing the judgments of God rest upon the race, the scheme of redemption was wrought out in the blood of Christ, and some men are everlastingly damned. No, it cannot have been nothing. It must have been something; and then the principle which makes God the efficient cause of all things necessitates the position, that he was the efficient cause of the sinful quality of Adam's act in eating the forbidden fruit. But the advocates of the hypothesis under consideration deny that God is the efficient cause of that sinful quality, and contend that he only permitted it. The hypothesis, consequently, contradicts their fundamental principle, and is, therefore, nothing worth.

If it be urged, that the sin of Adam's act was not a positive quality, but simply the defect of a good quality which ought to have existed, we reply: Either this defect of a good quality was something or nothing. If it was nothing, as of nothing nothing can be positively predicated, and from nothing nothing, by creature power, can be produced, it cannot be affirmed of this defect that it was damnable, and it would follow that the miseries of mankind which had their source in nothing are themselves nothing.

It will not do to say that this first defect of a good quality was nothing, and that, therefore, all sin is a chimera. No Supralapsarian would take ground so impious and absurd. If the defect of a good quality in Adam's act was something, then again we submit that, according to the principle that God is the efficient cause of all things, he was the efficient cause of this thing, and so the position of the advocates of the hypothesis in hand is contradicted, namely, that God did not efficiently produce, but only permitted, sin, as sin. But if the position, that God only permitted the defect, be still asserted, then there is something of which God was not the efficient cause, and the principle is given up, that God is the efficient cause of all things. Either horn of the dilemma is fatal to the Supralapsarian.

2. The necessitation of the act by which Adam committed the first sin would have been the necessitation of the sin, as sin. The distinction between effectuation and permission, as to that sin, is destitute of force. There is a distinction between the matter and the form of an act, and in the light of that distinction certain acts may be pronounced materially right and formally wrong, or materially wrong and formally right. Should one strike a man a fatal blow, intending only to stun him so as to save him from drowning, the act would be materially wrong, but formally right. Should one give alms to a beggar in order to elicit applause from bystanders, the act would be materially right but formally wrong. It would appear that resort is had to this distinction in the affirmation, that the act of Adam in eating the forbidden fruit may have been right, as an act, but that the quality of it was sinful. The wrong motive gave the act a sinful denomination—it may, in other words, have been materially right, but formally wrong. This distinction can only hold good where the matter itself of an act is not forbidden; but not where the act, materially considered, is prohibited. Now, this was the case with the eating of the forbidden fruit—the act itself, as to the matter of it, was prohibited: Thou shalt not eat of it. It is impossible, therefore, to say of Adam's act in eating of it, that it was materially right and formally wrong. The truth is, it was both materially and formally wrong. It was emphatically a wicked deed, in all re-

spects sinful. Unless, therefore, this distinction is not exhaustive, and there may be a further distinction in the matter itself of the act, it will follow that if God produced the act, as act, he produced that which was materially sinful, as a violation of the divine command. Throw out of account the sinful quality—motive, intention, whatever it may have been—and confine the agency of God to the mere matter of the act, and as that was wrong, the conclusion must be that God did a wrong thing. But that is contradictory to the position maintained by the supporters of the hypothesis under consideration, viz., that God effects no sin, as sin.

If it be contended that God's efficient agency must be separated from Adam's agency in the production of the act, as act, so that while Adam did what was materially wrong in performing the act, God did no wrong, we answer: (1.) According to the hypothesis, the divine agency is the only efficient agency, Adam's simply instrumental. The act, therefore, must be supposed to have been performed by God mediately through the agency of Adam. If so, it is impossible to separate the two kinds of agency from each other in the production of the act. The only conceivable difference is that the divine was efficient and the human instrumental; and that only serves to show that the real actor was God. It is, therefore, impossible to prove that the divine and the human agency were so distinct in the production of the act, that they are susceptible of different predication, to wit, that Adam's was sinful and God's was holy. Thus again are we shut up to the supposition that God produced the sinful act, as sinful, which is contradictory to the hypothesis. (2.) This is made still more apparent when we contemplate the nature of the act. What kind of act was it? A corporeal one—the eating of the forbidden fruit. As God cannot be conceived as performing the bodily act of eating, and yet, according to the hypothesis, he was the only efficient cause of the act, it is necessary to suppose that he produced the act through the bodily organs of Adam which alone were adapted to its performance. Now, attempt the disjunction of God's agency from Adam's, and what remains to thought as that which was peculiarly accomplished by the divine agency?

Nothing. We are, therefore, driven to the conclusion that the corporeal act of Adam in eating the fruit was efficiently produced by God, and that what is predicable of Adam's act, materially considered, is predicable of God's. That is to say, we must affirm that God produced the sinful act, as sinful, which is the contradiction to the hypothesis already noticed.

3. No mind, unbiassed by a desire to sustain a hypothesis, would conceive it possible to attribute to God the efficient production of Adam's corporeal act in eating the forbidden fruit. It is not only inconceivable, but, we think, incredible. The doctrine, under proper limitations, of a divine *concursum* with the bodily acts of creatures is not only conceivable but rational, and it is delivered to us by the Scriptures. But that is vastly different from the tenet that God by his efficient causality performs corporeal acts. And unless that tenet can be established, the position of the hypothesis in hand, that God was the efficient producer of Adam's physical act in eating the forbidden fruit, must be regarded as alike unphilosophical and unscriptural.

4. Let us return to the distinction made by the advocates of the hypothesis we are combating, between the effectuation of an act, as act, and the permission of the sinful quality, positive or privative, attached to the act. This distinction must involve one of two suppositions: either, that the permitted quality may or may not exist; or, that it must necessarily exist. If the first of these suppositions be made, namely, that the sinful quality which is permitted may or may not exist, the supposition is further possible that it may not exist. Let us then suppose, that while Adam's act in eating the forbidden fruit was effected by God and was therefore rendered absolutely necessary, the sinful quality of the act may not have been infused. The act was necessitated, the quality of the act may have been absent. We would then have the absurdity of the supposed existence of the act without a quality which was essential and inseparable. Adam must have done the act, but may not have been guilty. And yet it must be admitted that the act itself was a violation of the divine command—an absurdity upon an absurdity. If the second supposition be made, namely, that the permission of the sinful quality

necessitated its existence in consequence of its connexion with the necessitated act, what is that but God's efficacious procurement of the existence of the sinful quality? and how that differs, except in words, from the efficient production of that quality, it passes our ability to see. For if one is shut up by irresistible power to the infusion of a sinful quality into an act, he is the mere instrument of that power, and to talk, under those circumstances, of his being permitted to infuse the sinful quality, is to employ language abusively. To speak of one's being permitted to do a thing, which yet he is compelled to do, is to use terms contradictorily. Adam was permitted to attach a sinful quality to his act of eating the forbidden fruit, that is, he may or may not have done so; but at the same time he was necessitated to attach the sinful quality to the act—he could not avoid doing so; this surely is a contradiction.

The force of these objections to the hypothesis we are considering must, in the main, have been perceived by the able men who have supported it, and the question is an interesting one, How, in the last analysis, did they attempt to resist it? The answer is to be found in the hypothesis, essential to their scheme, of the privative character of sin. They held that a good quality is something positive, an entity which as a real effect demands an efficient cause for its production. God is that efficient cause. But a sinful quality is a mere privation of the good quality which ought to exist but does not. It is nothing positive, no entity which as a real effect requires an efficient cause for its production; it is a *defect* of good which demands for its existence nothing more than a *deficient* cause. The defect of a positive cause corresponds with the defect of a positive result. Man was the deficient cause of this privation. This is the view that lies at the root of their scheme.

A full consideration of this radical postulate of the Supralapsarians we do not now propose to undertake. It has already been partly discussed in the first article of this series on the Freedom of the Will.* There also we referred to the masterly treatises of Dr. Julius Müller, in his *Christian Doctrine of Sin*, and of Dr.

*SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW, October, 1878.

Thornwell, in his Lecture on the State and Nature of Sin, in the first volume of his Collected Writings, as rendering superfluous on our part a discussion which would, of necessity, largely consist of a re-statement of their arguments. The same reason operates upon us now; and as Dr. Thornwell's Writings are, no doubt, in the hands of most of the readers of this REVIEW, we would refer to them as presenting what is, in our judgment, a conclusive refutation of the hypothesis that sin is a mere privation of good. What, however, we now purpose doing is to subject to a particular examination the special hypothesis of a deficient cause—*causa deficiens*—for the existence of sin, under the conviction that if that assumption can be exploded, the supralapsarian doctrine in regard to the genesis of the first sin will be deprived of its chief foundation stone. We shall not fight a man of straw. The supposition to be considered is supported, as furnishing the ultimate philosophical justification of their doctrine, by Twisse, by Edwards, and, we take it, by our reviewer himself.

What, then, is a deficient cause? It cannot be a partially efficient cause which produces a partial effect. For if some effect were produced by it, the result could not be termed a mere privation. Something would positively exist as the effect of its action. But that is contrary to the supposition. A deficient cause, in the sense in which it is here employed, is the precise opposite of an efficient cause. An efficient cause is one which produces some effect; a deficient cause is one which produces no effect. It is simply the absence of an efficient cause, which might have existed. In the case of Adam, and that is the case with which we are dealing, if holy dispositions had acted as an instrumental cause, the grace of God would through them have produced, as the efficient cause, obedience to the divine command. But as these causes failed to act, there was no obedience—there was simply the privation of obedience. No good cause was in operation, and consequently no good effect was produced. If there had been in operation an evil efficient cause, a positively evil effect would have been produced; but then what would become of the doctrine that the only efficient cause of all things is the

divine causality? For, in that case, the evil cause and the divine efficiency would have been one and the same. And then, also, the position would have to be abandoned, that God did not produce sin, as sin. It is sufficiently evident that, according to the hypothesis under consideration, the deficient cause of sin was one which was neither active nor existent—it was no cause. And then the question at once occurs, whether the language—sin is the result of a deficient cause—has any intelligible meaning, whether it be not a solecism to speak of any kind of effect where there was no cause to which it could be assigned. For, the great canon, that there can be no effect without a cause, must be understood to mean not only that every effect which actually exists must have had a cause—some effect, some cause, but that no effect can exist without a cause—no cause, no effect. But, if what is termed sin had no cause for its existence, it would follow that sin itself had no existence—no cause for sin, no sin. The cause of sin is nothing; therefore sin is nothing. The argument is as conclusive as it is short; and the absurdity of the conclusion is enough to destroy the supposition of a deficient cause for sin.

This reasoning, cogent as it is of itself, receives confirmation from the fact to which we have already adverted, that the first sin involved not only a want of conformity to the divine law, but positive disobedience of its requirement. It will not do to say that the act of eating the forbidden fruit, as an act, possessed no moral character. It was the act of eating which was specifically forbidden. Adam ate, and therefore was guilty of a positive, overt, palpable infraction of the divine command. No doubt the act of eating, in general, is indifferent. But this act of eating cannot be reduced to that category—it was this particular act of eating which God prohibited. To talk of such a sin having been, as a mere privation of good, the result of a deficient cause, is to speak unintelligibly. Here was positive disobedience, not simple privation of obedience. The positive effect demanded a positively existent and active cause. According to our hypothesis, this disobedience had no cause!

These difficulties, formidable as they are, are not all which

block the path of this extraordinary hypothesis—they thicken as we press our inquiries. What was that efficient cause, the absence of which was the deficient cause in which the first sin originated? It is admitted by the Supralapsarians themselves, that God furnished Adam at his creation with good dispositions, that he implanted in his nature, when he formed it, no positive principle of evil. How, then, did it come to pass, that when there was no acting cause, springing from his concreated dispositions, which could produce sin as its effect, the positive cause, existing in his good dispositions, did not keep him from sinning and induce obedience? How was it that this positive cause, which tended to the production of holiness, lapsed into a deficient cause in which sin had its source? This good cause could not have been counteracted by an evil cause, efficiently impelling the nature of Adam in the direction of sin, for the existence of such an efficient cause is denied. How is the gigantic difficulty to be met? The Supralapsarian boldly answers, that the grace of God was necessary to preserve Adam from sinning, and God withheld that grace. Grace was an efficient cause adequate to the production of obedience, but the fact that God withheld it left nothing in Adam's nature but a deficient cause from which sin necessarily resulted. Adam, argues Edwards, was constitutionally too weak to keep from sinning, and God was not pleased to impart to him the needed strength. Grace alone, argues Twisse, could have kept him from sinning, and God withheld that grace. Their language is different, their meaning the same. Their deficient cause of sin was simply the result of the withholding by God of his grace, which would have been an efficient cause adequate to prevent it. And yet they call this the divine permission of sin! Adam was permitted to do what he could not help doing! You may sin, you must sin—these are represented as the same thing!

