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ART. I.—*Revivals: or the Appropriate Means of Promoting True Religion. A Sermon preached in the South Congregational Church in Bridgeport, Conn., on the Lord's day morning, June 20, 1841. By John Woodbridge, D.D. Published by request.*

WHATEVER diversity of sentiment may prevail in regard to the subject handled in this discourse, there can be but one opinion respecting its vast importance. All who believe in the reality of true religion must be agreed, that it is of the highest moment to understand what are the true and legitimate means of reviving its power and furthering its progress. The views advanced by Dr. Woodbridge in this discourse are judicious, scriptural and timely. Although it was not prepared for the press, the fact that a congregation not his own, on hearing it, requested its publication, because they thought it adapted to subserve the cause of Christ, is an encouraging symptom of a good state of opinion in Christian communities.

Dr. Woodbridge shows first what are not, and secondly what are "the appropriate means of promoting true religion." Among the first class he places "a bitter and censorious spirit in opposing wickedness; a neglect or superficial notice of the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel; en-

Charles Hodge

ART. VII.—*Sermons on Important Subjects. By the Reverend Samuel Davies, A. M. President of the College of New Jersey. With an Essay on the Life and Times of the Author.* By Albert Barnes. Stereotype Edition, containing all the Sermons of the Author ever published. In three volumes. New York: Dayton & Saxton. 1841.

THAT religion is founded upon truth may be considered an axiom in theology. How can a man revere and love a God of whom he knows nothing? How can he obey a law of which he is ignorant, or believe a gospel of which he has never heard? Religious experience is, and must be the conformity of our inward exercises with our views of truth; and hence if those views are inadequate or erroneous, our religious experience must be in like degree defective or spurious. It must indeed be admitted that two men may have substantially the same opinions on religious subjects, and yet their religious experience be very different. But this arises from the one having clearer views of the truth, more faith, and larger measures of divine grace than the other. In both cases, as far as there is any real or spiritual apprehension of the truth, there is a conformity of the exercises of the mind to the truth that is apprehended. It may also be admitted that men may apparently differ very widely in their views of doctrine, whose religious experience is very much alike. But in such cases the difference is only in words. Many men are accustomed to deny the doctrines of election, efficacious grace, imputation of righteousness, &c., who nevertheless agree with those who hold those doctrines. We know of Methodists who sing with great zest the hymn on Election in Dr. Nettleton's village collection.

Making due allowance for the cases in which men profess to believe doctrines of which they have no real or adequate apprehension, and for those in which they reject the words in which certain doctrines are usually expressed, while they believe the doctrines themselves, it may certainly be affirmed, that a man's religious experience is in accordance with his views of religious truth; and consequently that a harmless error, in matters of religion, is as much a contradiction, as a true falsehood, or an innocent sin. Truth

and holiness, error and unholiness are so inseparable as to be rather identical, than united. They are different phases of the same thing. What is light to the eye is warmth to the hand. What the mind apprehends to be true, the heart feels to be good. Hence in scripture the word truth often stands for moral excellence, and the belief of the truth includes the love of holiness. Zeal for the truth, therefore, when enlightened and real, is only another name for zeal for holiness; and indifference to the truth is a disregard for moral excellence. We admit that there may be a zeal for truth, which is mere bigotry; that is, an attachment to certain doctrines, for other reasons than their intrinsic excellence, and which, consequently, is indiscriminating and generally malicious. But this does not affect the correctness of our position that zeal for the truth, when enlightened and real, is but another name for zeal for holiness. The men, the churches, or the party, therefore, do but proclaim their own shame, who make a boast of their latitudinarianism, though they may endeavour to deceive themselves and others, by calling it charity.

No enlightened friend of religion, therefore, can fail to regard with regret and anxiety, the disposition which has been increasingly manifested in this country, to make light of differences in doctrine; to regard it as a matter of little moment whether the doctrines of grace as taught in the Bible, or the Arminian perversion of those doctrines, or the Pelagian denial of them, should prevail in our churches. The indications of this indifference are too numerous, and of too frequent occurrence, to escape the notice of any who are not themselves indifferent. The loose doctrine of subscription to the Confession of Faith, as though it included nothing beyond assent to the absolutely essential doctrines of the gospel, which has been openly advocated among us; the avowal of erroneous doctrines by ministers in connexion with professedly orthodox denominations; the countenance shown to those who adopt such errors, by licensing, ordaining, and commissioning them as pastors and missionaries, and by resisting all attempts to exercise ecclesiastical discipline for opinion's sake; the loud opposition to the advocates of what was once thought orthodoxy, as heresy-hunters and bigots; the numerous publications of all kinds constantly issuing from the press either defending error, or pleading for its indulgence, are only a few of the many evidences of this low estimate of the value of the truth. This

indifference is often unconsciously manifested. Men can prepare and publish in various forms, essays on the kind of preaching which the age demands, with scarcely any reference to the importance of sound doctrine, beyond loose declamation in favour of the Bible, and in opposition to creeds and confession. They can draw the character of the distinguished preachers of other days, and ascribe to them every real, and many imaginary excellencies, without an allusion to their theological opinions. This could not be done by men who felt the importance of truth, or who were aware of its vital connexion with religion.

With regard to President Davies, who while living was probably the most admired preacher in the Presbyterian church, and whose sermons have certainly proved the most generally acceptable ever published in this country, it is surely a question of no little interest, What were his theological opinions? This question has the greater interest at the present time, as an edition of his Sermons has just been published under the auspices of our New School brethren, who are lavish in their encomiums on his character and usefulness. "He became," it is said, "perhaps, the most eloquent and accomplished pulpit orator that this country has produced; and was more successful in winning souls to the Redeemer, than any other minister of the age in which he lived, if we except, perhaps, Whitefield and Edwards."\* The theological opinions of such a man, cannot be a matter of indifference.

It is well known that there are two very different systems of doctrine prevailing more or less among the Presbyterian and Congregational churches. The one has obtained the name of the New Divinity, and the other for distinction sake, is called Old School Theology. The former rejects what has always been understood by original sin; that is, it teaches that men come into the world free from guilt, or liability to punishment on account of the sin of Adam, and free from any moral, hereditary corruption of nature. Both these ideas are included in this doctrine according to the general faith of the Reformed churches, though the term, original sin, is very often confined to the latter. Both are rejected by the advocates of the new system. Imputation of sin is hooted at as an absurdity, and execrated as inconsistent with the first principles of justice. And, since ac-

\* Mr. Barnes's Introductory Essay, p. xi.

