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ART. I.—THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH DIET OF GERMANY.

THE German Evangelical Church Diet has now been in existence since 1848, and become one of the most important and encouraging facts in the history of modern Protestantism. A condensed account of its origin, history, influence and prospects, based upon the official reports of its proceedings, as they were published from year to year, upon personal observations made at its seventh meeting at Frankfort on the Maine, and upon intercourse and correspondence with its founders and leading members, must be both interesting and instructive to those who wish to become fully acquainted with the present state of theology and religion in the land of the Reformation.

The Kirchentag, or Church Diet, is a free association of pious professors, ministers and laymen of Protestant Germany, for the discussion of the religious and ecclesiastical questions of the day, and for the promotion of the interests of practical Christianity, embraced under the term *Inner Mission*. It meets annually in one of the leading cities of Germany, and is at present by far the largest and most respectable representation of evangelical Christianity in that country. Its doctrinal basis is the Bible, as explained by the ecumenical symbols and the evangelical confessions of the sixteenth century. It comprehends thus far four protestant denominations, the Lutheran, German Reformed, United Evangelical (a union of the former two), and the Moravian brotherhood, and holds intercourse at the same

The hints already given may, however, enable the thoughtful reader to make a much more extensive application, and to other subjects than those that have been brought directly before his notice.

Schnectady, New York.

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ART. III.—HODGE ON THE EPHESIANS.

A COMMENTARY ON THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS. By *Charles Hodge*, D. D., Professor in the Theological Seminary, Princeton, N. J. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. 1856.

THE distinguished character and high position of the author of this work, taken in connection with the wide significance of its subject, must be allowed on all hands to clothe it with more than ordinary claims to attention. The Epistle to the Ephesians is of cardinal authority, in particular for the doctrine of the Church; and it forms in such view the key, we may say, for the right understanding of all St. Paul's Epistles generally, which must serve of course also at the same time, to open the true sense of all the other Epistles of the New Testament. Knowing this, we could not be indifferent to the view that might be taken of it by such a man as Dr. Hodge. His theory of the Church, as it has been presented to the world in various ways, is commonly understood to be very low; so low indeed, that it has given serious dissatisfaction to many in his own communion. It has been a matter of interest with us to see, how such a theory would be applied in his hands to the interpretation

of the Epistle to the Ephesians. We have, accordingly, examined the new commentary with respectful consideration and care; and having done so, we propose now to make it the occasion for some earnest criticism and discussion, in our present article.

Our object is not to go into exegetical details; to speak of particular excellencies belonging to the work, or of what we may suppose to be its particular errors and defects. Our concern rather is with the work, viewed as a whole; with its general theological stand-point; with its reigning idea of the Gospel; with the scheme of Christianity which underlies all its thinking, and so gives form and determination to its particular expositions from beginning to end. We feel that there is an advantage in this. It leaves free room for all proper acknowledgment of the merits of the commentary, in its own order and system of thought. Indeed if we did not honor it in such view as the fruit of real learning and piety, we should hardly feel it necessary to notice it in the way of controversy at all. As it is, we contend with it because we hold it in respect. It represents ably the system of theological opinion in whose bosom it stands; and by doing so, challenges attention to its peculiar pretensions and claims, while it furnishes a fair opportunity also for bringing them into trial. For our readers generally also, we take it for granted, the general criticism we propose is likely to be of more interest than any discussion of single and separate points of exegesis. Such points it may indeed fall in our way occasionally to take in hand; but when that is the case, it will not be so much on their own particular account, as for the sake of their bearing on what is more comprehensive and broad. Our consideration of single passages and texts, will be steadily subordinated to the wider purpose of explaining, exemplifying, exposing and overthrowing, so far as with God's help we may be able, the general theological theory, which we find employed, with so much learning and ability, in the commentary before us, to darken, as it seems to us, the true sense of this most interesting and important portion of God's Word.