Look at this matter in another light. According to this hypothesis, sin, proceeding from a deficient cause, was no real thing: it was merely the privation of the good quality which ought to have existed, the want of the obedience which ought to have been rendered. God, therefore, who is the efficient cause of real entities, of positively good things, was not the producer of sin—

he only permitted it. But the advocates of this hypothesis are obliged to acknowledge, that the privation of the good quality which ought to have existed, the absence of the good conduct which ought to have been maintained, involved guilt in Adam. He was on that account obnoxious to punishment. For the privation of good God condemned him. It seems, then, that the sin of Adam was something, which was adequate to ground the damnation of himself and his posterity. This is the express doctrine of the Supralapsarians—they indignantly reject any other supposition, viz., that God did not decree nakedly to damn man, but to damn him *for his sin*. Sin, they contend, was conceived in the divine mind as the ground or precedent condition of condemnation. It seems, then, that this privation of good involved Adam and his descendants in guilt, and exposed them to “the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the pains of hell forever.” Now, how did he contract this fearful guilt? He failed, replies the Supralapsarian, to produce the good quality and the obedience which were due from him. But why did he fail? Because, rejoins the Supralapsarian, God permitted him to fail. Well, it is implied in this that Adam may have stood in integrity and not failed. No, again responds the Supralapsarian, he was under the necessity of failing, because God withheld from him the grace which was requisite to prevent his failing. Now, we ask, was Adam responsible for the failure? Was he really guilty in failing? Did he, in thus necessarily failing in consequence of God’s withholding the strength which alone could have enabled him to stand in integrity, expose himself and his whole posterity to merited punishment? To answer these questions affirmatively, is to violate our conceptions of the divine perfections and our fundamental intuitions of truth, justice, and benevolence. Adam was no producing cause of sin, he was simply a deficient cause of the absence of holiness; and this deficient cause was the result of God’s efficient causality! The Supralapsarians refute themselves. They link the divine efficiency to the production of the first sin, as the privation of the good which ought to have existed. And then they represent man as damnable for not doing what the divine efficiency prevented!

Still, further, if sin had its origin in a deficient cause, and was, therefore, no positive thing, but only the privation of good, one would naturally conclude that the following consequence would logically result: that when the sin, thus originating, becomes in turn a proximate cause—as proximate cause it is universally admitted to be—it would only be a deficient cause. Springing from an ultimate deficient cause, it must itself be a proximate deficient cause; for the effect, although becoming in its turn a cause, must correspond in its nature with the cause from which it arose. Now, as a deficient cause, according to the Supralapsarians, can only issue in privative results, it follows that sin, as such a cause, can only lead to such results. The consequence of sin, therefore, could only be the privation of happiness, not the positive infliction of misery. A deficient cause itself, it can only originate privative results. We submit, that this is a logical conclusion from the fundamental position of the Supralapsarians; but if so, what becomes of their doctrine, that sin is the procuring cause of the miseries of this life, the wrath of God and the eternal pains of the world to come? Not only is the favor of God forfeited, but his displeasure incurred; not only heaven lost, but hell endured.

These consequences cannot be legitimately deduced from the ordinary doctrine, that sin, as a want of conformity to the divine law, as well as a transgression of it, is attended with punitive results of a positive nature; for that doctrine is that a want of conformity to God's law is itself a positive evil produced by an evil efficient cause, and therefore challenges the infliction of positive punishment. We are dealing with a very different doctrine, one which characterises sin as a mere privation of good, and assigns it to a deficient cause as its source.

But let us not do injustice to the Supralapsarians. They expressly maintain that sin was the *meritorious* cause of damnation; that while God is its efficient cause, in the sense that he inflicts it, man by his sin deserved it. This is their doctrine. But we cannot conceive, in consistency with the intuitions of justice and benevolence, that sin, *in the first instance*, could have merited punishment unless it was avoidable. Twisse and Perkins, as we have shown by citations from their writings in the article pre-

ceding the present, saw this difficulty, and maintained that the first sin was avoidable; and Twisse went so far as to say that it was avoidable, whether regarded from the point of view of man's freedom of will or from that of God's decree. On the other hand, they strenuously contended that God efficaciously decreed the first sin, and that, in pursuance of that decree, he effected that sin, considered as an act; and therefore that the sin was necessary, though as evil it was unnecessarily done by man. The sin was avoidable, but it was a necessity. It might have been avoided, but it must have been committed. What contradiction could be more pronounced? Nor will it meet the difficulty to say, that the terms are used in different senses determined by different relations. Let us see. If it be said, that the sin was avoidable contemplated in relation to the intrinsic power of man's free will, but necessary viewed in relation to God's efficient decree, and so no contradiction is involved, we answer: the Supralapsarians deprive themselves of this explanation, for they hold that God efficaciously decreed to withhold from Adam the grace, which they confess was necessary to empower his will to refrain from choosing sin. The terms are not used in different senses, and the contradiction stands in all its force. Adam, by virtue of the ability conferred by grace, may have avoided the commission of the first sin; but God, by withholding the grace which conferred ability, made it necessary that he should commit it; the sin was avoidable and unavoidable at the same time and in the same sense.

Still another view of this matter deserves to be pressed. The Supralapsarians, and the advocates of the hypothesis of the privative character of sin, fully admit that the good quality, the defect of which constituted the essence of the first sin, as sin, *ought* to have existed. Now this plainly asserts that it was Adam's duty to produce the requisite good quality. But obligation is, in the first instance, conditioned by ability. It would have been unjust that Adam should be required to produce a quality which he had not, as innocent, the power to produce; and consequently unjust that he should be punished for the failure to produce what, as he came from the hand of God, he had no power to produce. We have

already emphasised the important distinction between an original and a penal inability. In case an ability to discharge duty at first exists, and has been wilfully destroyed by an avoidable and therefore inexcusable act of sin by the moral agent, the inability which results as a penal consequence cannot exempt the sinner from the pressure of the original obligation. He freely and unnecessarily disabled himself, and justly bears the retributive results of not performing the duties which at first he had ability to discharge and of committing the sins which at first he had the ability to avoid. This truth, in connexion with the doctrine of the federal headship of Adam and the just imputation of his guilt to his seed, constitutes the Calvinistic answer to the cardinal position of the Arminian, that ability is the measure of obligation. The Arminian makes the tremendous mistake of putting the descendants of Adam in the place of Adam—the guilty in the place of the innocent. His principle is true, in its application to the first man in innocence. We maintain that, in the first instance, ability conditions obligation. Our conviction of the indispensableness of this principle in the case of Adam, in his integrity, cannot be affected by the unscriptural doctrine of its applicability to the case of sinners. We must insist on the truth that Adam was able to stand, though liable to fall. He ought, inasmuch as he was able, to have produced the good quality the defect of which, it is urged by the advocates of the privative character of sin, constituted the essence of his apostasy from God. But the supralapsarian supporters of this hypothesis hold that his ability was not a constitutional and concreated endowment. It depended for its existence upon the positive communications of grace. Now God, they say, withheld the grace which created ability. Adam therefore was destitute of ability by a divine determination. No grace, no ability; and God deprived him of grace. Where then was his ability? and how ought he to have done what confessedly he had no ability to do? Had he, by his conscious act, disabled himself, we can see how he would have become culpable for not doing what he ought to have done. But, according to this view God disabled him. How then was he to blame? Under such a supposition, it is idle to talk of moral obligation—to say that

Adam ought to have produced the good quality, which he could not have produced, nay, which God prevented him from producing. And it is worse than idle to attach to such an unavoidable failure the condemnation alike of himself and of his whole posterity. This hypothesis is a speculation of theologians, not the doctrine of Calvinism as held by the Reformed Church. This line of argument, too, renders it still more obvious that the supralapsarian position makes God the real efficient of the first sin, as sin; and so, while it extends their doctrine that God is the sole efficient cause of all things in all its logical development, contradicts the tenet by which the sweep of that principle is limited and the divine holiness is sought to be saved, viz., that God is not the efficient cause of sin, considered as sin.

We have thus subjected to examination the hypothesis—supported by the splendid names of Twisse and Edwards—of the origination of sin, as sin, in a deficient cause. If the arguments employed are valid, the hypothesis has been convicted of insufficiency; and if so, the main prop has been swept away of the celebrated doctrine of the privative character of sin.

There remains yet another view, the consideration of which is necessary to anything like thoroughness in this discussion. Some of the Supralapsarians take the ground that sin is a real evil, a positive quality; and that while God efficiently caused the first sin, as an act, Adam produced the quality of the act, as sin. In regard to this position we remark, in the first place, that a positive quality is an effect which demands for its existence a positively producing—that is, an efficient—cause. It is, therefore, admitted that the creature may be an efficient cause, which is contradictory to the principle, vital to the supralapsarian hypothesis, that God is the sole efficient cause of all things. In the second place, if the evil quality of the first sin was produced by Adam—and that is the supposition under consideration—it follows that it must have been produced by his voluntary act. That he could have produced the sinful quality without any act is out of the question. In that case there could have been no production. But, upon the principles maintained by those whom we are opposing, at least by the reviewer himself, an act has no moral sig-

nificance except it be grounded in and represents a quality (or disposition) lying back of it, and preceding it in the order of thought or production. Now this preceding evil quality which stamps the significance of the act in question must, according to the hypothesis we are considering, have been produced by a still preceding act; and so we would have a regression of act producing quality and quality originating act. Either this regression must be *ad infinitum*, or it must come to an end; which is the same thing as to say that the series must have a beginning. To suppose that the regression proceeds *ad infinitum* is to suppose an infinite series of relative commencements, which is contradictory to the fundamental assumptions of a Christian theism. If it be granted that the regression of act and quality comes to an end, it must be admitted that the terminal point is either an act or a quality. If an act, the vital principle of the advocates of the hypothesis under review is abandoned, namely, that an act derives its moral significance and value from a quality preceding it, in which it originates and which it expresses. If a quality be the terminal point of the regression, the position against which we are immediately contending is given up, namely, that man, not God, produces sinful qualities—that is, that sinful qualities originate in the acts of man. The Supralapsarian, who holds this view, is tossed upon the horns of these dilemmas. The position that man produced the evil quality inhering in the first sin is, as far as it goes, an element of the sublapsarian scheme. Its interjection into that of supralapsarianism is like putting a piece of new cloth into an old garment—the rent is made worse. Consistency would suggest that those Supralapsarians who hold it should either relinquish it, and stand up squarely for the sole efficiency of God in the production of sin, or adopt the sublapsarian doctrine as a whole.

Reserving to ourselves a fuller consideration of it, we now take occasion to advert briefly to the objection, that in denying that God is the efficient cause of sin, we deny that he is the first cause of all things. God is the first cause of all things in the sense that he efficiently causes their being, and their power to act. This is true of the whole creation—inanimate, animal, and intel-

ligent. He is the first cause of all human things, in the sense that he is the efficient cause of man's being and of his power to act. Now we have distinguished between the existence of man and his principle of activity on the one hand, and his sinful acts on the other. The former we refer to God's efficient causality, the latter to man's. Considered as to his being and his power to produce sinful acts, man is related to God as a first cause, and in this regard he is, as to his sinful acts, a second cause. His being and power owe their existence to God's efficiency, and depend upon it for preservation and continuance. But considered as to the actual production of sin, man is a first cause, inasmuch as he efficiently causes—originates—the sinful acts. He is relatively and subordinately a first cause—a second cause, as to his existence and power to sin; a first cause, as to the production of sin itself. General propositions, or propositions couched in general terms, must be accepted under necessary limitations. The general proposition, that God is the first cause of all things, is no exception to this rule. To say that he is the first cause, in the sense of efficient cause, of all things, including human acts, is to say that he is the efficient cause of man's first sin, as sin, which is denied by the Supralapsarians and Determinists themselves. Man, therefore, must be regarded as the efficient—the relatively and subordinately first—cause of sin. To take any other ground is to say that sin is nothing, seeing that it is to be assigned to no producing cause whatsoever; and to affirm that sin had its origin in a deficient cause is, as we have shown, substantially to affirm that sin is nothing. In that conclusion no theist can rest. Our doctrine, therefore, does not involve the denial of the proposition, taken under proper limitations, that God is the first cause of all things. The limitations which we have put upon its universality are demanded alike by a regard for logic and a reverence for God. He is the first, because efficient, cause of every cause—*causa causarum*—but not the first, because efficient, cause of every act of every cause.