According to the new theory, all morality consists in acts, and all sin in the voluntary transgression of known law, there can be no moral corruption, until we become moral agents, capable of understanding the law, of feeling obligation, and of knowingly transgressing the command of God. Corruption of nature, or inherent hereditary depravity, is thus excluded. Men are born without any moral character, as Adam was created in *puris naturalibus*. He, under the influence of self-love chose God, as his portion, and made himself holy; we under the same influence, choose the world, and make ourselves unholy. There is in us no unholy disposition or principle, which accounts for this universal and ruinous preference of sin to holiness. There is therefore nothing of a moral character within the soul, which is beyond the dominion of the will. If we choose the world from an innocent desire of happiness, we can, on more mature deliberation, from the same motive, choose God. There is nothing prior to this act of choice susceptible of change; as there is no corrupt principle leading to the choice of the world, there is no holy principle leading to a choice of God. Hence the doctrine of plenary ability. As there is nothing in the soul but its essence, with its necessary attributes, which are destitute of a moral character, and its acts; and as the acts of the will are determined by the simple constitutional principles of our nature, we have the same ability to will right as wrong; this ability belongs to us as moral agents, and is entirely independent of any influence of the Spirit of God. Regeneration therefore is our own act; it is a right choice or determination of the will, brought about by the power of self-love, or the desire of happiness. There may be a divine influence inducing men to form this determination, but it cannot be necessary, in the sense that without such influence men are unable to make this choice; nor can it be called efficacious in any proper and acknowledged sense of that expression. For according to this system, God cannot control the acts of moral agents; he can neither prevent sin nor the present amount of sin in a moral system; and, at all times and under all circumstances, he does all he can to bring men to repentance. His influence is therefore general; and if effectual in some cases, and not in others, it is not because of its peculiar nature, or superior power in such instances of success, but because some men choose to yield to it, while others choose to resist it. An influence which, in point of fact, is unsuccessful, in the great

majority of cases, though exerted to its utmost extent, cannot in its own nature be effectual. Justification, also, according to this system, is very different from what it has been commonly represented. There is no imputation of our sins to Christ, or of his righteousness to us. It is denied that Christ suffered the penalty of the law, or that his sufferings were of the nature of punishment; or that he made, in any proper sense, a satisfaction to divine justice. His death is represented as a kind of display or expression of God's disapprobation of sin, designed to prevent the evils of gratuitous forgiveness. It therefore merely opens the way for the exercise of mercy to sinners, on such terms as God sees fit to appoint.

This we believe to be a fair exhibition of the leading features of the New Divinity. We wish it, however, to be distinctly understood, that we are far from supposing that this system is adopted by all those who belong to the New School division of the church. We know, on the contrary, that there are many who not only reject it for themselves but condemn it in others. Unfortunately, however, the New School as a body are chargeable with harbouring, and protecting this system, and with endorsing it as harmless, having officially pronounced its peculiarities to be mere "shades" of doctrines. No man who believes that there is an intimate connexion between truth and religion, can believe that a system which rejects original sin; which asserts the plenary ability in the sinner to change his own heart; which makes regeneration our own act, a mere change of purpose; which denies the doctrine of efficacious grace; which explains away the atonement into a mere governmental display or symbolical expression, can fail to produce a kind of religion which is superficial and delusive. Happily, its influence is in a good measure counteracted by the better knowledge of the people on whom it is inculcated, and by the application of the truth, as exhibited in the Bible, to their hearts and consciences by the Holy Spirit. But this does not alter the tendency of the system, which is in so many points opposed to that which we believe is revealed in the word of God; a system which admits that our race had a fair probation in Adam, that his sin, on the ground of his representative character, is imputed to us, that is, that it forfeited for us as it did for him the favour of God; that consequently all the natural descendants of Adam come into the world out of communion with God, and as

there can be no holiness where there is no communion with the source of holiness, they are born without the divine image, without any disposition to delight in God, as the supreme excellence, but on the contrary, with hearts prone to the earth, and filled with the moral darkness and disorder implied in the absence of the light and power of a governing disposition to love and serve God;—a system which recognizing this corruption of nature, affirms that the power which the sinner has over the course of its own thoughts and purposes of his own mind, is entirely inadequate for his recovery from this spiritual death; that he is unable of himself to turn unto God, but must be renewed in the temper of his mind, by the mighty power of God; that this inward renovation therefore is not the sinner's own act; it is not a natural change effected by any of the principles belonging to our fallen nature, whether self-love, or natural conscience; but is a supernatural work, effected by the Holy Spirit, and consisting in a change not of the substance of the soul, nor yet of its acts merely, but of its moral state, communicating to it spiritual life, of which principle of life, conviction of sin, repentance, faith, and holy living, are the appropriate and certain results. This system, moreover, teaches that as the sinner cannot of himself produce that holiness without which no man can see God, so he cannot do any thing to merit the pardon of sin or acceptance with God; that the ground of his justification is not his own righteousness, but the perfect righteousness of Christ, consisting in his obedience and sufferings, whereby the demands of the law are fully satisfied, so that God can be just in justifying him that believes in Jesus; and that this righteousness of Christ is imputed unto us, and received by faith alone. This view supposes that Christ assumed our place, that our sins were imputed to him; that he bore the penalty or curse of the law, in our stead; that the obedience which he rendered to the law, and the sufferings which he endured, constitute that righteousness which as mediator he wrought out for his people, and which forms the only ground of their justification.

It is this system which we firmly believe is taught in the word of God, and has been, and still is the life and support of true religion in the church. It is this system which has of late years been so much derided as effete, and powerless, except for evil, and is still a standing mark for the shafts of denunciation and ridicule.

As President Davies is revered both by the advocates and opposers of this system, and as the latter seem disposed to assert a claim of peculiar relationship to him, we proceed to inquire what are the doctrines which he taught.

I. And first, as to the imputation of Adam's sin. "The angels," he says, "stood every one for himself, but Adam was constituted our representative; our concerns were lodged in his hands, and we fell in him."\* "By the sin of our first parents and representatives, our principle of spiritual life was forfeited, and the forfeiture is continued, and spiritual death brought on us by our personal sin. That Adam was constituted the representative of his posterity, and consequently that his sin is imputed to them, I shall take for granted, not having time to prove it. And if this be granted, then we are destitute of spiritual life; for that disobedience may be punished, consistently with reason and justice, by the judicial privation of our power to obey, cannot be denied; if these reasonable *postulata* be conceded: That it is consistent with the justice and goodness of the Deity to suspend the continuance of the powers of upright moral agency conferred upon his creatures, on the condition of their right improvement of them: That when such powers are abused and misimproved, they may be justly withdrawn: And that, when withdrawn in consequence of their being forfeited by a criminal misimprovement, God is not obliged in justice to restore them."†

It must frequently happen, in making these extracts, that passages cited in proof of Davies's opinion on one point, exhibit his views on others. Thus in the above passage we have, 1. A distinct assertion of the imputation of Adam's sin. 2. That his posterity are destitute of spiritual life. 3. That they are destitute of the powers of upright moral agency, which is a much stronger statement of the sinner's inability than we are wont to hear from the most strenuous of the modern assertors of that doctrine.