In any case, the theological scheme with which an interpreter comes to the exposition of the Bible, is more deserving of consideration than any isolated results of his exegetical learning aside from this. Our theology, or want of theology, must always rule our exegesis. The notion of a purely grammatical exegesis, as urged by the school of Ernesti, is simply absurd. No amount of philological or historical learning can of itself lead to a trustworthy exposition of what the Scriptures actually say and teach. The case requires, in addition to this, an inward correspondence and sympathy of mind on the part of the expositor, with the world of truth which he has called to expound. It needs the living spirit of any science or art, to read aright the true sense of its utterances and speak forth the hidden power of its creations. And just so, it requires the inward stand-point of a positively right and sound theology, to understand and explain to full purpose the theological teachings of the Bible. It may sound well, to talk of coming to the Scriptures without any theory or scheme; but there is not in fact, and cannot be, any such freedom from all prepossession. The Bible supposes the existence of Christianity as a fact already at hand, and utters all its oracles from the bosom of this new creation alone. We must come to it then with the prepossession of faith, or else with the prepossession of unbelief, the worst possible preparation for understanding it, on the supposition of its being more than an empty fable. Of what account here can the greatest knowledge of words be, without any actual sense of the things with which the words are concerned? An infidel pretending to explain the Bible, is like a man born blind discoursing of colors. All mere rationalism or naturalism must necessarily travesty its sense. But for the very same reason that faith in general, or power to acknowledge the supernatural character of Christianity, as distinguished from full unbelief, forms thus the necessary habit of a good interpreter of the sacred text, it is plain that it must be of vast account also for such an interpreter to possess this habit of faith in a form approaching as nearly as possible to the

very nature of the things themselves with which it is employed. And therefore it is always of the first consequence, as we have already remarked, to look to the theological scheme which an interpreter brings with him to the exposition of the Bible and from which as a stand-point he takes his observations upon its sense.

It is hardly necessary to say, that this Commentary of Dr. Hodge is constructed upon a general theory of the nature of Christianity, thus previously established and fixed in his own mind. If it were not so, the work would be entitled to but small regard. We find no fault with it merely on this ground. Only let the fact be fairly understood and kept in sight; that we may make due account of it, in examining the work itself. It is not an attempt to explain the Epistle to the Ephesians purely and exclusively from its own text, and without any sort of theological preconception or bias. It can hardly be said, indeed, to pretend to such independence. However it may suit the view of some to make light of all authority in this form, and to look upon tradition of every kind as an embarrassment to the right use of the Scriptures more than a help, we meet with no such pedantry in Dr. Hodge. He has his theological system, his ecclesiastical tradition, that serves him continually as a medium through which to study the features and proportions of the inspired text. Neither is it difficult at all to determine the character of this system. It is well defined, openly acknowledged, and for the most part, though not always, consistently maintained. We may see at once, in such circumstances, how necessary it is that we should try the merits of the system, in order to estimate aright the merits of the Commentary.

No one can have read the Epistles of the New Testament with any sort of attention, without being made sensible in his own mind of a certain difficulty in them, standing not so much in particular passages as in the whole hypothesis which is made to underlie their construction. Two seemingly opposite views are embraced in this, which it is found

exceedingly hard to reconcile or hold in steady union. Let us endeavor to exemplify and explain.

Nothing can be more clear, in the first place, than that these Epistles are not addressed to the world at large in its natural character and state. For the world in such view, the Gospel universally has but one form of address. It calls on all men everywhere to "repent and believe," to submit themselves to Christ, to be "converted," to be "baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins," as the absolutely indispensable condition of holiness and salvation. "He that believeth and is baptized," the proclamation runs, "shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." All depends on this obedience of faith. All begins here. Without this preliminary act of submission to Christ's authority, the opportunities and possibilities of grace in any farther view are not regarded as being at hand for the use of men at all. The Gospel never offers its grace for the purposes of sanctification, to those who refuse to place themselves by such preliminary obedience within the range and scope of its supernatural provisions; and it never allows itself, therefore, to waste upon such its lessons of piety or its motives to a holy life. So with these New Testament Epistles. They are full of doctrine, instruction in righteousness, warnings, admonitions, promises, encouragements to Christian duty; but all this for a certain class of persons only, and not for the race of mankind indiscriminately. This is at once evident from their inscriptions and salutations. They are addressed not to countries or towns as such, but to particular bodies of people in them separated and distinguished in some way from the world in general. St. Jude writes "to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." St. Peter, in one place, "to them that have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;" in another, to dispersed strangers of Pontus, Galatia, &c., who are regarded, at the same time, as gathered together and elect "according to the foreknowledge of God the Father,