We have thus considered the doctrine of the Supralapsarians and the maintainers of the privative character of sin, that the first sin is distinguishable into act and quality; that God effected the

act as good, while man infused the quality as evil; and that although God only permitted the evil quality, it became necessary in consequence of its inseparable connexion with the act, which was the necessary result of efficacious decree. Let us now collect the results which have been attained by separate lines of argument, and exhibit them in a recapitulatory statement. In the first place, we have shown that the distinction, as to the first sin, between act as good and quality as sinful, is one which cannot be vindicated; and that the hypothesis, based upon that distinction, that God effected the sin as act, but that man was culpable for the infusion of the evil quality, or the privation of the good quality which ought to have existed, falls to the ground. In the second place, we have shown that the hypothesis of the origination of the first sin in a deficient cause, which was invented to rid God of the imputation of having efficiently caused it, is incapable of proof; but that if it be admitted as a supposition, it does not relieve the difficulty of the ultimate causation of the sin by the divine efficiency. In the third place, we have shown that the distinction between the decree to permit the first sin and a decree to effect it is, regarded from the supralapsarian point of view, merely nominal, having no foundation in reality, and that the doctrine, founded upon it, when brought to the last analysis, is that God decreed to effect, and so providentially effected, the first sin. In the fourth place, we have shown that the supralapsarian hypothesis concerning the genesis of the first sin being thus logically reduced from a nominal one of mixed divine effectuation and permission to a real one of simple divine effectuation, it is impossible to hold the divine effectuation of the first sin without contradicting the Scripture account of the nature of the first sinful act as itself a violation of law, and admitting, what the Supralapsarians deny, that God effected the sin, considered as sin.

The conclusion from all this is, that the effectuation of the first sin by God cannot, upon the principles of the Supralapsarians themselves, be proved, but on the contrary is positively disproved; and that the dependent consequence must along with it be abandoned, that the first sin was necessitated by efficacious decree. And so, the position, for which we have contended, is estab-

lished—that the first sin was unnecessitated and avoidable, and in this way a competent account is furnished of the guilt and punishment of man, and of the origin of that moral necessity which now determines him in the direction of sin.

We had hoped to finish this discussion in the present number of the REVIEW; but it has grown upon us as we proceeded, and we must, with the leave of Providence, occupy another article with answers to special objections which have been offered to our views, especially the objection that, if the first sin had not been made certain by an efficacious decree, it could not have been foreknown.

ARTICLE II.

THE LAW OF MARRIAGE.

1. *The Hebrew Wife; or the Law of Marriage Examined in Relation to the Lawfulness of Polygamy, and to the Extent of the Law of Incest.* By S. E. DWIGHT. New York: Leavitt, Lord & Co.; Boston: Crocker & Brewster. 1836. 1 Vol., 12mo., pp. 189.
2. *Inquiry into the Christian Law, as to the Relationships which Bar Marriage.* By WILLIAM LINDSAY, D. D., Professor of Sacred Languages and Biblical Criticism to the United Presbyterian Church. London: James Nisbet & Co. 1871. 1 Vol., 12mo., pp. 226.
3. *The British Law of Marriage.* *New York World*, 9th July, 1880.

In ranking marriage among the sacraments of God's house, the Roman Catholic hierarchy is not so far astray as they are who regard marriage as a merely civil contract. And it must be acknowledged that all Papal countries contrast favorably with the United States in the regard outwardly paid to the sacredness of the institution, and in the absence of divorce laws, like those that disgrace American statute-books. For while the Romish observance of the true sacraments is semi-idolatrous, the customs of the

'THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW,

VOL. XXXII.—NO. 1.

JANUARY, MDCCCLXXXI.

ARTICLE I.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE OFFICE OF DEACON.

The particular topic to which we shall direct attention is *the Importance of the Office of Deacon*. But before proceeding to its immediate discussion, we shall offer some preliminary remarks in regard to the timeliness and desirableness of considering the whole subject of the diaconate.

1. It has not unfrequently been said, that the age in which we live is peculiarly called upon, in the providence of God, to take up Church-questions and subject them to a careful examination. There is truth in this remark, if it be received with necessary qualification. No doubt, it is the duty of every age to study the whole counsel of God as revealed in his inspired word. But there are peculiar circumstances connected with the Church, at particular times, which compel her attention to certain articles of faith and principles of order. Conflicts arise in consequence of the propagation of error, which necessitate a thorough investigation of the truth which is challenged, and a sharp and definite statement of true in contrast with false doctrine. And as every error is not circulated in every age, but particular heresies prevail at particular seasons, the result is that the special form of truth which is related to the prevalent type of false opinion, requires to be precisely fixed. It is in this way that the theology

ARTICLE IV.

THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL IN ITS THEOLOGICAL RELATIONS.

In the continuation of the discussion of this question, we come now to a more articulate consideration than before¹ of the great Necessitarian argument, urged by our reviewer, that if God had not efficaciously decreed and therefore efficiently caused the first sin, he could not have foreknown it to be certain. To state the argument in few words: God must have made the first sin certain, or he could not have foreknown it as certain.

In the preceding articles of this series we endeavoured by various lines of proof to show, that God did not efficaciously decree, nor causally effect, the commission of the first sin. By an appeal to the Supralapsarian divines themselves, we evinced the fact, that the distinction between efficacious and permissive decrees is one universally accepted by Calvinistic theologians, and must be regarded as an integral element of the Calvinistic system. We add now the express testimony of the Westminster Confession: "Our first parents, being seduced by the subtilty of Satan, sinned in eating the forbidden fruit. This their sin God was pleased, according to his wise and holy counsel, to permit, having purposed to order it to his own glory."² We have shown that neither the teachings of Calvin, nor of the Calvinistic symbols, lend any countenance to the Necessitarian doctrine that God made the first sin certain by a concreated necessity of nature. In our last article, contained in this REVIEW for October, 1880, we subjected to a careful examination, and attempted to refute, the Supralapsarian paradox that although God only decreed to permit the first sin, considered as sin, yet the decree to permit it necessitated its commission. An effort was especially made to show, that the hypothesis of the origina-

¹We discussed this aspect of the subject in the second article of this series, contained in the SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW for January 1879.

²Chap. VI., Sect. 1.

tion of the first sin, as sin, in a deficient cause, which has been used by Supralapsarians to save the divine efficiency from implication in the production of that sin, is one which cannot be maintained in consistency with their own principles, nor justified upon either scriptural or rational grounds.

It does not become us, whatever may be our convictions, to affirm that these arguments have been convincing; but if they have been, they have established the conclusion, that God did not by his causal efficiency necessitate the commission of the first sin, that is to say, that he did not make its commission certain. The great argument which is employed against this position is one which is derived from what is conceived to be a condition of the divine foreknowledge of the certainty of any event. In order that God should foreknow the certainty of an event, he must have determined its occurrence through the operation of necessary causes. The necessity of an event as fixed by the divine decree, and determined by the divine efficiency, conditions the possibility of God's foreknowing it as certain. Consequently, the indispensable condition upon which the foreknowledge of the first sin as certain depended, was an efficacious decree and the causal efficiency of God, which made it certain. There must have been, it is contended, an objective certainty in the event itself to ground the subjective certainty of the divine foreknowledge, in relation to its occurrence; and such an objective certainty could be referred to nothing but the operation of some necessary cause or causes. The conclusion is, that Adam's first sin was necessary and unavoidable. Against this argument, based upon a theory in regard to the conditions of the divine knowledge—conditions upon which omniscience is conceived to depend, we are entitled to urge the whole cumulative force of the preceding argumentation. It has gathered up proofs from Scripture, reason, and the teachings of the Calvinistic standards, and combined them in a great aggregate of evidence which goes to show that this condition of the foreknowledge of the first sin of the race could not have existed—that it could not be true, that God by efficacious decree so determined the commission of that sin as to make it necessary and unavoidable. The answer to all this is, that if these considera-

tions are valid, God could not have foreknown the certainty of that sin ; but it is unquestionable that he did foreknow its certainty ; consequently, they cannot be regarded as valid. We do not intend to imply that, the whole scope of the discussion being taken into view, this is the only or even the chief argument that is employed ; for, philosophically contemplated, the field of argument is more widely extended. But from a theological point of view, this is the proof upon which main reliance is placed. It is the theological citadel of the Determinist and Supralapsarian.

When we show, that the supposition of the necessitation of the first sin by an efficacious decree is attended with consequences, in relation to the character of the ever-blessed God, which cannot be admitted by the pious mind, the answer is drawn from the divine foreknowledge of the certainty of that sin. When we contend, that if man fell by reason of a con-created necessity of nature, he would not have sinned, but obeyed the laws of his constitution ; and that consequently there could have been no guilt, and no place for righteous punishment ; we are pointed, in reply, to the indispensable conditions of the divine foreknowledge. When we argue, that the whole dealing of God with man in innocence—the institution of the Covenant of Works, containing a promise of indefectible life to Adam for himself and his posterity upon condition of perfect, though temporary, obedience ; his probation, as a non-elect person, supposing the possibility of obedience as well as of disobedience, of standing as well as of falling, as a condition of its termination for weal or woe ; his endowment with competent ability to stand, with sufficient, though not determining, grace, and his possession of a mutable will which might incline either to holiness or sin—that all this excludes the supposition, that God by efficient decree had determined the necessity and therefore the certainty of the fall ; we are told that a refutation of these arguments is furnished by the divine foreknowledge. When we urge, that the dreadful necessity of sinning, which now, as an all-conditioning law, affects every human being from birth in his natural and unregenerate condition, cannot be accounted for, in consistency with scriptural conceptions of the divine attributes, the fundamental truths of

natural religion and the original intuitions of our nature, except upon the ground that it is a penal infliction in consequence of a free self-decision for evil which, in the first instance, was unneccessitated and avoidable, and therefore not made certain by efficacious decree operating through necessary causes, we are referred for an answer to the divine foreknowledge. When we press the view, that the distinction between efficacious and permissive decrees is an almost universally accepted Calvinistic determination, that there are some things which God decreed that he would himself do, and that there are other things which he decreed to permit others than himself to do; and that it is an abuse of language and a self-contradictory affirmation, to say that what was permissively decreed was necessitated by decree—that a decree that a thing may be is the same as a decree that a thing shall be; we are directed to the divine foreknowledge. When, finally, we maintain, that a permissive decree, which is conceived to have necessitated the fall, as really implicates the divine efficiency in the production of sin as an efficacious decree could do, since it would have accomplished all that an efficacious decree would have effected; and that the attempt to avoid this inevitable consequence by representing sin as a mere privation of good, and ascribing its origination to a deficient cause in man, cannot succeed, inasmuch as the alleged deficient cause—even were it allowed to be possible as accounting for sin which is a stern reality—must itself be assigned to the causality of God, as withholding the grace which might have been, if given, an efficient cause of abstinence from sin; we are still confronted with the divine foreknowledge. All this is set aside as inconclusive, in view of the allegation that the fall must have been made certain by the operation of necessary causes, in order that it might be foreknown as certain.