"I now proceed," he says in another sermon, "to the illustration of the great truths the apostle has chiefly in view in this verse (Rom. v. 17); and I begin with the first. That by the sin of Adam, all mankind are subjected to the power of death. It is the more necessary to insist on this, as the doctrine of original sin, as it is commonly called, is not only

\* Vol. ii. p. 189.

† Vol. ii. p. 404.

disputed in our age and country, but too generally denied, and represented as a Calvinistic fiction, supported neither by scripture nor reason, inferring blasphemous reflections upon the divine perfections, and degrading the dignity of human nature.

“ We now hear panegyries upon the powers of man, the dignity of his nature, and I know not what; as though these powers had never been shattered by the first fall. We often hear and read such harangues as these—‘ Can we suppose that a righteous and good God would inflict punishment upon millions of millions of his own creatures for an offence committed by another so long before they had a being; an offence in which they had no concurrence, and which they could not possibly have prevented? Is this consistent with the merey or justice of God?’ . . . . . We are also told, that as this is not the doctrine of reason, so neither is it that of revelation; that there are but few passages of scripture that so much as seem to countenance it; and that these will easily admit of another sense; that this, however, cannot be the sense of them, because it is contrary to reason, which a revelation from God can never contradict. . . . . You may observe that it is not my present design, nor that of my text, to consider that part of original sin which consists in the corruption of our nature derived from Adam, but only that which consists in the imputation of his guilt to us, or our exposedness to punishment on account of his sin.”\* In proof of this imputation he appeals first to the difference between the present and primitive state of the earth; then to the prevalence of death, especially over infants, with regard to whom he says, “ It is computed that at least one-half of mankind die under seven years old; and the greater part of this half die before they are moral agents, or capable of personal sin or duty, even in the lowest degree. Whatever therefore they suffer, must be for the sin of another, even Adam their common father, whose offence subjected him and all his posterity to the power of death and the various calamities that precede it.” The standing answer to this argument is, that brutes die. To this he replies, “ First, That we have no evidence from scripture or reason, that the brutal creation was formed for immortality. . . . . It is no punishment to a brute that it does not enjoy the privileges and immunities of man in

\* Vol. iii. p. 298.

his original state; because these were never intended for the brutal nature. But if Adam's posterity are stripped of these privileges and immunities which belonged to their nature in him, and which were insured both to him and them, if he continued obedient, and if they are stripped of these on account of his sin, then it is evident that his sin is imputed to them, and they are punished for it."\*

II. Original sin, or innate depravity. In the extracts already given we find Pres. Davies speaking of "the corruption of our nature derived from Adam;" and throughout his sermons the doctrine of the innate hereditary moral depravity of our race, is variously stated or assumed. In his discourse on the nature and universality of spiritual death, we find this doctrine not only asserted but proved. After stating that the apostle declared the Ephesians to be dead in sin before their conversion, he adds, that he passed the same sentence upon himself and the whole body of the Jews. "We all, as well as they, walked in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires and inclinations of our sensual flesh, and of our depraved minds, for these were tainted with spiritual wickedness, independent of our animal passions and appetites; and we are all, even by nature, children of wrath even as others: in this respect we Jews are just like the rest of mankind, corrupt from our very birth, transgressors from the womb, and liable to the wrath of God. . . . As we are children of disobedience by our lives, so we are all without exception, children of wrath by nature; but when we were all dead in sins, when Jews and Gentiles were equally dead to God, then, even then, God, who is rich in mercy, had pity upon us; *he quickened us*; he inspired us with a new and spiritual life by his own almighty power, which raised the dead body of Christ from the grave. . . . This is the obvious meaning and connection of these verses; and we now proceed to consider the text, *dead in trespasses and sins*; you dead, we dead, Jews and Gentiles all dead together in trespasses and sins. A dismal mortifying character! 'This one place,' says Beza, 'like a thunderbolt dashes all mankind down to the dust, great and proud as they are; for it pronounces their nature not only hurt but dead by sin, and therefore liable to wrath.' "

He then proceeds to illustrate the nature of this spiritual death, and to show wherein it agrees and wherein it differs

from natural death. Spiritual death is consistent with feelings and activity about worldly things, and even about the external duties of religion. Though the unregenerate sinner, he says, "can commit sin with greediness, though he is capable of animal actions and secular pursuits, nay, though he can employ his mind about intellectual and spiritual things, and is capable of performing the external duties of religion; yet there is something in religion with regard to which he is entirely dead; there is a kind of spiritual life of which he is entirely destitute; he is habitually insensible with regard to things divine and eternal; he has no activity, no vigour in the pure, spiritual and vital exercises of religion; he has no prevailing bias of mind towards them. . . In short, he is so inactive, so listless, so insensible in these respects, that death, which puts an end to all action and sensation, is a proper emblem of his state; and this is the meaning of the apostle in my text. He is utterly unable to quicken himself. He may indeed use means in some sort; but to implant a vital principle in his soul, but to give himself vivid sensations of divine things, and make himself alive towards God, this is entirely beyond his utmost ability; this is as peculiarly the work of almighty power as the resurrection of a dead body from the grave. As to this death, it is brought on him by, and consists in, trespasses and sins. The innate depravity and corruption of the heart, and the habits of sin contracted and confirmed by repeated indulgences of inbred corruption, these are the poisonous, deadly things that have slain the soul; these have entirely indisposed and disabled it for living religion."\*

In the sermon entitled, 'The success of the Ministry owing to a divine influence, we find such declaration as the following: "Such is the present degeneracy of human nature, that all the ministrations of the gospel cannot remedy it, without the concurring efficacy of divine grace. . . The metaphors used in scripture to illustrate this case, sufficiently prove the degeneracy of mankind, and their entire opposition to the gospel. They are represented as spiritually dead, Eph. ii. 1, John v. 25; that is, though they are still capable of the exercises of reason and animal actions, yet they are really destitute of a supernatural principle of spiritual life, and incapable of suitable exercises towards God. . . . Sinners are also represented as blind, 2 Cor. iv. 4.

\* Vol. i. pp. 76, 78.