through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." So in every Epistle of St. Paul. One is: "To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints;" another: "Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints;" a third: "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia;" a fourth: "Unto the churches of Galatia;" a fifth: "To the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus;" and in similar style throughout. And the restriction thus made in the first address, is always carefully observed in every Epistle on to the end. The writers do not allow themselves to fall away from the conception with which they start, by gliding into any more loose and general view. They have before their mind always, not men at large, but the particular class or description of persons to whom they address themselves in the beginning. Their instructions and exhortations are everywhere for the "church," for the "called," for those who are known as the "faithful in Christ Jesus."

Nothing, moreover, can be more plain, than that the distinction thus kept in view always by these sacred writers was considered by them to be far more than one of name only and mere outward profession. Nominal and outward indeed it is assumed to be, as implying an external separation of some sort from the rest of the world, which might be known and spoken of in such view as a really existing society, bearing its own name and having its own terms of fellowship and communion. The society of the "faithful in Christ Jesus" is referred to, not as a fellowship of opinion only, not as the presence merely of a common sentiment in a number of minds, but as being in some way actually at hand, and open to observation, in the form of an externalized historical fact. But in this character again, as we now say, it is never represented as a simply factitious distinction, turning upon the fancy and pleasure of those who had come to set themselves apart in such style from the surrounding world. It is continually

taken for granted, on the contrary, that it carried along with it benefits and privileges, opportunities and powers, of the very highest order. So much is suggested at once by the titles and terms of address, which are employed, as we have just seen, to characterize those to whom the Epistles are directed. These are quite too bold and strong, to be resolved into the notion of rhetorical declamation simply or gracious compliment. "Beloved of God" (Rom. 1: 7), "called to be saints" (Rom. 1: 7. 1 Cor. 1: 2), "the called of Jesus Christ" (Rom. 1: 6), "those that are sanctified in Christ Jesus" (1 Cor. 1: 2), "saints in Christ" (Eph. 1: 1, Philip. 1: 1, &c.); how unreasonable to imagine for a moment that terms of this description might be used, under the guidance of inspiration, without any meaning answerable to their high sound. We are not left here, however, to such inferences only, as it might seem natural to draw from any titles of this sort taken by themselves. The Epistles in question proceed throughout on the supposition, that the persons whom they address are really and truly in a state or condition corresponding with these titles; and references are made in them continually to what are conceived to be the actual privileges of this state, in such a way as to show that there is not considered to be any exaggeration whatever in the terms thus used for its description.

Take, for example, the First Epistle of St. Peter. No sooner has the Apostle saluted those whom he addresses, than he is led to break out in the language of adoring worship and praise, on account of what appears to him the unspeakable mercy of God bestowed upon them through the Gospel. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away; reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." It is not the salvation of the Gospel as a general boon to the

world, not the mere fact at large that Christ has risen from the dead and made salvation possible, that is here made the subject of such joyful praise. It is plainly the special relation rather, in which those addressed are regarded as standing to this grace by virtue of their Christian profession and position. We may congratulate all men, that life and immortality have been brought to light, that redemption is placed within the reach of our guilty and lost race; but in the case before us, the congratulation extends a great deal farther than this. The persons to whom it is offered, are considered to be already, in a most material sense, the recipients and subjects of God's redeeming mercy. They have come actually within the range of its action. They have a present interest in it, and a right to its opportunities and privileges, going vastly beyond any form it may be supposed to carry along with it for the world at large. This very fact, accordingly, is made the ground of all that follows in the way of exhortation to Christian duty. "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind," it is said, "be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ: as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." No such exhortation is dreamed of as suitable for men in other circumstances, however desirable it might be that they too should practice the virtues of Christianity; it proceeds throughout on the supposition, that a certain position in the way of grace has been already secured, that an actual foothold in the kingdom of God has been already gained, by which a life of true holiness is rendered practicable, and without which it must ever be vain to bestow either precept or exhortation on the subject. So again: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtain-

ed mercy, but now have obtained mercy. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; &c." The order of thought still is: Ye are the subjects of a glorious distinction in the way of grace; ye have passed out of darkness into God's marvellous light; ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth; ye have come out of the world into the Church: *therefore* follow diligently after holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. Your privilege involves, not merely the duty, but also the power of overcoming the world and entering into everlasting life. See then that it be used with earnestness, and perseverance to the end, for this purpose. The same idea pervades the entire Epistle; as any one may readily see who will take pains to read it with proper attention, bearing in mind the restriction which characterizes its address in the beginning, and observing how all along in conformity with this it is written, not for men at large, but only for those who have come into the bosom of the Church.