This argument, to which so much importance is attached, when formally stated, is as follows: Everything which God foreknows as certain is foreknown only because he has made it certain; the first sin of man is a thing which God foreknew as certain; therefore, that sin was foreknown because God made it certain. In regard to the truth of the minor, there is no dispute—it is con-

ceded. The fallacy of the conclusion it has been the main purpose of the whole preceding discussion to prove. Now, it is obvious to one who attentively considers the case, that as so much is made to depend upon the truth of the major proposition, it behooves that it be clear and undoubted. If it be not, it cannot be legitimately employed to check and destroy the force of the numerous and weighty considerations by which it is opposed. Even though it could only be shown that there is a considerable degree of improbability attaching to it, the presumption against it, created by the contrary arguments, would be damaging to its claims. But if it can be evinced that it is really untenable, the main prop of the position, that the first sin of man was necessitated and unavoidable, will have been removed.

We proceed to consider the arguments which have been advanced in favor of the affirmation, that every thing which God foreknows as certain is foreknown only because he has made it certain.

1. The first argument which we notice is that which is sometimes drawn from the prophecies contained in the Bible. Future events, and among them the free acts of men, have been predicted by God. But they must have been made certain by him, in order to their being foretold. In answer to this we remark, that all which can be fairly collected from the prophecies is—and we fully admit it—that God foreknew the certain occurrence of the events predicted, and that, as the free acts of men are among those events, he foreknew the certainty of their occurrence. Against the position that God cannot foreknow the free acts of men, this argument is irresistible. For this purpose President Edwards used it, and he elaborately and unanswerably presented it. But with the question, whether God causally determined the certainty of the predicted events, the argument from prophecy is not logically concerned. That they could not have been foreknown, and therefore could not have been foretold, unless God had made them certain through the operation of necessary causes, is an assumption which requires to be sustained on independent grounds. From the proposition, God has foretold the free acts of men, therefore he foreknew their occurrence as

certain, the consequence is valid. But from the proposition, God has foretold the free acts of men, therefore he made their occurrence certain, the consequence is not valid. Whether the foreknowledge of the free acts of men, which is proved by the divine prediction of those acts, itself proves the divine necessitation of them—that is a separate question, and must be considered upon its own merits.

But it may be said, that some things which God has predicted were made certain by him. Granted, but to argue that therefore all things which he predicted were made certain by him would be illegitimate. From some to all the consequence is invalid. More cannot be contained in the conclusion than was in the premises. Before the argument could assume a valid form, it would have to be proved by an exhaustive induction of particulars that all things which God has predicted were made certain by him. But even supposing that such a generalisation had been reached upon a complete induction, and that it were shown that all the predicted sinful acts of sinful men were made certain by God, that would not prove that the unpredicted first sinful act of a previously innocent man was made certain by him. All the predicted sinful acts of sinful men were made certain by God; the first sin of Adam was the unpredicted sinful act of an innocent man; therefore, the first sin of Adam was made certain by God: this precise statement of the argument is sufficient to evince its invalidity. There is no recorded prophecy of Adam's first sin, and therefore his free act in sinning is exempted from the scope of this argument from prophecy. We do not mean to imply that God could not have predicted Adam's first sin. But he did not. And as the argument is only based upon prophecies which have been actually delivered, it does not, at least directly, apply to that sin. If it be contended that it applies by reason of analogy grounded in a general principle of God's providential government, we dispute the alleged fact of the analogy; and then it must be proved that the analogy holds; and by the time that the argument reached that stage, it would, to say the least, be so vague and indefinite as to be devoid of practical force.

But further: the connexion between the proposition, some of

the free acts of men have been foretold by God, and the proposition, some of the predicted free acts of men were made certain by God, there is, for aught that appears to the contrary, only a connexion of fact. Both are true; but there is no proof, arising from this consideration of a co-existence of the two facts, that there is a causal connexion between them—that the making of the acts certain was the indispensable ground of the prediction of the acts. And until that be proved, the argument, some of the free acts of men have been predicted by God, therefore they were made certain by him, breaks down.

Still further: to say that God could have predicted the first sin of Adam, therefore he must have made it certain, is to apply to the particular case of that sin an argument which, as general, has already been shown to be invalid. To say, that because he could have predicted it he must have foreknown it, that is true; but the affirmation, that in order to his foreknowing that sin, he must have made it certain, that is the very thing to be proved. The considerations which have been submitted are sufficient to show that the argument from prophecy is inconclusive in its application to the question under discussion.

2. The second argument which we consider is derived from God's intuitive knowledge as grounded in his own eternal purposes. He knows his own purposes to produce, or to necessitate the production of, all things—beings, acts, events—and as those purposes cannot possibly fail of accomplishment, he knows from eternity, in one perfect intuition, their actual results. This is the position maintained by our reviewer, as will fully appear from the following passage in which he definitely states it:

“According to the laws of thought with which we ourselves are endowed by the Creator, we cannot conceive of certainty which is not established by antecedents. But, before creation, all antecedents must have been in the mind of the Almighty. His volitions, therefore, are the fountains of his creative acts. His purposes alone established the certainty of those wonderful events. Resolutions formed by an infinite mind must be accompanied by a positive assurance of the acts to which they relate. This consciousness is not the result of calculation or inference. It is not an impression of overwhelming probability, but an intuition that the purposes of such a mind, unrestricted by conditions, will be fulfilled. The

purpose is a cause, of infinite efficiency, and the effect is immediately apprehended as a certain result."¹

This seems also to be the doctrine of Edwards in the following passages—seems, we say, for his statements savour so strongly of the assertion of presentative knowledge, that one can scarcely help doubting whether the language does not necessarily imply it:

"The very reason why God's knowledge is without succession is, because it is absolutely perfect, to the highest possible degree of clearness and certainty; all things, whether past, present, or to come, being viewed with equal evidence and fulness; future things being seen with as much clearness as if they were present; the view is always in absolute perfection . . . As God is immutable, and so it is utterly and infinitely impossible that his view should be changed, so it is, for the same reason, just so impossible that the foreknown event should not exist; and that is to be impossible in the highest degree; and, therefore, the contrary is necessary. Nothing is more impossible than that the immutable God should be changed by the succession of time—who comprehends all things, from eternity to eternity, in one, most perfect, and unalterable view."²

But what grounds this one, perfect, all-comprehending intuition?

"The certain truth of these doctrines concerning God's eternal purposes will follow from what was just now observed concerning God's universal providence; how it infallibly follows from what has been proved that God orders all events, and the volitions of moral agents among others, by such a decisive disposal, that the events are infallibly connected with his disposal. For, if God disposes all events so that the infallible existence of the events is decided by his providence, then he doubtless thus orders and decides things knowingly and on design . . . If there be a foregoing design of doing and ordering as he does, this is the same with a purpose or decree. And as it has been shown that nothing is new to God, in any respect, but all things are perfectly and equally in his view from eternity, hence it will follow that his designs or purposes are not things formed anew, founded on any new views or appearance, but are all eternal purposes."³

In these statements it is affirmed: that the divine knowledge of all things is "an intuition"; that it is "one, perfect, unalterable view"; that it "is not the result of calculation or inference";

¹ *Southern Presbyterian Review*, July, 1879, pp. 520, 521.

² *Inquiry*, etc., Pt. II., §12.

³ *Inquiry*, etc., Conclusion.

and that it is grounded in God's knowledge of "his eternal purposes", which pre-determine, and by "a decisive disposal," necessitate, the existence of all beings, acts, and events. Now it is evident, that the argument represented by these passages consists of two distinct members, one, which is concerned about the *nature* of the divine knowledge of all events, the other, about its *ground*. As to its nature, it is held, that it is uninferential and intuitive—it is one perfect view, or, what is the same thing, intuition. As to its grounds, it is contended, that it is God's eternal, efficacious decrees which determine and necessitate all events, including those which are denominated the free acts of creatures. The argument is, that the divine knowledge of all events is what it is, because it is grounded as it is. The divine being cannot know the certainty of any event without having decreed to make it certain, either by immediately producing it, or by producing it mediately through the instrumentality of necessary causes. But having eternally purposed so to produce all events, he must know them, not by inference, but by a perfect intuition. In considering, first, this position in regard to the nature of the divine knowledge of events, we shall inquire, what is inferential knowledge, then what is intuitive, and then whether the statement, which denies the former and affirms the latter of God, be self-consistent and convincing.

Without pausing to offer an unnecessary explanation of the meaning of the term *inference*, we remark that inferential knowledge is that which is grounded either in mediate or immediate inference. The ratiocinative processes of the discursive faculty—the faculty of reasoning as contradistinguished from the generic attribute of reason—arrive at conclusions through the comparison of the terms of two propositions by means of a third term. The conclusion is an inference which is mediately derived through this comparison, and which is therefore said to be mediate. The knowledge which is grounded in such an inference is, consequently, mediately inferential. It depends for its existence upon a reasoning process which has been instituted, and for its validity upon that of the inference which has been mediately attained. The questions, whether God can reason, and whether he ever de-

pend upon reasoning in order to know, are entirely different. The former we must answer in the affirmative, the latter in the negative. The divine mind which, by inspiration, constructed the argument of the Epistle to the Romans, can reason, but the conclusions of that argument, however they may be known to be true by God, constitute no ground upon which his knowledge depends. He who formed our minds as organs for reasoning must himself know how to reason; but it would be illegitimate to argue that because we depend upon reasoning for our knowledge, the same must be true of our omniscient Maker. There are limitations which we are obliged to impose upon the analogy of our mental processes to the infinite energies of the divine mind. But upon this point it is not likely that there will be any discussion. We are probably agreed in denying that the divine knowledge is, in any degree, grounded in mediate inference. God knows how to reason, but not because he reasons.

But there is another sort of knowledge—that which is founded upon immediate inference. When one proposition is directly deduced from another, without the intervention of any middle through which a comparison is effected, it is said to be an immediate inference; and if it be enforced by the fundamental laws of thought or belief, it is said to be a necessary inference. When, for example, one of two contradictories is known to be true, the inference is immediate that the other is false. When we perceive phenomenal properties, we immediately infer the existence of a substance which underlies them, and constitutes the unperceived ground of their unity. Even were the truth of this inference, for idealistic reasons, disputed, it serves its purpose as an illustration. When we perceive any phenomenon, or phenomena change, we immediately infer, by virtue of the original and necessary law of causality in our constitution, that it is an effect which has a cause, or has causes, for its existence. Upon this point there is no difference of opinion between the reviewer and ourselves. When we perceive the stupendous phenomena of the universe, we immediately infer, by reason of the same principle, the existence of a cause adequate to their production. And we are prepared to go further and maintain, that in consequence of

a fundamental law of belief which guarantees objective infinite existence, we immediately infer an infinite cause—the existence of God is, in a normal condition and the regular exercise of our faculties in connexion with the observed facts of the external world, an immediate inference. It may be said, also, that when we have by an exertion of will resolved to do what we perfectly know we have the power to do, the conviction that the contemplated result will follow, is an instance of immediate inference. These cases will amply elucidate what we understand by immediate inference, and the nature of that knowledge which, as grounded in it, must be conceived to be immediately inferential.

Here, however, the distinction must be carefully noted which obtains between knowledge accompanying immediate inference on the one hand, and immediate knowledge on the other—a distinction which is sometimes overlooked. Immediate knowledge is that which is grounded in the direct relation of phenomenal objects to the faculty of perception, internal or external. Objects when presented cannot be inferred. Our knowledge of them is immediate, not inferential. We gaze upon an object before us; we immediately know it. We close our eyes, and we are conscious of a mental image which represents it. We immediately know the representative image; we only mediately know the object which had been presented. We immediately infer its existence from its vicar, which is the only thing now immediately known. The knowledge which springs from immediate inference is mediate. Immediate knowledge is not inferential. Which of these sorts of knowledge—immediate, or mediate resulting from immediate inference—is ascribed to God in the statements which have been cited, must be ascertained upon inquiry as to the nature of that intuitive knowledge which is, in them, attributed to him.