Now what can feeble mortals do for such? We can exhibit divine things before them; we can expose the horrid deformity of sin, and its tremendous consequences; we can display the glories of God, the beauty of holiness, and the allurements of redeeming love; but alas! all this is but like exposing colours to the blind." In the same page he says, men, "naturally delight in sin," and adds, "Now, since the innate dispositions of men are thus averse to the gospel, it is evident that nothing but divine power can make it effectual for their sanctification."\*

In a sermon already quoted, he says, "If men have lost that holiness which adorned their nature, when first formed, and are morally corrupt and depraved, if this, I say, be the case, then it is evident, we are a fallen race, and lie under the penal effects of Adam's offence."† "There is a visible disparity between the present and original state of our world and human nature; and this disparity is penal; that is, it is inflicted upon Adam and his posterity as the punishment of his sin."‡

In the discourse on Evidences of want of love to God, he says: "The love of God is not in you, if the native enmity of your hearts against him has not been subdued. This will appear evident to every one that believes the scripture account of human nature in its present degenerate state. By nature we are children of wrath; and certainly the children of wrath cannot be the lovers of God while such. 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh;' and they savour of the flesh, or, as we render it, 'the carnal mind is enmity against God,' Rom. viii. 7. And hence it is, that 'they that are in the flesh cannot please God,' Rom. viii. 8. . . . From these things it is evident, that, according to the scripture account, the present state of nature is a state of disaffection and hostility against God. . . . Now it is most evident, that since you are by nature enemies to God, your natural enmity to him must be subdued, or, in the language of the New Testament you must be reconciled to him, before you can be lovers of him."

We have in the preceding extracts a complete account of original sin, in the widest acceptation of that term, as including the imputation of the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of our nature. Mr. Davies teaches that Adam was the represen-

\* Vol. ii. p. 526.

† Vol. iii. p. 300.

‡ Vol. iii. p. 304.

tative of his race, that we fell in him, that we are born destitute of that holiness which originally belonged to our nature, that our nature is now corrupt, that this corruption is innate, that it is derived from Adam, that it is of a moral character, so that by nature we are children of wrath, and the enemies of God. A fuller assertion of this doctrine it would be difficult to find; sure we are that we never heard so much on these points in all the Old School sermons we ever listened to, as is to be found in these discourses of President Davies.

III. Inability. Intimately connected with the foregoing subject, and necessarily involved in it, is the inability of sinners to change their own hearts, or to yield acceptable obedience to God. On this point these discourses are unusually full and explicit. "The exceeding greatness of his mighty power is exerted towards us that believe, as well as it was upon the dead body of Christ to restore it to life, after it had been torn and mangled on the cross, and lain three days and three nights in the grave. What strong language is this! What a forcible illustration! Methinks this passage alone is sufficient to confound all the vanity and self-sufficiency of mortals, and entirely destroy the proud fiction of a self-sprung faith, produced by the efforts of degenerate nature."\* "The mind of man, in his present fallen state, like a disordered eye, is incapable of perceiving divine things in a proper light, however clearly they are revealed; and therefore, till the perceiving faculty be rectified, all external revelation is in vain, and is only like opening a fair prospect to a blind eye. Hence this great Prophet carries his instructions further, not only by proposing divine things in a clear objective light by his word, but inwardly enlightening the mind, and enabling it to perceive what is revealed by his Spirit?"† "When I exhort sinners to look to Jesus, I would not intimate that they are able to do this of themselves. No; I am very sensible that all the exhortations, persuasions, invitations and expostulations that a feeble mortal, or even the most powerful angel in heaven can use with them will have no effect, but vanish into air, without the efficacious operation of almighty grace. And yet such exhortations are neither useless, improper, nor unscriptural; they tend to convince sinners of their inability to believe,

\* Vol. i. p. 75.

† Vol. i. p. 253.

which is necessary to their believing aright; and it is while such arguments are addressed to their understandings, that the Holy Spirit is wont to work upon their hearts.”\* Our New School brethren say that is necessary that sinners should believe and feel their ability to obey the calls of God, before they can feel their obligation; President Davies says they must feel their inability before they can believe aright. This shows a radical difference in their views of experimental religion. If it is true that they have this ability, then they ought to feel it; but if it is true they have it not, then genuine religious experience will make them feel their helplessness. This subject, however, will come up again, in the sequel.

“Regeneration,” says our author, “is a change so great, so noble, and divine, that from thence alone we may infer it can be produced only by divine power. And the nature of man, in its present state, is so corrupt and weak, that it is neither inclined nor able to produce it. . . . Here then, sinners, you see to whom you must look for this blessing. You can no more regenerate yourselves, than you could beget yourselves at first. And this you must be deeply sensible of.”† “The awakened sinner betakes himself to the use of the means of grace with redoubled vigor and earnestness, and strives to change the principles of action within. But alas! he finds his heart is a stubborn thing, and altogether unmanageable; and after repeated strivings to no purpose, he is effectually convinced of his own inability, and the absolute necessity of the divine power to make him truly good. Therefore he lies at the throne of grace, as a poor, anxious, helpless sinner, entirely at mercy, and unable to relieve himself.”‡

The sermon on Divine Life in the soul, is a continued argument on this subject, but as we shall have occasion to refer to that discourse for another purpose, we content ourselves for the present with the following short, but sufficient extract. “How many content themselves with a self-begotten holiness! They have formed to themselves a system of natural, self-sprung religion, (I mean that it is natural originally and subjectively, though it be pretended to be divine objectively, because its patrons acknowledge objective revelation,) in this they acquiesce as sufficient, as though they knew not that *that which is born of the flesh*

\* Vol. ii. p. 263.

† Vol. ii. p. 383.

‡ Vol. ii. p. 384.

*is flesh.* The cogitiveness of matter seems to me to be a notion very like this ; for I think it might be demonstrated as clearly, that our mere natural powers, in our present lapsed state, without the infusion of any divine supernatural principle, are incapable of living, evangelical holiness ; as it can, that mere matter, without the superaddition of a principle entirely distinct from it, is incapable of thinking, however much it be polished, or however differently it be modified.”\* If any man has ever stated the doctrine of the sinner’s inability in stronger terms than this, we are ignorant of the fact.

Let us now see how President Davies answers the excuse which men make for not believing, founded on this doctrine. “ Before I proceed any further,” he says, “ I would remove one stumbling block out of your way. You are apt to object, ‘ You teach us that faith is the gift of God, and that we cannot believe of ourselves, why then do you exhort us to it ? Or how can we be concerned to endeavour that which it is impossible for us to do ? ’ In answer to this I grant the premises are true ; and God forbid I should so much as intimate that faith is the spontaneous growth of corrupt nature, or that you can come to Christ without the Father’s drawing you ; but the conclusions you draw from these premises are very erroneous. I exhort and persuade you to believe in Jesus Christ, because it is while such means are used with sinners, and by the use of them, that it pleases God to enable them to comply, or to work faith in them. I would therefore use those means which God is pleased to bless to this end. I exhort you to believe in order to set you upon the trial ; for it is putting it to trial, and that only, which can fully convince you of your own inability to believe ; and till you are convinced of this, you can never expect strength from God. I exhort you to believe because sinful and enfeebled as you are, you are capable of using various preparatives to faith. You may attend upon prayer, hearing, and all the outward means of grace with natural seriousness ; you may endeavour to get acquainted with your own helpless condition, and as it were place yourselves in the way of divine mercy ; and though all these means cannot of themselves produce faith in you, yet it is only in the use of these means, you are to expect divine grace to work it in you ; never was it yet produced in one soul,

\* Vol. ii. p. 395.

while lying supine, lazy, and inactive.”\* How much more true, scriptural, rational and pious is this, than the hard-hearted repetition of the mere command believe, believe, repent, repent, you have all the requisite power, you can if you will; for if you were unable you would be excusable; your ability is the measure of your obligation. A style of address which contradicts the consciousness of every hearer, is at variance with the experience of every Christian, and which either bewilders and distresses those who are seeking salvation, or deludes them into a confidence in what President Davies calls “a self-begotten holiness.”