St. Paul's Epistles all, in like manner, only if possible in a still more striking way, take for granted everywhere the existence of a most real distinction between those whom they address as saints and the world in its general and natural character. Let any one consider in this view particularly the Epistle to the Ephesians. No terms seem to be too strong for the Apostle, no conceptions too high, in setting forth the condition of grace and privilege to which he considers those advanced, whom he addresses as "the saints which are at Ephesus and the faithful in Christ Jesus." They are already, by their position and calling, "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ;" the subjects, along with other saints, of a heavenly election and adoption; made accepted in the Beloved, in whom they had "redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." In virtue of their faith, they are said to have been "sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise," which is the earnest of the inheritance that awaits the Christian in the world to

come. They needed a special illumination, only to be able themselves to form any proper conception of the high and glorious significance of their own position ; and the most earnest prayer of the Apostle in their behalf, accordingly, was that God might give unto them the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ ; the eyes of their understanding being enlightened, that they might know what was "the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of his power" towards them that believe. Their relation to Christ is represented as being nothing less than a present actual comprehension in the new order of life, which was exhibited in his resurrection from the dead, and in his glorification at the right hand of God. They were quickened and raised up together with him, and made to sit with him in heavenly places. They were "no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." They were "built upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone." Such is the strain in which the Apostle speaks throughout of the high condition and state of those to whom he writes ; and all his instructions and practical exhortations, addressed to them as Christians, are so formed as to involve continually the same view. Their spiritual exaltation as the elect of God, the called of Christ, the sealed of the Spirit, the heirs of the heavenly inheritance, is assumed everywhere as an admitted postulate, on the ground of which they are urged upon to cultivate piety and avoid sin. In view of this precisely, they are besought to "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called." Their privileges are made the great reason for their "putting off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts," so as to be "renewed in the spirit of their mind," and to "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." What is particularly worthy of observation, moreover, is, that the consideration thus pressed is brought forward, not

simply as a motive to recommend and enforce Christian virtue, but as being itself the whole ground of its possibility. The order of thought is in part certainly: Ye are exalted in Christ, and it is, therefore, fit and right for you to cultivate corresponding dispositions and habits. But mainly it goes far beyond this, and means: Ye are highly exalted in Christ, and it is, therefore, practicable for you to cultivate successfully a corresponding character. It is not so much the idea of what *ought* to be, as the idea of what *may* be and *can* be, in virtue of the Christian position, that is urged as the grand argument for a Christian life. "Ye were sometime darkness," it is said, "but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light: for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth."

All this, we say, forms one general aspect, under which the conception of Christianity is continually presented to us in the New Testament Epistles. Along with this, however, in the second place, there runs throughout another view, which seems at first to look in quite a different direction, and to place the whole subject in a new and different light. It may be denominated, with propriety perhaps, the human side of the case, as distinguished from its divine side.

We are confronted with it at once in all those representations, which require us to descend from the idea of the lofty privileges of believers, to the thought of the manifold infirmities with which they are still compassed about in their present state. Who has not experienced at times some sense of incongruity, in passing directly from the wonderful terms in which these privileges are described by St. Peter or St. Paul, to the topics of ordinary morality they are made to enforce? It sounds strangely, to hear those who are spoken of as sitting in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, exhorted, at the same time, to avoid the most common sins, such as lying and stealing, and warned against "fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness" among the heathen, including things done by them in secret, of