The terms *intuition* and *intuitive knowledge* are employed in senses so widely different, that it is necessary that they be discriminated from each other, if confusion of thought is to be avoided. Frequently by intuitive knowledge is meant that which results from immediate inference. When it is said that we have an intuitive knowledge of the truth of self-evident propositions

in which the relation is immediate between the predicate and the subject, it is obvious that we designate a knowledge which supposes an immediate inference to the truth of one proposition from the truth of another. When we characterise the knowledge of the relation of effects to causes as intuitive, it is also evident that we mean a knowledge which grounds itself in immediate inferences from the existence of the effects to that of the causes. When, for example, orthodox divines speak of an intuitive knowledge of God, it is not meant to affirm the Absolutist doctrine that we have an immediate and presentative knowledge of him. He is not an object of consciousness or of external perception. We do not gaze upon him as a presented object. How could an infinite being be presentatively known by a finite? Neither is his essence phenomenal, nor are his attributes; nor could the omnitude of his existence be comprehended within the field of vision of the perceptive faculty. The meaning is, that there are original principles in the human mind which, when empirically brought into contact with cosmical phenomena, necessitate the immediate inference that God exists. These principles are often termed intuitions, and for the reason, probably, that their effect when elicited into expression by the conditions of perceptive experience is equivalent to that produced by sight. We know the certainty of the things guaranteed by them, just as if we actually looked upon them. And it deserves notice that this figurative employment of the term *intuition* implies that vision—or real intuition—affords the standard of certainty with which the knowledge accruing from the exercise of every other power is compared. In a word, consciousness, which is the gaze of the mind upon its own phenomenal manifestations and upon the presented objects of the external world in contact with the organ of vision, is the surest as it is the directest guarantee of the certainty of existence. There is between it and the divine veracity in which it is grounded no inferential process, and therefore no room for error. Immediate and necessary inferences from the data of consciousness, which is, strictly speaking, intuition, that is to say, the looking of the mind upon phenomena actually and immediately under its observation, although not themselves intuitions but deductions, are nevertheless

truly said to involve the intuitive knowledge which properly belongs to those data themselves.

Sometimes by intuitive knowledge is meant the certain conviction that a vicarious and representative image is a guarantee of the real, objective existence of the object which had been presented. In this case the intuition, accurately speaking, is of the representative mental modification—of that we are conscious, and therefore have immediate knowledge. But the inference to the real existence of the external object is immediate and necessary, and we transfer to the knowledge which springs from that inference the attribute of certainty which attaches to the intuition itself. We call it intuitive knowledge. This would seem to have been the view of those Schoolmen who, like Duns Scotus, held that God foreknows events future in time through ideal representations of them, anticipative of their actual existence. But there is a difficulty here. Whatever may be the possibility of the existence in the divine mind of ideal anticipations of events regarded as elements in a temporal succession, the term *representations* is certainly unfortunate when used for this purpose; for one cannot conceive how there can be re-presentations of things of which there was no previous presentation—how things can be again presented when they never were presented. The hypothesis of a representative knowledge—*cognitio representativa*—of future events is encumbered with a difficulty akin to that which we cannot but regard as damaging, if not fatal, to the scheme of Idealism which is known as Hypothetical Realism: real, objective existence presupposes a representative mental modification from which it is inferred; but the representative mental modification pre-supposes real, objective existence in which it is grounded. The circle is vicious.

Let it be observed, that, in all these cases in which intuitive knowledge is affirmed, the different aspects in which it is regarded are all brought into unity by the fact that they are grounded in immediate inference. And knowledge so grounded can be characterised only figuratively and derivatively, and not strictly and originally, as intuitive knowledge.

There is another, and that the strict, signification of intuitive

knowledge. It is that which makes it synonymous with what is denominated presentative knowledge. When any object is in immediate relation to perception, internal or external, it is said to be presented, and the knowledge resulting is correspondingly designated as presentative. Being directly before us we look upon it, we have a real intuition of it. We gaze immediately upon itself, unmediated by anything else which represents it, or through which its existence is inferred. We have immediate knowledge of it. This immediate knowledge of a presented object is, strictly speaking, intuitive knowledge. Mental phenomena presented to consciousness, material phenomena presented to perception, are thus intuitively known. They are not known by immediate inference—they are immediately known. This intuitive knowledge, therefore, is not inferential knowledge. It is to be sharply distinguished from it.

There is another feature of intuitive knowledge, considered as presentative, which must not be left out of account. When we have an intuition of an event, immediately presented to us, we do not depend for our knowledge of it upon a precedent knowledge of the cause or causes which have produced it. We do not know it as certain, because we know that it has been made certain. We may or may not be acquainted with its causes, but we know it as certain because of our intuition of it. It is a fact, and we apprehend it as a fact. Nothing can be more certain of existence than that which actually is; and no knowledge can be more certain than that of a thing which is perceived to be. This is the very standard of the certainty of events. The certainty of a past event is the certainty that it once was, and we are certain of it when we know that it was. The objective certainty of a fact lies in itself; and when the fact is perceived, there must be, from the nature of the case, a corresponding subjective certainty of its existence. No conviction, or experience, of the operation of causes, grounds, in such a case, the certainty of knowledge. The knowledge is certain because it is intuitive, immediate, presentative. We have, then, in this instance, a knowledge of the certainty of events which does not depend on the fact that they are made certain.

Let us now, in the light of these explanations, consider the positions maintained in regard to the divine knowledge in the statements which have been cited. It is affirmed to be intuitive, but not inferential. It must therefore be regarded as presentative. But it is affirmed to be grounded in the knowledge of purposes causally operating to produce the certainty of events; it is therefore intuitive knowledge proceeding by immediate inference, that is to say, it is inferential. Given the knowledge of the purpose certainly to produce an event, and the knowledge of the certainty of the event necessarily and immediately follows. If it be said that this holds only in reference to the order of thought, granted; but, in that order, the existence of the knowledge that the event will be certainly produced is conditioned by the knowledge of the purpose certainly to produce it. What is that but a necessary inference of the one kind of knowledge from the other? The knowledge of the event must be either presentative or inferential. If it be maintained that it is grounded in a precedent knowledge of cause, it is denied to be presentative. It remains that it must be inferential. There are, therefore, in these statements the contradictory affirmations that the divine knowledge is presentative, and that it is inferential, in relation to the same objects.

Let us next contemplate the divine knowledge of a past event, that is to say, an event which God knows as past in its actual relation to a temporal succession of events. The divine knowledge is characterised by these writers as one, perfect, and unalterable view—that is, one, perfect, unalterable intuition, which is not inferential, and which embraces the past, the present, and the future. How then does God from eternity know an event which as related to a succession in time must be viewed as a past event? Not surely in consequence of a purpose that it shall certainly be; for, according to the supposition, it certainly has been. And if he could know it in consequence of such a purpose, the knowledge would be inferential, and that is denied. How then does he know it? By memory? But the knowledge which includes the past is said to be one, perfect intuition. Is memory one, perfect intuition, which includes the present and the future

as well as the past? If not, how does it certify the past? By a mental representation of the past event? If so, the knowledge of the event is mediate and inferential. But that is denied. How then? By a conviction which is equivalent to immediate knowledge? But, on the supposition, the event, as in every sense past, is not an object of immediate knowledge. It is known as gone beyond the reach of presentative knowledge. How then can a conviction that it did occur exist, except through some apprehension of its past occurrence? For if there be no apprehension of it whatsoever, how could a conviction of its occurrence be grounded? It would be impossible. If we return then to the mental representation of the event, we are shut up to the admission that the knowledge of it is mediate and inferential, which is denied. How then is a knowledge of the past from eternity possible to God, upon the theory that it is neither presentative nor inferential? If it be said that he knew from eternity the certainty of past events in this sense, that he knew that at a given period they will have been, in consequence of the certain accomplishment of his purposes, we say again that the knowledge would be inferential; but that is denied.

Further, if it be said that God from eternity knew the past by memory, it would follow that memory as a knowledge existing from eternity antedated the past, for the past must succeed the present in time, and the present what was future, and so the whole succession must have begun, and therefore was not eternal. But an eternal memory is, strictly speaking, a contradiction in terms. There could be no memory without the past, and the past could not be eternal. If it be admitted that God's memory of the past is conditioned and limited by past events—that is, that there could not be memory until the event be past in time, it is conceded that memory is not eternal. How then could there be an eternal view by memory of the past? But if there were not an eternal knowledge of the past, the position is maintained and denied that God's knowledge of the past, the present, and the future, was from eternity one, perfect, unalterable view. If it be granted that God did not from eternity know the past by memory, it must be allowed that his knowledge of it was from eternity

presentative; but a presentative knowledge grounded in a knowledge of causes, and not in the presence of the object, is a contradiction.

Take an event which is now occurring before us, and therefore to us a present event. How, according to this theory, did God know it from eternity? If the event is eternally presented to him, his knowledge of it is eternally presentative. If that be denied, he must from eternity have known it as a future event. But an event which is, has past out of the category of those that will be. It was, then, from eternity known to the same intuition as an event that would be and is, as to be in the future and as at present existing. If there be but one sense in which the divine knowledge is related to the event, a contradiction emerges; but more than one sense is not allowed. That one sense is, that God knows all events only as they will be actually developed in time in consequence of the successive acts of his power; and that, consequently, the divine knowledge is, strictly speaking, foreknowledge, present knowledge, and memory. But if, strictly speaking, that knowledge is divisible into these three sections, how can it be held to be one, perfect, unalterable view? An infinite intuition, as such, could not be conceived as thus distributed, without a contradiction.

Still further: if Edwards by one, perfect, unalterable view of all events, past, present, and future, meant a knowledge analogous to our presentative knowledge freed from its limitations and imperfections, he held the doctrine as to the divine knowledge of events for which we have contended. If such was not his meaning—if he did not mean by such a view existing “from eternity” an eternal presentative knowledge—there is but one other supposition, namely, that he meant a knowledge projected *from* a past eternity, forwards, through the whole series of non-presented events, *to* an eternity to come. It is plain, that memory must be excluded from such a knowledge, for memory could not exist before remembered events; and as, by the admission, presentative knowledge is thrown out of account, it would follow that the divine knowledge of events was simply prospective—that is, it could only have been foreknowledge. But the prospective knowledge

of the past, which is an object of retrospective knowledge, is a contradiction in terms. A foreknowledge of past events is not only inconceivable, but incredible.

Either this one, perfect, unalterable view was limited to events conceived as future, or it was not. That it was so limited is maintained in this affirmation: that God foreknew all events because of his purpose that they should be brought to pass—his purpose to make that actually certain which was not eternally in existence. But if this construction of the language in which the theory is conveyed be necessary, then, when the events decreed to be made certain in the future have actually occurred, God could have no further knowledge of them; for a knowledge grounded in a purpose to necessitate the future existence of events must cease when the event, having already occurred, is no longer future, but past. A purpose to necessitate the occurrence of a past event is incredible. And so, as the ground of the knowledge no longer exists, no more can the knowledge which depended upon it for existence. God's knowledge, consequently, would be limited; which implies a contradiction, since it is admitted to include all events, past, present, and future. If, on the other hand, this one, perfect, unalterable view was not limited to events conceived as future, but extended to events conceived as present and past, then, as the knowledge of past events cannot be grounded in a purpose to necessitate their occurrence, God's eternal knowledge of the past overlapped the only ground upon which all his knowledge of events is affirmed to be founded. How, then, could his knowledge of past events, upon this theory, be accounted for? It must have the ground of a purpose to make events certain, in order that it may exist. But as to past events it cannot have this ground. What then? Either, it must be admitted that God had no eternal knowledge of past events, which is contradictory to the affirmation that the one, perfect, unalterable view embraced all events, past, present, and future; or, if, as is confessed, he did eternally know past events, the theory must be given up, that he could know any event only because he eternally purposed to bring it to pass. The purpose to bring events to pass is said to be the sole ground of the knowledge of

the events; but the events having been brought to pass, the purpose to bring them to pass expires by its own limitation. The knowledge of the event as past, cannot, therefore, exist. The theory fails to account for God's eternal knowledge of past events, which yet is by the theory included in that knowledge. How then can its sole ground for the divine knowledge of the certainty of all events be consistently maintained?