The most interesting point, however, connected with this subject, is the practical bearing of this doctrine. We are accustomed to hear it denounced as destructive to the souls of men, as tending to produce indifference and neglect, as encouraging procrastination, a waiting God's time, nay, as exonerating the sinner and throwing the whole responsibility of his perdition on God. We are willing to admit, as remarked above, that if the doctrine is false, it must be destructive: but on the other hand if it is true, then those who know their own hearts know it to be true; and they must know it, in order to receive the grace of God. The whole plan of salvation is arranged and executed with a design to prevent all self-reliance and all boasting. Not only our forgiveness, but our conversion, the apostle says, is of God, in order that no flesh should glory in his sight. If therefore we feel that we can change our own hearts, that we can make ourselves good, that we are able without divine aid to repent, believe, and be holy, then is our experience opposed to the truth of God, it is inconsistent with the plan and design of redemption, and is so far spurious. We have already seen that President Davies tells his readers that a conviction of their inability to believe is necessary to their believing aright, or to their receiving strength from God, but it may be worth while to see more fully how this successful preacher and experienced Christian regarded the practical bearings of this important doctrine.

In his sermon on the Nature and Process of Spiritual Life, he traces the exercises of a real Christian; he describes him as first roused by the threatenings or promises of God to some sense of the importance of religion, but being unacquainted with the odious nature of sin, and “the entire,

\* Vol. i. p. 50.

universal corruption of his own nature," he contented himself with mere external reformation. But when God was pleased to carry on his work in him, he was made to see "the corruption of his heart, the awful strictness of the divine law, his utter inability to yield perfect obedience, and the necessity of an inward change of the inclinations and relishes of his soul. These," he adds, "and a great many other things of like nature, broke in upon your minds, with striking evidence and a kind of almighty energy; and now you saw you were still *dead in sin*, weak, indisposed, averse towards spiritual things; *dead in law*, condemned to everlasting death and misery by its righteous sentence." The effect of these convictions, he says, is to lead those who feel them "to set about the duties of religion with more earnestness than ever," but these renewed efforts only make them "more sensible than ever of their weakness." "Alas," he says, "you found yourselves quite helpless, and all your efforts feeble and ineffectual, then you perceived yourselves really dead in sin, and that you must continue so to all eternity, unless quickened by a power infinitely superior to your own: not that you lay slothful and inactive at this time; no, never did you exert yourselves so vigorously in all your life, never did you besiege the throne of grace, with such earnest importunity, never did you hear and read with such eager attention, or make such a vigorous resistance against sin and temptation; all your natural powers were exerted to the highest pitch, for now you saw your case required it; but you found all your most vigorous endeavours insufficient, and you were sensible that, without the assistance of a superior power, the work of religion could never be effected." "Now the process of preparatory operations is just come to a result. Now it is time for God to work, for nature has done her utmost, and has been found utterly insufficient; now it is proper a divine supernatural principle should be infused, for all the principles of nature have failed, [self-love and all,] and the proud sinner is obliged to own it, and stand still, and see the salvation of God."\* Thus according to Davies, it is a necessary part of Christian experience, that we should be convinced of an inability, which our modern teachers assure us does not exist. Surely they and Davies must differ greatly as to their ideas of the nature of religion.

\* Vol. i. p. 104, and the whole sermon.

“He that is poor in spirit,” says our author, “is sensible of his need of the influences of divine grace to sanctify him, and enrich him with the graces of the Spirit. . . . Holiness is the one thing needful with him, which he desires and longs for above all others; and he is deeply sensible that he cannot work it in his own heart by his own strength; he feels that without Christ he can do nothing, and that it is God who must work in him both to will and to do.”\*

He represents a convinced sinner as using the following language: “Lord, though I am sensible of the necessity of turning to thee, though I exert my feeble strength in many a languid effort to come, yet I cannot so much as creep towards thee, though I should die on the spot. Not only thy word, but my own experience now convinces me that I cannot come unto thee, unless thou draw me. Others vainly boast of their imaginary power, as though, when they set themselves about it, they could perform some great achievements. Thus I once flattered myself, but now, when I am most capable of judging, that is, when I come to the trial, all my boasts are humbled. Here I lie, a helpless creature, unable to go to the physician, unable to accept of pardon and life on the easy terms of the gospel, and unable to free myself from the bondage of sin; and thus I must lie forever, unless that God from whom I have revolted, draws me back to himself.”†

To the same effect in another sermon, he says, “Thus the blessed Spirit convinced you of your own weakness, and the necessity of his influence, to work this divine change;” and then asks his readers, “Have you ever been reduced to this medicinal self-despair? It is the humble heart alone that is susceptible of the image of the meek and lowly Jesus.”‡

“Faith supposes the supernatural illumination of the mind and renovation of the heart, by the power of divine grace. . . . Hence many a believer has found that it was easier for him to work up his heart to any thing, than to believe in Jesus Christ, and that God alone could enable him to do this.”§

“Faith is not of ourselves; but is expressly said to be the gift of God, Eph. ii. 8. Nay, the implantation of faith is represented as an exploit of omnipotence, like that of the resurrection of Christ.”||

\* Vol. i. p. 122.

† Vol. i. p. 236.

‡ Vol. ii. p. 322.

§ Vol. ii. p. 509.

|| Vol. ii. p. 531.