which it was a "shame even to speak." It sounds strangely, when the power of the Spirit and the power of the flesh, the life of grace and the life of nature, are brought before us in such close proximity as we find ascribed to them in the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians. "Walk in the Spirit," it is there said, "and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, &c." The occasion for admiration here is, not that such sins are condemned as contrary to Christianity, but that those who are addressed should be supposed to be at all liable to the power of them in the immediate and near way that seems to be implied by such a style of exhortation. But the case becomes, in this view, still worse, when we find that the bad possibilities of the Christian state, as thus described, are represented as frequently passing into actual effect. We need not go beyond the New Testament, to get clear of the idea that the early churches were, in a great measure, free from corruption and sin. We have abundant evidence of the contrary in the New Testament itself. The sacred writers use no sort of reserve on the subject. They not only warn Christians against the danger of sin, but bewail and denounce it at times as really present under very gross forms in their communion. We hear of some in the church who denied the Lord that bought them, privily introducing damnable heresies, and bringing upon themselves swift destruction; of certain men, who "turned the grace of God into lasciviousness," walking after their own ungodly lusts; and strange indeed are the terms in which they are spoken of by St. Peter, bringing into immediate juxtaposition, as they do, the exaltation of their Christian state on the one hand, and their enormous abuse of it, to the purposes of sin, on the other. "Spots they are and blemishes, sport-

ing themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you. Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin ; beguiling unstable souls ; an heart they have exercised with covetous practices ; cursed children. Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the ways of unrighteousness." "When they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, *those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.* While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption : for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. For if *after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,* they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning." Compare with this Heb. 6 : 4-6, and 10 : 26-29, where we have the same startling picture of extremes thrown together, in a way which many have found it exceedingly difficult to understand. The difficulty, however, is not confined to passages of this sort, in which the bright and dark sides of the Christian profession are opposed to each other in such direct and vivid contrast. It meets us with full force, likewise, in all those numerous cases, in which reference is made to ruinous errors or gross corruptions in the Church, without any particular stress being laid at the time on the idea of its abused grace. References of this sort abound on all sides. We meet with them in every Epistle. Lofty as the terms are in which St. Paul addresses the several churches to which he wrote, while his eye is fixed on the thought of their high and glorious privileges, he finds it quite as easy again apparently to admit the existence among them of offences and scandals, which seem to turn the other conception into a mere flourish of empty words. We need not cite examples. They will come up readily of themselves to the mind of every one, who is at all familiar with his writings.

Here then is a peculiar and difficult problem to be solv-

ed, in the interpretation of these Epistles. How are we to bring together the two sides that enter thus into their general hypothesis of Christianity, seemingly incongruous as they are, in such a way that we shall have a result doing full justice to both, and uniting them in real logical harmony for our thoughts? It is plain, that no scheme of exegesis which fails to do this, however much it may have to recommend it on other grounds, can be entitled to confidence; since it must be constructed on a view of the Gospel different from that which pervades the Epistles themselves, and can never serve, therefore, as a sufficient key to unlock their sense.

Now there are two general ways in which a theory of interpretation may wrong the New Testament conception of Christianity, as we have just had it under consideration. It may not do justice to the first side of the hypothesis, or it may not do justice to the second. In the one case, we shall have the idea of nature overwhelmed in a certain sense by a false sublimation of the idea of grace; in the other case, the order will be reversed, and we shall have the idea of grace merged and lost in the idea of nature. For the sake of distinction, we may call one the Calvinistic and the other the Arminian tendency.

The Arminian view proceeds on the supposition, that there is no essential difference between the order of nature and the order of grace. It acknowledges, of course, the existence of grace, regarded as a supernatural power exerted upon the minds of men; but this is not felt to depend on any other order or constitution than that of the world under a simply natural view, considered in the general relation which it sustains to God. Man in his natural character is possessed of intellectual and spiritual faculties, which carry his thoughts above and beyond the present world, and qualify him for entering into communication with the realities of a higher life in the way of religion; and the idea here is, that in order to do so, he needs no other help than what is comprehended in the notion of a common divine influence exercised upon his powers for