Again: the divine knowledge of all events, as one, perfect, unalterable intuition, may be considered logically and relatively, or really and intrinsically. If it be regarded as a logical conception, it may legitimately be said to contain under it the distinct species—foreknowledge, present knowledge, and memory. In the case, for instance, of one, eternal divine purpose, we logically distribute it into decrees distinct from each other, in consequence of the distinction between the objects upon which they terminate, and the relations which they sustain to them—for example, the decree to create, the decree to elect, the decree to redeem. All of these are reducible to unity upon one eternal decree. So, in that of the divine knowledge, we logically separate it into specifically distinct knowledges, taking their denominations from the distinct events about which they are concerned—that being conceived as foreknowledge which relates to future events, that present knowledge which relates to present events, that memory which relates to past events. If, on the other hand, the divine knowledge be conceived as really and intrinsically one perfect, eternal intuition, it cannot be regarded as divisible. Real unity and real divisibility are incompatible with each other. As really one intuition it is not, in itself, partly prescience, partly present knowledge, and partly memory. What the nature of this unity is, it is not just at this point relevant to inquire. It is another fault of the theory we are considering, that it takes no account of this distinction in regard to the nature of the divine knowledge, which we are under the necessity of making.

Having shown the inconclusiveness of the argument: God, could not, from eternity, have known the certainty of any event unless he had determined from eternity to make it certain, so far as the doctrine contained in it touching the nature of the divine

knowledge is concerned, we will, secondly, consider the position held in it in regard to the ground of that knowledge.

The ground of the divine knowledge from eternity of the certainty of events, as affirmed by the Necessitarians whose views we are discussing, may be succinctly defined in one comprehensive sentence. It is the knowledge which God from eternity had of his own necessary purposes, proceeding necessarily, through necessary causes, to the production of the events,—his necessary purposes, for although they are admitted to have been spontaneous, they are held to have been necessarily what they were; proceeding necessarily, for they could proceed in no other mode than that in which they do proceed; through necessary causes, for all causes are necessary, none contingent. The questions, whether all God's purposes are necessary, and whether they proceed necessarily to the accomplishment of ends, we will not just here pause to consider. We regard the very hinge of the controversy to be the position that all causes are necessary, none contingent. That this is the position of the writers with whom we have to do, is so evident that to produce proofs of the fact from their writings would be entirely unnecessary. They over and over again affirm it, and treat any denial of it as absurd. Nothing is surer than that they assign all cause to the category of necessity, and refuse to admit the possibility of such a thing as is called a contingent cause. To hold that view is to be a Necessitarian, in the strict sense of the term, and Necessitarians, in that sense, they are. Consequently, that the will of a being divine, angelic, or human, can be, under any circumstances or relations, a contingent cause, they utterly deny. A free cause, which possesses the power of otherwise determining, they pronounce not only an impossibility, but an absurdity. They deem it strange that any intelligent man should believe in the reality of such a chimera, and passing strange that any Calvinist should entertain it.

As our end is mainly theological, we shall not enter into a strictly philosophical discussion of this question. What considerations of that nature may be submitted must be incidentally introduced. We shall not, however, exclude the little logic which is attainable.

(1.) The argument as to the ground of the divine foreknowledge of the certainty of any event is chargeable with the capital fault of reasoning in a circle. This may be regarded as a bold and startling assertion in reference to an argument which has been so famous, and has exercised so potent an influence upon theological thought. The presumption is heavily against it. But if its truth can be proved, that presumption will be rebutted, and the inconclusiveness of the argument evinced. It is provable in the following ways: In the first place, we have the position: the existence and operation of necessary causes proves the certainty of events. That this position is maintained, and maintained as one of leading and fundamental importance, will scarcely be disputed. To deny that it is, would be to deny the very existence of the Necessitarian scheme. It is argued—that all causes must be followed by effects; that necessary causes must be followed by necessary and therefore certain effects; that all causes are necessary and therefore all effects are necessary and consequently certain; that all events are effects, and are therefore necessary and consequently certain. In a word, the existence and operation of necessary causes proves the certainty of events. In the second place, we have the position: the certainty of events proves the existence and operation of necessary causes. That this position is maintained is provable in at least two ways: first, the certainty of past events is used to disprove the possibility of contingent causes, in relation to them. That some events are certain is beyond question, because they are past facts. “Having already made sure of existence,” says Edwards very truly of a past event, “it is too late for any possibility of alteration in that respect; it is now impossible that it should be otherwise than true that that thing has existed.” But the certainty of those events proves that they could not have been brought to pass by contingent causes, for the reason that supposed uncertainly operating causes can possibly bring to pass no certain events. But if the certainty of events disproves the possibility of their having been brought to pass by contingent causes, it proves that they were brought to pass by necessary causes. The certainty of past events proves the existence and operation of necessary causes.

Secondly, the certainty of divinely predicted future events is used to prove the same thing. Future events which God has predicted must be certain to occur. Granted. But this being irrefragably established, the certainty of predicted events disproves the possibility of their being produced by contingent causes. Being causes supposed to operate without certainty, it is impossible that they should produce events certain to occur. The omniscient Being himself, it is contended, could not fore-know, and therefore foretell, the result of a cause which may go this way or that way. As he has predicted events, which are consequently certain, their certainty disproves the possibility of their being produced by contingent causes, and therefore proves that they must be produced by necessary causes. Again we arrive at the affirmation: the certainty of events proves the existence and operation of necessary causes. Both members of the circle having been proved to be maintained, it is, when stated in precise antithetical form: the existence and operation of necessary causes prove the certainty of events; the certainty of events proves the existence and operation of necessary causes.

That this is not a misrepresentation of the argument will be evidenced by asking two questions, and giving Necessitarian answers to them. How is the certainty of events proved? The answer is: By the operation of necessary causes. How is the operation of necessary causes proved? The answer is: By the certainty of events. If any doubt should exist, whether the second of these answers be fairly attributed to Necessitarians, let it be considered, that it is unquestionably in that way they disprove the operation of contingent causes; and that, of course, furnishes a proof of the operation of necessary. To make it still clearer: they hold that events which are certain of existence are necessary; but, argue they, necessary events cannot be the effects of contingent causes; therefore, necessary causes must be inferred.

If it be urged that we have confounded proof with ground, that the argument is correctly stated thus: Necessary causes ground the certainty of events; the certainty of events proves necessary causes; and so the circle disappears,—we reply: It

is admitted that ground sometimes signifies cause and sometimes proof; but in this argument, as is often done, ground is used as proof. There may be other proofs of the certainty of even future events, to us, but necessary causes, as grounding the certainty of events, constitute the great Necessitarian evidence of that certainty, especially in relation to God's foreknowledge of future events. If it be said that the divine prediction of future events is a proof of their certainty, we reply: First, it is to us, but not to God. The question is—it is the very one with which we are dealing—what is the evidence grounding God's foreknowledge of their certainty? The answer cannot be: His prediction of them. It must, if consistently given, be: The operation of necessary causes pre-determined and known by him. These considerations are sufficient to show that we have not unjustifiably confounded proof with ground as different things, but have warrantably treated them, as, in this argument, made to discharge the same office.

If the charge has been sustained, that the reasoning under examination, touching the ground of the divine foreknowledge of the certainty of events, proceeds by a vicious circle, that extraordinary fact would have a twofold edge—it would invalidate the proof of the particular position that there are no causes but necessary causes; and, also, by that means the general argument, resting upon it, that God can only foreknow the certainty of events through the operation of necessary causes by which he determined to make them certain.

(2.) The position that all causes are necessary, none contingent, is fatally inconsistent with other positions, of fundamental value, maintained by Christian Necessitarians themselves. None are more pronounced than they in the assertion of the principle, that every effect must have a cause—otherwise chaotic anarchy results. In this we thoroughly concur with them. But sin is an effect, and, therefore, must have had a cause. As the first sin of man is that from which all other human sins originated, and it must be admitted to have had a cause, or the universality of the causal principle is sacrificed, it is a question of the last importance, what was its cause? Now it is strenuously contended

by pious Necessitarians that God did not produce that sin, but that man, as a second cause, produced it. But all causes, according to them, are necessary. Therefore the human cause, whether efficient or deficient, of that sin, was a necessary cause. If not, all causes are not necessary, since this was not. But all creaturely causes derive, as second causes, their necessity from the necessary causality of the First Cause. If not, how are necessary second causes, as effects, to be accounted for? They surely cannot be consistently assigned an absolute beginning. They must be referred to God as the first, the original and determining First Cause. If so, the necessary causality of God operated, through the agency of man as a necessary cause, to the production of the first sin. It does not relieve the difficulty to say that man was the proximate cause, if God, though the remote, was the real cause. If the first ball of a series in contact with each other be struck, the last flies off. The detachment of the last may be proximately referred to the impulsion of that next to it, but its real, though remote cause, is the blow dealt to the first. The series of necessary second causes is a series of effects, and the first of the series is immediately connected with the efficiency of God as the First Cause. We have then the contradictory affirmations: God did not produce the first sin of man; God did produce that sin. These are not independent facts, the harmony of which we cannot apprehend. They are contradictories; and it must be left to our Necessitarian brethren to effect a reconciliation between them. If they decline the attempt, and, on the principle that of two contradictories one must be true, the other false, elect between them, which will they choose? Will they go with the doctrine of the Church, or with the Necessitarian philosophy?

(3.) The position that all causes are necessary, none are contingent, is inconsistent with admitted Calvinistic doctrine. In support of this view we refer to the explicit statements of the Westminster Confession of Faith. To avoid confusion let it be distinctly noticed, that the Confession observes the distinction between the nature of God's knowledge of causes, and the nature of causes themselves. God's knowledge it denies to be contin-

gent. These are its words: "His knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent upon the creature; so as nothing is to him contingent, or uncertain."¹ In regard to this there is no dispute. But the Confession also affirms, as to the intrinsic nature of derived and dependent causes, that in some instances it is contingent. Some causes are declared to be contingent, and some events, which are the effects of such causes, are correspondingly said to be contingent events. This is the language employed:

"God from all eternity did, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass: yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established."²

"Although in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God, the first cause, all things come to pass immutably and infallibly, yet, by the same providence, He ordereth them to fall out according to the nature of second causes either necessarily, freely, or contingently."³

There can be no discussion as to the question, whether the Confession affirms the existence of contingent causes. The language is too definite to admit of it. Not only is their existence asserted, but said to be "established" by the divine ordination; and necessary and contingent causes are, as to their nature, expressly distinguished from each other. Things fall out according to the nature of some causes necessarily, according to that of others, contingently. There is, therefore, no room for a supposition that it may have been meant, that necessary causes, as generic, may act specifically through contingent modes, that some necessary causes may be contingent and some necessary events contingent. They are contradistinguished upon the ground of nature. They are essentially distinct. With the question of the way in which the terms, "*liberty*" and "*freely*" are, in these statements employed, we are not now concerned. What is emphasised is the unequivocal assertion by the Confession of the existence and operation of contingent causes. This the Necessitarian denies, and a contradiction results: there are no contingent causes, says the one; there are contingent causes, says the other. A contin-

¹Chap. ii., Sec. 2.

²Chap. iii. Sec. 1. ³Chap. v. Sec. 2.

gent event, says the Necessitarian, is one which could have no cause. A contingent event, the Confession teaches, is one which falls out according to the nature of a contingent cause.