“It is our duty to use the most vigorous endeavours to obtain those graces promised, because it is only in the use of vigorous endeavours that we have reason to expect divine influences. And yet these endeavours of ours do not, in the least work those graces in us, and therefore there is certainly as much need of the promised agency of divine grace to effect the work, as if we should do nothing at all. Our utmost endeavours fall entirely short of it, and do not entitle us to divine assistance; and this we must have a humble sense of, before we can receive the accomplishment of such promises as the effect of free grace alone.”\*

In the conclusion of the same discourse he says, “Hence we learn, how essential and important the doctrine of divine influence is to the church of God. The very life, and the whole success of the gospel depend upon it. And since this necessarily supposes the utter depravity and spiritual impotence of human nature in its fallen state, that doctrine also must be frequently and plainly preached. Alas! the great defect of the system of divinity too fashionable in our day, and one great cause of the languishing state of religion in our age, and of the prevalence of vice and impiety! Since it has been the mode to compliment mankind as able to do something very considerable in religion, religion has died away. Since it has been the fashion to press a reformation of men’s lives, without inculcating the absolute necessity of divine grace to renew their nature, there is hardly such a thing as a thorough reformation to be seen; but mankind are evidently growing worse and worse. Since men think they can do something, and scorn to be wholly dependent on divine grace, the Lord, as it were, looks on and suffers them to make the experiment, and alas! it is likely to be a costly experiment to multitudes. God withholds his influence in just displeasure, and lets them try what mighty things the boasted powers of degenerate nature can do without it; and hence alas! they lie all secure and asleep in sin together.”†

It is abundantly evident from these extracts that Davies held that the unrenewed man is entirely unable to change his own heart, to repent, or believe, or perform any really holy act. Indeed we never heard or read any series of sermons, in which this doctrine is so frequently and plainly inculcated. It is moreover evident that he considered it to be

\* Vol. ii. p. 530.

† Vol. ii. p. 589.

a doctrine of great practical importance, entering deeply into genuine religious experience, and the inculcation of which he felt to be necessary to all real success in preaching the gospel. It is still further evident, and will be much more so from what follows, that he regarded this inability as something more than a mere unwillingness, though it is that too. His doctrine, and the common doctrine of the church, is, that by the fall men lost communion with God, and with that communion, his moral image; that they have no disposition, or taste for holiness, that they are blind to the excellence of divine things, that the mere natural principles of our nature, reason, conscience, self-love, sympathy, &c., are inadequate to the production or support of spiritual life, that there must be, in his language, a new and supernatural principle, not a new faculty, but a new principle, infused into the soul, and that when this is done, then there are new views, new feelings, and a new life. All this is clearly taught in the passages already cited, but will be brought more distinctly into view, when we present those which relate,

IV. To the nature of regeneration and the influence by which it is effected. It will be seen that so far from regarding regeneration as a mere change of purpose, he represents it as a change of nature, or of the moral state of the soul by communicating to it a principle of holiness; and so far from its being our act, he declares it to be the act of the mighty power of God.

Though these points are frequently introduced in these sermons, we shall content ourselves with a few extracts from the two discourses on the Divine Life in the Soul, requesting the reader, who may feel interested in the subject, to refer to the sermons themselves. "Spiritual life," he says, "supposes a living spiritual principle. There can be no life, no vital actions, without a vital principle, from whence they flow, e. g. there can be no animal life, no animal sensations and motions, without a principle of animal life. . . Now a holy principle is something distinct from and superadded to the mere natural principle of reason. By virtue of this a man can think and will; but experience teaches and assures us that thinking and willing, abstractedly considered, or under sundry modifications which they are capable of, are very different from thinking and willing in a holy manner, or with those peculiar modifications which spiritual operations bear. . . . It may be urged, That all the acts

of spiritual life may be resolved into the acts of reason, namely, thinking and willing in a holy manner; and therefore the principle of the former is the same with that of the latter." This he admits with regard to reasonable beings "who still continue in their original uprightness; but the principle of reason may be so maimed as to lose this power, and yet not lose its nature; that is, it may become incapable of that manner of operation which spiritual life produces, and yet continue a principle of reason still. Now the principle of spiritual life supplies this moral defect; it adds to reason a capacity of exercising itself suitably about spiritual things. Such a capacity is a separable adjunct of reason, and by the corruption of our natures it is actually separated from it; and consequently till it be superadded to our rational powers, we are incapable of spiritual operation, I mean such a manner of spiritual operation as is morally good and acceptable to God. . . . When a sinner is quickened by efficacious grace, a power of acting in a fit manner with respect to these things, is superadded to his rational powers; and before this there is nothing in him out of which such a power may be educed."\*

"Spiritual life implies a disposition to a holy operation, a spontaneous inclination towards holiness, a willing that which is good. . . . There is a savour, a relish for divine things, as essential to spiritual life, as our natural gusto and appetites are to natural life."†

"Spiritual life implies a power of holy operation. A heavenly vigour, a divine activity animates the whole soul. It implies more than an inefficacious disposition, a dull, lazy velleity, productive of nothing but languid wishes. . So every kind of life implies a power of operation suitable to its nature."‡ He concludes this part of his subject with "a caution against a common mistake, viz. that our mere natural powers, under the common aids of divine grace, polished and refined by the institutions of the gospel, are a sufficient principle of holiness, without the addition of any new principle. You see a principle of spiritual life is supernatural; it is a divine, heaven-born thing; it is the seed of God; a plant planted by our heavenly Father. . . . Let us also improve what has been said, to remove another equally common and pernicious error, namely, That gospel holiness consists merely in a series of acts materially good.

\* Vol. ii. p. 390.

† Vol. ii. p. 392.

‡ Vol. ii. p. 395.

Some imagine that all the actions they do, which are materially lawful, and a part of religion, have just so much holiness in them; and as they multiply such actions their sanctification increases in their imagination. But alas! do they not know that a principle, a disposition, a power of holy acting must precede, and be the source of all holy acts? That a new heart must be given to us, and a new spirit put within us, before we can *walk in God's statutes and keep his judgments, and do them*. That we must be created in Jesus Christ unto good works, before we can walk in them." Again, as to the difference between morality and religion he says, "Spiritual life is of a divine original; evangelical holiness flows from a supernatural principle; but mere morality is natural; it is but the refinement of our natural principles, under the aids of common grace, in the use of proper means; and consequently it is obtainable by unregenerate men."\*

In his second discourse on this subject, he proves that spiritual life is communicated in regeneration, and that a power of living unto God is not universally conferred on mankind at creation, by such arguments as the following: "1. If spiritual life were communicated in creation, there would be no propriety or significancy in the expressions used to denote the communication of it. There would be no need of a new, a second birth, if we were spiritually alive, by virtue of our first birth. . . . 2. The implantation of spiritual life is not only posterior to creation, but also to corrupt principles, which are innate. We are first dead in sin before we are quickened. . . . 3. The implantation of a principle of spiritual life is eminently an act of special grace, which the concreation of our natural endowments is never said to be. . . . 4. To this I may add that spiritual life is always represented as communicated through Christ as mediator and for his sake: but our natural endowments are not said to be given through him. . . . From all this it appears that spiritual life is wholly supernatural, it is a divine extract, and heaven-born in a peculiar sense."†

He then proves that this life is instantaneously communicated, because it is impossible it should be acquired by acting or by a series of acts, for "the acts of one kind of life, however often repeated, will never acquire a life of quite a dif-

\* Vol. ii. p. 327.

† P. 399, 400.

ferent kind ; e. g. the largest course and the most frequent repetition of animal acts will never acquire a principle of reason. . . . So let our natural principles be exercised about spiritual objects with ever so much frequency and permanency, that will never produce spiritual life. They are so depraved that there remains nothing out of which it can be educed, without the communication of something supernatural.” Again, the terms, creating, quickening, &c. denote an instantaneous communication ; and thirdly, “spiritual life is represented as prior to and the source and principle of all acts of evangelical holiness ; and consequently it cannot be gradually acquired by such acts, but must be implanted previously to the putting forth of any such acts, as reason is not acquired by reasoning, but is the pre-requisite and principle of all the acts of reason.”

“Hence we may see the vanity of that religion which is gained in the same manner that a man learns a trade, or an uncultivated mind becomes knowing and learned, namely, by the repeated exercises of our natural powers in the use of proper means, and under the aids of common providence. We have seen that a principle of spiritual life is not a good act, nor a series of good acts, nor any thing acquirable by them, but the spring and origin of all good acts. Let us then, my brethren, try whether our religion will stand this test.”†

There is much more to the same effect ; but this is enough, and more than enough to show that Davies had no faith in that kind of regeneration which is a man’s own act, and which flows from the mere natural principles of our constitution. The importance which he attributed to this subject, may be inferred from the following passage : “Without union with Christ we cannot have an actual interest in his righteousness, or be the special objects of that quickening influence, whereby the spiritual life and activity of his people are maintained ; and without these our persons and performances cannot be accepted, unless our own righteousness be sufficient, without an interest in his, to procure the pardon of sin, and reinstate us in the divine favour ; and unless human nature, labouring under the maladies of its present degeneracy, be capable, without the special aids of divine grace, to yield suitable obedience to the law ; neither of which can be asserted **WITHOUT VIRTUALLY RENOUNCING THE WHOLE GOSPEL.**”†

\* Vol. ii. p. 402.

† P. 410.

It is certainly unnecessary, after the above exposition, to trouble the reader with proofs that President Davies believed the change effected in regeneration to be the result not of moral suasion, but of the power of God. In his sermon on Eph. ii. 1 and 5, before referred to, he says, "The apostle had observed in the 19th and 20th verses of the foregoing chapter, that the same almighty power of God which raised Christ from the dead, is exerted to enable a sinner to believe. *We believe*, says he, *according to the working or energy of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead.* The one, as well as the other, is an exploit of omnipotence. . . . The same exertion of the same power is necessary in one case and the other; because as the body of Christ was dead, and had no principle of life in it; so, says he, ye were dead in trespasses and sins, and therefore could no more quicken yourselves than a dead body can restore itself to life."\*

"I must turn my address," he says in another sermon, "to another set of persons in this assembly; but where is the Lord God of Elijah, who restored the Shunamite's son to life by means of that prophet? I am going to call to the dead, and I know they will not hear, unless he attend my feeble voice with his almighty power. I would pray over you like Elijah over the dead child, *O Lord God, let this sinner's life come into him again.*"†

"And who, do you think, can work this happy change in your hearts? If you are so vain and ignorant as to flatter yourselves that you can effect it in your own strength, make the trial and you will soon be undeceived. It is God alone that can work in you both to will and to do. My text tells you, it is He that prepares the vessel of mercy for glory; it is the Holy Spirit alone that is equal to the arduous work."‡

Having seen President Davies' views on the natural state of man, on the nature of that change which he must experience in order to be saved, and the power by which it is effected, we proceed to exhibit his opinions with regard to the other great fundamental doctrine of the gospel,

V. Justification by faith. This doctrine assumes that the law demands a perfect righteousness; that all men being sinners are destitute of such a righteousness, and justly exposed to the penalty of the law; that Christ assumed our place, obeyed the precepts, and suffered the penalty of the

\* Vol. i. p. 75.

† Vol. i. p. 111.

‡ Vol. ii. p. 286.

law in our stead, and thus satisfied all its demands ; that this perfect righteousness is imputed to all believers, that is, to all who receive and trust upon it as the sole ground of their pardon and acceptance with God.

This view of the doctrine supposes the union of Christ and his people, or that he assumed their "law-place," or acted as their legal representative ; that our sins were imputed to him, that he bore the punishment of them, or endured the penalty of the law. By the penalty of the law, however, is not meant any special kind or degree of suffering but such sufferings as were judicially inflicted, on account of sin, and for the satisfaction of justice, and therefore were not mere afflictions or calamities, but were strictly penal. It assumes, moreover, that his obedience, no less than his sufferings, was vicarious, i. e. performed for others, and is imputed to those who believe.

Every one of these points is brought up with a frequency, and urged with a force in these sermons, such as to prove, that in the view of the author they entered deeply into the very nature of the gospel. It is impossible to quote a tithe of the passages which relate to this subject, or to separate the several points just stated, as all are often embraced in a single paragraph. As to the nature of justification, and the necessity of a perfect righteousness, the following extract may be considered sufficient : " To receive a pardon is a very different thing, in common language, from being justified. When a man is pardoned, it supposes that he has broken the law, but that the law is dispensed with, and the threatened penalty not executed ; but when he is justified, it supposes that he has a righteousness equal to the demands of the law, and therefore that he may be acquitted according to justice. These, you see, are very different things ; but in the affair before us, they are happily united. The sinner is said to be pardoned and justified at once ; and the reason of this unusual dialect is this: the sinner has broken the divine law, and has no obedience to answer its demands, and therefore his being freed from the guilt of sin and its threatened punishment, is in this respect a gracious, unmerited pardon. But by faith he has received a righteousness of Christ, and God imputes it to him as though it were his own ; and this righteousness answers all the requisitions of the law, and it has no charges against him ; so that in this respect he is justified, or pronounced righteous according to law and justice. Hence it

follows, from the very meaning of the terms used in this case, that no righteousness can justify us in the sight of God, but that which is equal to all the demands of the divine law. It must be perfect, and conformed throughout to that standard ; for if it be not, we cannot be pronounced righteous in the eye of the law, but the law charges and condemns us as transgressors, and its sentence lies in full force against us.”\*