If, in order to neutralise the force of this contradiction, it be contended that since contingent events are said, in these statements from the Confession, to be among the all things "freely and unchangeably ordained", and which "come to pass immutably and infallibly", they are really necessary events, and must, therefore, be referred to really necessary causes, we remark, first, the contradiction is thus attributed to the Confession itself, viz., causes operate necessarily and contingently at the same time; and that ascription of the contradiction to the Confession ought not to be made except upon the clearest and most convincing evidence. Secondly, no allowance would be made for the distinction between efficacious and permissive decrees, and it has been shown that it is a Calvinistic distinction, and that it is embodied in the Westminster Confession. Says Dr. Thornwell:

"Of course, this scheme [of the privative nature of sin] which deserves the reproach of *Crypto-panteism*, implied in the argument of Schweizer, abolishes the distinction, so vital to any consistent maintenance of the doctrines of grace, between the efficient and permissive decrees of God. The moderate Calvinists . . . have been compelled to admit that there is a sphere in which God leaves personal agents to themselves, and in which they are permitted to act as real, efficient causes. So, in innocence, Adam was left to the freedom of his will. This field is not beyond his providence; there are limits to the permission, and every act that takes place in it is made to play its part in the whole economy of the divine dispensations, and is ordered and overruled for the accomplishment of his ends. The divine ordination in this sphere of liberty does not impinge upon the creature's efficiency; he is the author of the deeds."¹

Certainly, if all foreordination is efficacious, none permissive, necessity, as always ruling moral agency and operating to the inevitable production of volition, is established; since, according to the supposition, God would have efficiently predetermined that all free, or spontaneous, acts should unavoidably come to pass. But permissive foreordination being allowed, that is to say, it being allowed that some decrees are permissive, that which in them is efficaciously predetermined, so as to be made inevitable and ne-

¹Coll. Writings, Vol. i., pp. 387, 388.

cessary is the *permission* of the given events. But the permitted events themselves, so far as the intrinsic causal agency of the creature is concerned, may be contingent, that is, so far as that intrinsic agency is concerned, not necessary and unavoidable. Hence the assertion by the Confession of the existence and operation of contingent causes, as distinguished from those of necessary. We are sustained in this view by Dr. Charles Hodge, who, although a Sublapsarian and a maintainer of the distinction between efficacious and permissive decrees, held that all events are by foreordination made certain to occur. Yet, he shrinks from saying that a permissive decree necessitates the event upon which it terminates, and thus clearly enounces the discrimination we have given :

“The universality of the decree follows from the universal dominion of God. Whatever he does, he certainly purposed to do. Whatever he permits to occur, he certainly purposed to permit.”¹

The sum of this consideration is, that if the Confession makes the distinction between efficacious and permissive foreordination, and also that between necessary and contingent causes, it cannot be understood as teaching that contingent causation is but a mode of necessary causation, and that contingent events are really a species of necessary events. If these distinctions be denied—if all foreordination be efficacious, why the mention of permissive? if all causes be necessary, why the introduction of contingent? Thirdly, foreordination is by the Necessitarian view limited to rigid predetermination proceeding through necessity to the production of its results; whereas some Calvinistic theologians, of the strictest type, while, of course, they hold that some foreordination involves such predetermination, also understand by some foreordination a divine purpose to order and arrange events according to an eternal, definite, all-comprehending, plan. That this is not a rash assertion, will be evinced by the following observations made by the distinguished Francis Junius, in his Discussion with Arminius, when the Calvinistic theologian was expressly endeavoring to reconcile Supralapsarianism with Sublapsarianism in regard to the order and object of the divine decrees:

¹Syst. Theol., Vol. i., p. 542.

“Those holy men, therefore, rightly stated that the election and reprobation of man was made from eternity; some considered them as having reference to man not yet created; others, to man as not yet fallen; and yet others, to man as fallen. . . . Now I come to your argumentation, in which you affirm that ‘according to that theory, God is, by necessary consequence, made the author of the fall of Adam, and of sin, etc.’ I do not, indeed, perceive the argument from which this conclusion is necessarily deduced, if you correctly understand that theory. Though I do not doubt that you had reference to your own words, used in stating the first theory, ‘that he ordained also that man should fall and become depraved, that he might thus prepare the way for the fulfilment of his own eternal counsels, that he might be able mercifully to save some, etc.’ This, then, if I am not mistaken, is your reasoning: He who has ordained that man should fall and become depraved, is the author of the fall and of sin; God ordained that man should fall and become depraved; therefore, God is the author of sin. But the major of this syllogism is denied, because it is ambiguous: for the word *ordain* is commonly, though in a catachrestical sense, used to mean simply and absolutely to decree, the will determining and approving an act; which catechresis is very frequent in forensic use. But to us, who are bound to observe religiously in this argument the propriety of terms, to *ordain* is nothing else than to arrange the order in acts, and in each thing according to its mode. It is one thing to decree acts absolutely, and another thing to decree the order of acts, in each thing, according to its modes. The former is immediate; the latter, from the beginning to the end, regards the means, which in all things pertain to the order of events. In the former signification, the minor is denied: for it is entirely at variance with the truth, since God is never the author of evil; that is, of evil involving guilt. In the latter signification, the major is denied, for it is not according to the truth, nor is it necessary in any respect that the same person who disposes the order of actions, and, in each thing according to its mode, should be the author of those actions. The actor is one thing, the action is another, and the arranger of the action yet another. He who performs an evil deed is the author of evil. He who disposes the order in the doer and in the evil deed is not the author of evil, but the disposer of an evil act to a good end.”¹

Enough has been said to show that what is affirmed by the Confession in regard to the scope of the divine fore-ordination cannot legitimately be pleaded to annul the force of its express assertion of the existence and operation of contingent causes, in contradistinction from those of necessary causes.

¹ Answer to Prop. VI., Bagnall's Trans.

It deserves further to be considered that while, as we have seen, the Confession maintains, in the general, the existence of contingent causes, it clearly represents the will of man in innocence as a special instance of that kind of cause. It declares that our first parents had "the law of God written in their hearts and power to fulfil it; and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject unto change." Again, it says that "man, in his state of innocence, had freedom and power to will and to do that which is good and well-pleasing to God; but yet mutably, so that he might fall from it."¹ Now a contingent cause, as distinguished from one that is necessary, is a cause which is not determined by necessity to the production of a contemplated effect, but involves the possibility of producing or not producing it. What, then, according to the Confession, was the will of man, in innocence, but a contingent cause, since it might have chosen obedience to the law or might not, might have chosen sin or might not have chosen it? If it be said that man was a free agent, not the will, we care not, so far as the question immediately before us is concerned, to stand upon the difference; for if man, as an agent, might or might not have kept the law, might or might not have sinned, the result is the same. He was a contingent cause. The Confession, it thus appears, teaches positively, that the will of man, or man through his will, in innocence, was a contingent cause. But this is not all. It also teaches the same thing negatively. It denies that the will of man in innocence was a necessary cause. Its words are: "God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty, that it is neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity of nature determined to good or evil."² There are three suppositions in regard to the term *nature*, as here employed. Either it is intended to signify original nature, or corrupted nature, or both. It cannot designate corrupted nature, for the doctrine of the Confession, as of all Calvinistic standards, is that nature as corrupted is determined to evil. For the same reason, it cannot include both; it cannot be a generic term, characterising nature in all respects,

¹ Chap. IV., § 2, and Chap. IX., § 2.

² Chap. IX., § 2.

for that would be affirmed generically which is not predicable of one of the species. To say that the nature, in general, is not determined to evil, and yet that the same nature, in particular, is determined to evil, would involve the Confession in contradiction to itself. It remains that nature, as it originally came from the creative hand of God, must be intended. That being assumed, there are, in regard to man's original nature, two suppositions possible as grounded in the words cited. The determining necessity of nature must be either a necessity of co-action (or force) externally exerted upon the nature and through it upon the will, or, an internal necessity of spontaneity exerted through the nature, and so through the will. The first supposition is clearly excluded by the consideration that the determining necessity of nature is expressly distinguished from force. The will is declared to be "neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity of nature determined." The necessity of co-action being ruled out as intended by the words, "necessity of nature," it follows that they must signify an internal necessity of spontaneity. It is, therefore, in this statement of the Confession, denied, that in the original and uncorrupted condition of man, his will was, by a necessity of spontaneity, determined to good or evil. It was not a necessary cause, determined in either direction. It was, consequently, a contingent cause, which had the power to operate either in the direction of good or of evil.

It has thus been shown, that the Westminster Confession of Faith both asserts the existence and operation of contingent causes in the general, and of a special contingent cause in the case of the will of man in innocence. There is, therefore, a want of harmony between the doctrine of Necessitarianism and that of the Westminster Confession.

In connexion with this question, whether all causes are necessary, it challenges attention, that the Necessitarian doctrine in regard to the necessary causality of the Supreme-Being is at variance with the ordinary, and, by us, accepted, teachings of the Calvinistic theology. That doctrine is, and to be self-consistent must be, that not only is God's being necessary, and his nature as the unity of attributes necessary, but that all the specific de-

terminations of his will and all the acts of his power are necessary. His causality however operating, whether *ad intra*, in reference to his own infinite subjectivity, or *ad extra*, in reference to things which are objective to and different from himself, is characterised by necessity. Upon this point we desire to be distinctly understood. We fully hold that the being of God is necessary; that it is absolutely uncaused, the sole instance of undeived, independent, infinite being, containing in itself, eternally and immutably, the reason of its existence. It must be what it is. We also as fully hold that the nature of God is necessary; that his infinite perfections must be what they are; and that the blessed God is in himself the infinite exemplification of the co-existence and harmony of spontaneous freedom with unchangeable necessity, of which our adorable Saviour in his humanity, angels confirmed in holiness, and human beings eternally elected to be regenerated, justified, and glorified, are finite analogues. But there is, so to speak, an infinite reservoir of power in God, which did not eternally flow forth in its fulness upon created objects. Creation, although incomprehensible by the thinking faculty, is affirmed as a fact by every theist; all creatures must have had a beginning, which was caused by the creative power of him who is the cause of causes. An eternal creation is a contradiction in terms, and cannot, as an alleged fact, be entertained even by a faith which indefinitely transcends the limits of thought. There must, therefore, have been—so we must phrase it—a period in eternal duration in which no creative act was exerted. Now the question is, whether the acts of the divine will which have had specific determinations *ad extra* were controlled by necessity. Were they necessary acts? It is not whether, on the supposition that God acts at all, he necessarily acts in a way befitting his infinite perfections. Holiness being taken to express the unity of the moral perfections of God, there is absolutely no dispute as to the question whether all his acts are necessarily holy. Of course, they are. To say that he cannot act inconsistently with his holiness, is but to say that he is infinitely perfect. But the question is, whether every act which he puts forth in relation to creatures is a necessary act—necessary in the sense that he could not have

abstained from it. This is the precise question in regard to which we maintain that the Necessitarian position is at variance with ordinary Calvinistic belief. That position is, not only that when God acts his acts are necessarily holy—that is admitted—but that whenever he acts he must act; the very acts which he performs are those, and no others, which he was under the necessity of performing. All causes are necessary; God is a cause; all the acts, therefore, by which he causes events to come to pass are necessary. The divine causality is, in no respect, an exception to the law that all cause is necessary. President Edwards devotes two sections in his *Inquiry* to the proof of this position, and it is maintained by our reviewer. We have not room to adduce passages in support of this allegation. But what need of it? The doctrine of necessity must include the view we have noticed.

On the other hand, it is common for Calvinistic theologians to take the ground that certain decrees and acts of God are free, in the sense of not being necessary. We cannot go into details, but let us for illustration take the question of the necessity of the atonement. It is maintained to be the necessity of means to an end. On the supposition that God determined to save certain sinners of mankind, it was necessary that he should provide atonement in order to secure the attainment of the end contemplated. But the question being, was it necessary for God to entertain the purpose to redeem, to elect some to salvation who were conceived as equally with others deserving of condemnation, the answer is, that it was not necessary, but God might in consistency with his perfections have left the whole race to perish. The decree to elect was not a necessary determination of the divine will. The same thing we confess in our prayers, which often represent a scriptural theology more accurately than do our speculations. We offer thanks to the Father of eternal mercies, that he freely purposed to redeem us, although he might have left us to our merited doom. We are sure that we utter Dr. Thornwell's view on this subject, though we have not just now the opportunity to refer to his discussion on the Necessity of the Atonement in which it is expressed. The following is Dr. Charles Hodge's explicit language in reference to this question:

"Freedom is more than spontaneity. The affections are spontaneous, but are not free. Loving and hating, delighting in and abhorring, do not depend upon the will.

"God is free in acting, as in creating and preserving, because these acts do not arise from the necessity of his nature. He was free to create or not create; to continue the universe in existence, or to cause it to cease to be".¹

It is not our intention to prosecute this special line of argument. It is enough to call attention to the fact that the doctrine of the necessary causality of God, maintained without qualification by Necessitarians, traverses the path of ordinary Calvinistic thought. In the hands of Edwards, although connected with some extravagant speculations, it was in a measure restrained, but in those of his New England disciples it soon developed itself by a rigorous logical process into doctrines which have ever been regarded as aliens and strangers in the Calvinistic household.

Before passing from this point, we would incidentally notice the curious fact, that while the doctrine of exclusive necessary causation has been reproached for agreeing with the tenet of the Stoics in regard to Fate, and the charge has been repelled by the Christian advocates of that doctrine, the truth probably is, that its assertion of necessity goes beyond that of most of the Stoic philosophers. Jackson, in his *Defence of Human Liberty*, collects a formidable array of citations from the works of those philosophers and their commentators to sustain this position, and, we are disposed to think, makes it good. He says:

"Leucippus, Democritus, and Empedocles, indeed the founders of the Epicurean or Atomical system, Heraclitus, the predecessor of the Stoics, and some others (whose notions shall be distinctly considered hereafter), held Fate in the sense of Necessity, as Cicero (*Lib. de Fato*, p. 359) informs us, and made the motion and exertion of the mind subject to it. But yet Epicurus and his followers, and the most eminent of the Stoical sect also, rejected the notion of necessity, and held the motions and actions of men's minds to be voluntary and free."²

A doctrine which is out of harmony with the analogy of the Calvinistic theology, and overpasses the fate of the Stoic philoso-

¹*Syst. Theol.*, Vol. I., p. 403.

²London, 1730, p. 132. "Free" is here used as synonymous with contingent.

phy itself—if the foregoing construction of it be true—would find difficulty, one would suppose, in vindicating itself from the charge of being exceptional.

3. The only other argument which we shall notice in favor of the position: God could not have foreknown events as certain unless he had determined to make them certain, is one which is derived from the infallible connexion between certain foreknowledge and the events upon which it terminates. Edwards thus argues: God's certain foreknowledge of future events, including the volitions of men, is proved by prophecy; but "certain foreknowledge infers some necessity;" that is to say, some necessity is an inference from certain foreknowledge, which is the same thing as saying, certain foreknowledge proves some necessity. We admit the inference, as a necessary one, from prophecy to the certain foreknowledge of future events. At the same time, while our faith in the certainty of the divine foreknowledge is fortified by fulfilled prophecy, we would have been obliged, in the absence of prophecies, to infer that truth from the infinite perfection of the divine knowledge. The fact that so great stress is laid by the Necessitarian upon the proof from prophecy goes to show that by him foreknowledge is strictly and properly ascribed to God as the only mode in which he can apprehend future events.

The certainty of the divine foreknowledge of future events being undisputed, the question is, whether it proves their necessity. We admit that it does, but admit this only under a limitation which vitally affects the general question. Edwards is very guarded in his statement of the case, as though conscious of the danger of ambiguity in the argument. He says that "certain foreknowledge infers some necessity"; that it proves the fore-known events not to be "without all necessity." Some necessity of future events is proved by certain foreknowledge. Now what sort of necessity? Edwards answers: "The necessity of infallibility or of consequence." How does he explain this kind of necessity? Thus: if a proposition be certainly true, a dependent proposition, proceeding from it by necessary inference, must also be certainly true; there is an infallible connexion, a connexion of logical consequence, between them. The necessity of the truth

of the derived proposition is established by the certain truth of the original. But it is certainly true that God has a certain foreknowledge of future events; therefore, it is certainly true, from the necessary connexion of a logical inference with the proposition from which it is deduced, that the foreknown future events will occur. This is the necessity which it is affirmed must attach to future events, if God's foreknowledge of them be certain—it is a necessity of infallibility or of logical consequence. Now this sort of necessity we as fully concede as does Edwards himself. Given certain foreknowledge of an event, and it follows that it will certainly occur; but the certainty of its occurrence follows by a logical and not a causal necessity. This is the limitation under which we admit the truth of the proposition: "Certain foreknowledge infers some necessity." We concede the proof of a necessity of occurrence in relation to God's knowledge; we deny the proof of a necessity of occurrence in relation to cause. It is one thing to say: an event will certainly occur because God foreknew it would occur; and another thing to say: it will certainly occur because God causes it to occur. The proof of certainty and the cause of certainty are different things. Edwards himself admits that the foreknowledge of an event cannot cause its existence.

What, then, are the force and bearing of this argument? If it stop here, all that it proves is a *cognitive* necessity—a necessity not inhering in the events themselves, but in the relation between them and God's knowledge. It is merely a necessity of connexion, as Edwards terms it; and the connexion is not one between cause and effect, but between the mind knowing and the thing known. But if this be all that is proved, the argument falls short of its mark, which is to show that God cannot foreknow future events, unless he causes their existence to be certain. What needs to be proved is not a logical, but a causal, necessity. The foreknowledge which the Christian has of the resurrection and the final judgment is certain, for it is founded on "the sure word of prophecy," which cannot fail. The immediate inference which faith draws from the statement of him who cannot lie, that those events will occur, to their certain occurrence, is a clear in-

stance of certain foreknowledge. There is a necessary connexion of infallibility and consequence between the knowledge and the events which it apprehends. The necessity, however, has nothing causal in it. No more has the relation between God's knowledge and foreknown events. It is allowed that the argument proves some necessity in connexion with foreknown events. But if it be arrested at this point, the necessity which is proved may be expressed by the formula, the events will occur because God foreknows them, and not by the formula, the events must occur because God will cause them. The "some necessity" which foreknowledge infers is not the "some necessity" which the requirements of the argument demand—that is, a necessity of events induced by the operation of necessary causes. We admit that God's foreknowledge of future events infers the necessity of infallible connexion or of logical consequence; but we hold that that is true of God's foreknowledge of events brought to pass by the operation of contingent causes. Every cause which is operative must produce some effect. A contingent cause must, if it operate at all, operate eventually in one way. There may, before the effect is actually produced, have been a possibility of the cause producing another effect. But it cannot produce two different effects at the same time; consequently, one effect must be the result. Now, whatever the effect of a contingent cause may prove to be, that effect God certainly foreknew eternally. Between the effect of a contingent cause and God's foreknowledge, there is, we maintain, the relation of infallibility or logical consequence. The argument that "certain foreknowledge infers some necessity," namely, the necessity of infallible connexion or logical consequence, in itself considered and apart from a farther prosecution of it by way of inference, makes no progress in regard to the question at issue between the parties. Both concede what it proves, and nothing is gained. The inquiry remains still to be settled, whether God cannot foreknow a future event, unless he determines its occurrence through necessary causes. If this be not allowed, and it be urged that it is sufficient that the argument from certain foreknowledge proves the necessity of the foreknown events, we insist that logical necessity and causal neces-

sity are unjustifiably identified. To use a familiar illustration: if we say that it has rained because the earth is wet, we do not mean to imply that the wetness of the earth caused rain, but that it proves that it has rained. If we say that the earth is wet because it has rained, we mean that rain has caused the wetness of the earth. So if we affirm that an event is certain because God foreknew it, we do not mean that the foreknowledge caused the certainty of the event, but only that it proves the certainty. If we wished to bring in a causal connexion, we should be obliged to say: God foreknew the event, because it was certain. Here we would indicate the certainty of the event as grounding the foreknowledge. A logical and a causal reason are different things, and ought not to be confounded.

But let it be admitted that the argument is not arrested at this point, but that it goes further, and although it does not formally and expressly, yet it does by implication, prove that all foreknown events derive their certainty from causal necessity; and that in this manner the proposition is sustained, that God cannot foreknow an event as certain, unless he has determined to make it certain through the operation of necessary causes. Upon this supposed state of the case we remark:

First, there are two ways in which Edwards implicitly extends the argument. In the first place, he contends that there must be certainty in events themselves in order to their being foreknown as certain. "There must be," he says, "certainty in things themselves before they are certainly known, or, which is the same thing, known to be certain."¹ A certainty to knowledge cannot exist before the knowledge of it exists. This preëxistent certainty, therefore, must be understood to be that which is engendered by the operation of necessary causes. Now, that is precisely what we deny, namely, that there must be a certainty in events, in every case, created by necessary causes, in order that God should know the events as certain. There is here, then, merely a positive assertion pitted against a negative, and the result is that nothing is proved. In the second place, it is implicitly argued that unless the certainty of events were produced by

¹ *Inquiry*, etc., Pt. ii. § 12.

necessary causes, there would be to the divine mind itself no evidence of that certainty. The operation of contingent causes cannot furnish the requisite evidence; consequently it must be found in that of necessary. ¹ This also is what we deny, namely, that the only evidence to God of the certainty of events is lodged in the operation of necessary causes. To affirm this, without proof—and none is given beyond the affirmation itself—is again simply to match a positive assertion against a negative; and no advance is made towards a conclusion.

Secondly, the Necessitarian either overlooks or throws out of account a distinction which ought to be observed between contingency, as related to knowledge, and as related to cause. Because nothing that occurs can be contingent, so far as God's knowledge of it is concerned, but is certain in relation to it, he denies what well-nigh all others admit—the existence of contingent events, that is, events which are brought to pass by contingent causes. This position, as we have shown, crosses the track of ordinary theological and philosophical thought. The presumption is against the view of the Necessitarian, and it behoves him to rebut it by clearer evidence than we have yet discerned in the arguments which have come under our notice, against the existence or possibility of contingent causes. The position, that God cannot foreknow as certain an event brought to pass by a contingent cause, can only be sustained on the ground that his knowledge of events is, in every case, conditioned by and inferred from the foreordained operation of necessary causes. We hold that some causes are contingent, and that their effects, as corresponding with them, are contingent; but that, at the same time, both the operation of the causes and the results are certainly known to God. Edwards constantly assumes that there can be no certainty which is not the result of causal necessity. We divide. Events may be certain to God's knowledge, which are not made certain by necessary cause. God's knowledge of the certainty of events cannot be employed to disprove the existence of contingent causes, unless it could be shown that all certainty in events is the same thing as necessity springing from

¹ *Inquiry*, etc., Pt. ii. § 12.

necessary causation. But it is obvious that there is some certainty which exists only in relation to knowledge, and which is to be distinguished from necessity produced by the operation of necessary causes.

Thirdly, no allowance is made for the distinction between impossibility as intrinsic and as relative—intrinsic, as to the nature of causes; relative, as to God's knowledge. Granted, that it is impossible, in relation to God's knowledge, but that an event certainly foreknown will occur, that does not prove that it is impossible, in relation to the nature of causes, that they might produce other results than those foreknown. One walks; that does not prove it impossible, so far as his causal agency is concerned, that he should have continued to sit. But it is impossible, so far as God's knowledge is concerned, but that the walking should take place. In like manner, the common judgment of the Church has been that, in relation to Adam's intrinsic causal power, it was not impossible that he should have abstained from sinning; but that, in relation to God's knowledge, it was impossible that the Fall should not have occurred. To say that God certainly foreknew that Adam *would* sin, is one thing; it is quite another thing to say that God certainly foreknew that he *must* sin, in consequence of the operation of necessary causes. He foreknew that Adam would sin; but he also knew that he had intrinsic ability to refrain from sinning. In short, God knew that Adam's sin was *avoidable*, but he also knew that it *would not be avoided*. If our first father had stood in his integrity, as the Church has steadily maintained he might have done, his standing would have been the event certainly foreknown; but then God would also have known the intrinsic possibility of the Fall.

It has been said, and will still be said, that this is inconceivable. But even supposing that it is, by our limited faculty of thought, it would not on that account be singular, but would have the company of many other revealed truths equally incomprehensible with itself. At the same time, this view, in regard to the scope of a knowledge which is confessedly infinite, is by no means as inconceivable as the position that God, having ne-

ecessitated sin, should punish, with endless and inexpressible torments, myriads of angelic and human beings for its unavoidable commission. The sentence of eternal truth in relation to every sinner is: "Thou hast destroyed thyself." Blessed be God, that he adds in reference to our fallen race: "But in me is thine help."¹

Dogmatically to affirm demonstration upon questions involving moral reasoning has ever been regarded as unwarrantable. That claim the Necessitarian boldly asserts in favor of his arguments, concerned though they be about the incomprehensible modes of God's infinite knowledge and the relation of his eternal purposes to the origin of sin. We presume not to adopt the same confident tone as to the challenge of them which has, in humble dependence upon the illumination of the Divine Spirit, been adventured in these discussions; but this may be said: it has at least been shown that, on rational grounds they have not been unquestionably demonstrated, and that, theologically considered, their harmony with the standards of Calvinism is not beyond dispute.

We have not room to develop our own views in a more positive manner. Suffice it now to say, that they have nothing in common with the conditional foreknowledge of the Molinist theory, or the conditional predestination of the Arminian.

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¹Uosea xiii. 9.