Wherein this perfect righteousness of Christ consists, is clearly stated in the following passage : “ In justification we are considered as guilty, law-condemned sinners, entirely destitute of all personal righteousness ; and we are pardoned and accepted only and entirely upon account of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, imputed to us, and accepted of God for us, as though it were our own. I say, the righteousness of Jesus Christ, or his yielding a most perfect obedience to the precept of the law, and suffering its dreadful penalty for us, or in our stead, is the only ground of our justification. This is a righteousness as perfect as the law of God requires. And consequently, the law is not repealed when we are justified in this way ; it is in full force ; and all its demands are answered by this righteousness, which is equal to the severest requisitions of the covenant of works ; only it is dispensed with in one particular, namely, that whereas the law properly requires personal obedience from every man for himself, now it accepts of the obedience of Christ as a surety in our stead, and is satisfied by his righteousness imputed unto us, as though it were originally our own. . . . . When an humble sinner despairing of relief from himself, renounces all his own righteousness, and trusts only and entirely to the free grace of God in Jesus Christ, when he places all his dependance upon his righteousness only, and most earnestly desires that God would deal with him entirely upon that footing, then he believes, and then and thus this righteousness is made over to him, and accepted for him, and God no more views him as a law-condemned sinner, but as one that has a righteousness equal to all the demands of the law, and therefore he deals with him accordingly ; he pronounces him just, and gives him a title to life and every blessing, as though he deserved it upon his own account, or had a claim to it upon the footing of his own obedience to the covenant of works. My brethren, I am bold to pronounce this the gospel method of salvation ; and

whatever scepticism and uncertainty I feel about many other things, I have not the least scruple to venture my soul, with all its guilt, and with all its immortal interest, upon this plan. If I have thoroughly searched the scriptures for myself in any one point, it is in this.”\*

“ The righteousness of Christ, on account of which we are justified, signifies the obedience and sufferings of Jesus Christ, to answer the demands of the law, which we had broken, or, as it is usually expressed, ‘his active and passive obedience.’ He obeyed the law, and endured its penalty, as the surety or substitute of sinners; that is, he did all this, not for himself, but for them, or in their stead.”†

“ The scheme of salvation through Jesus Christ, supposes that all are sinners, exposed to condemnation, and unable to make satisfaction for their offences, or merit the divine favour by any thing they can do or suffer; and represents the Lord Jesus as substituting himself in the place of the guilty, bearing the punishment due to their sin, obeying the law of God in their stead; and it represents our injured Sovereign as willing to be reconciled to such of his guilty creatures on this account; but then, that in order to enjoy the blessings of righteousness, they must, as guilty, helpless sinners, place their whole dependance upon it, and plead it as the only ground of their justification; and that, though they may abound in good works, yet they must not make these in the least the ground of their hopes of pardon and acceptance. This is the substance of the testimony of God in the gospel.”‡

“ A method of justification by the righteousness of another, by the obedience and death of an incarnate God; by his perfect obedience to the law, and complete satisfaction to justice in stead of the sinner, a method by which sin may be pardoned, and in the mean time the honours of the divine government advanced, and the divine perfections gloriously illustrated; this is a mystery which was hid for generations and ages.”§

As to the nature of the union between Christ and those for whom he acted, and the punitive character of his sufferings, a very few extracts will be sufficient, In his sermon on the method of salvation, having said that “ Jesus Christ was above law, that is, not obliged to be subject to that law which he had made for his creatures, and consequently his

\* Vol. ii. p. 475—6. † P. 503. ‡ P. 505. § P. 505.

obedience to the law not being necessary for himself, might be imputed to others ;” . . . he asks, “ Was it necessary that the holiness and justice of God should be displayed in the salvation of sinners ? See how bright they shine in a suffering Saviour ! Now it appears that such is the holiness and justice of God, that he will not let even his Son escape unpunished, when he stands in the law-place of sinners. . . . Go to the cross of Christ, then, ye fools that make a mock of sin ; there learn its malignity and its hatefulness to the great God. There you may see it is so great an evil that when it is but imputed to the man that is God’s fellow, as the surety of sinners, it cannot escape punishment. . . . . If the darling of heaven, the Lord of glory, though personally innocent, suffers so much when sin is but imputed to him, what shall the sinners themselves feel, who can claim no favour upon the footing of their own importance or personal innocence ? If these things be done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry ?”\*

“ We cannot be saved through Jesus, till his righteousness be so far made ours as that it will answer the demands of the law for us, and procure the favour of God to us ; but his righteousness cannot be imputed to us, or accounted ours in law, till we are so united to him as to be one in law, or one legal person with him.”†

“ Mercy (is displayed) in transferring the guilt from the sinner upon the surety, and accepting a vicarious satisfaction ; justice in exacting the satisfaction, and not passing by sin, when it was but imputed to the darling Son of God. . . . The precept of the law which they had broken, was perfectly obeyed ; the penalty which they had incurred, was fully endured, not by themselves indeed, but by one that presented himself in their place ; and it is only on this footing that they are received into favour.”‡

“ An offering for sin is when the punishment of sin is transferred from the original offender to another, and that other person suffers in his stead. Thus the Lord Jesus was made a sin-offering for us. The punishment of our sin was transferred to him, and he bore it in his own body on the tree. He became our substitute, and took our place in law, and therefore the penalty of the law due to us was executed upon him. It is in this, my brethren, that we have any hope of salvation.”§

\* Vol. i. pp. 39, 40.

† P. 43.

‡ P. 452.

§ P. 480.

As might well be expected, Davies represents this doctrine of justification as entering essentially into the experience of Christians. He tells his hearers that if they ever truly believed in Jesus Christ, "You saw, you felt yourselves lost forever without this righteousness; you found yourselves shut up to faith." He represents the believer as saying, "I now most cheerfully consent to the method of salvation revealed in the gospel, not only because I must, but because I choose to do so. I see it is a scheme well ordered in all things and sure, and therefore it is all my salvation and all my desire. I would not only be saved, but I would be saved by thee, blessed Jesus! I am willing, I am desirous, that thou, and not I, should have the glory of it. I would rather see thy grace honoured than my own vanity and pride flattered, and therefore I cheerfully renounce my own righteousness, and count it but dross and dung, in comparison of thine, which I embrace with all my heart. Pardon is sweet to a guilty criminal; salvation is sweet to a perishing soul; but oh! pardon by thy righteousness, salvation through thy grace, this is doubly sweet! Such, my brethren, has been, such still is the language of your hearts, if you have ever received the righteousness of Christ through faith."\*

Such, then, is the theology of President Davies, and we should unfeignedly rejoice if we could regard the publication of his Sermons, as indicating approbation of his theology. If our new school brethren are beginning to see that the doctrines which they have hitherto opposed are the doctrines of God, that they enter deeply into the religious experience of his people, and that they cannot be denounced without sin, nor opposed without injury to the souls of men, then we may hope that better days await the church in this country, than we have been wont to anticipate.

After what we have said, it is unnecessary to add that we rejoice in the publication of these volumes; we hope that they may be widely circulated and extensively read. We doubt not they will scatter blessings in their path. We regard them as among the best sermons in the English language, not by any means the ablest, but combining so much truth, so much piety, so much zeal, so much good sense, so much knowledge of the heart, and of religious experience, as to place them among the first rank of practically useful books.

\* Vol. ii. p. 508.