this purpose. The whole conception of grace thus resolves itself into this, that God by his Spirit, is supposed to act on the minds of men, just as they are, directly and indirectly, without any intervention whatever; and it is supposed also to depend upon themselves, in the use of their natural ability, whether such gracious influence shall be of avail or not for the purposes of salvation. Such a view, of course, leaves no room for the idea of the Church, as a real economy or constitution different from the world. It is easy to see, accordingly, how it must work, when brought to bear exegetically on the New Testament problem which we have at present under consideration. This Arminian tendency has no power to make any earnest account of the lofty terms, in which St. Peter and St. Paul allow themselves to speak of the privileges of the Christian state, regarded as anything more than the inward condition in general of the truly pious. It is admitted, indeed, that these terms are applied immediately to outward and visible bodies of people; but this is considered sufficient of itself to show, that they are not to be construed strictly, but with great latitude rather and accommodation. The titles "elect," "beloved of God," "called to be saints," "sanctified in Christ Jesus," &c., are taken to refer only to the profession of Christians and the avowed object of their being gathered into ecclesiastical associations. They are for the most part borrowed too from the old Jewish economy, being a simple transfer to the Christian Church, outwardly considered, of forms of thought and modes of speech, with which the Jewish mind had long been familiar as applied to the Old Testament theocracy, under a like outward view. Christianity, however, it is assumed, is of altogether too spiritual a nature to be adequately measured by any such simply outward conceptions; and it is held to be clear enough, that there was very much in the actual condition of those to whom they are thus collectively applied, which forbids the thought of their being employed in any other light. In this way, these conceptions, great as they may seem to be in sound, are virtually shorn of significance and

force. The heavenly or divine side of Christianity, as represented by them, falls away before its merely human or earthly side. The Church comes to be nothing more than a particular form of the general life of the world, in its relation to religion and piety. It offers facilities and opportunities for spiritual culture; but these are by no means confined to its bosom. All resolves itself at last into the sincere belief of certain doctrines, and the earnest practice of certain virtues, which have no *necessary* dependence on the Church.

How completely this system of thought fails to do justice to the Epistles of the New Testament, we need not spend time now in endeavoring to show. Our business at present is more immediately with the opposite form of onesided thinking presented to us by the Calvinistic tendency; for this it is that governs throughout the New Testament exegesis of Dr. Hodge, as it comes before us in his Commentary on the Epistles to the Ephesians.

Here we have a false sublimation of the idea of grace, by which in the end serious wrong is done to the proper human side of the Christian salvation. All is made to resolve itself into divine agency, under such a form as fairly lifts the process of redemption out of the sphere of man's proper life, and causes it to go forward in another and different sphere altogether. The doctrine of election, turning on the notion of an absolute unconditional decree in the mind of God, is made to be the principle, and only really efficient cause, we may say, of the whole work. God having of his mere good pleasure determined, from all eternity, to save a certain fixed number of persons belonging to the human family, and not to save any besides, is supposed then to have ordered the entire plan of redemption in subordination to this purpose. All the provisions of his grace, including the fact of the Incarnation itself, the atonement made by Christ's death, the benefits of his resurrection, the mission of the Holy Ghost, the establishment of the Church, the Bible, the ministry of reconciliation, and the holy sacraments, are conditioned and limited, according to this view,

by the settled and foregone conclusion which it is proposed to reach by their means; becoming under such aspect, a sort of outward mechanical apparatus merely in its service. The result is an ultra spiritualistic, shadowy idea of redemption, in which no real union is allowed after all to have place between the powers of heaven and the necessities of earth; and in full correspondence with this, a complete dualism is brought into the conception of the Christian life also, regarded as the subjective or experimental appropriation, on the part of believers, of the grace thus objectively provided on their behalf. Human and divine factors are indeed both acknowledged, as entering in some way together into the process of conversion and sanctification; but no room is found for their free and harmonious coöperation. God becomes all, and man practically nothing; the consequence of which here again is, that religion becomes a scheme of mere abstract spiritualism, which, carried out consistently, can hardly fail to turn it at last into a cloud-like phantom or hollow shadow, the counterpart in full of its own profoundly kindred error, the christological dream of the ancient Gnostics.

For the application of this system to the exposition of the New Testament, we could have no better example than Dr. Hodge's Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians. It proceeds upon the Calvinistic hypothesis, as now described, from beginning to end. So far as we can see, too, he does not shrink from acknowledging this hypothesis in its only fully consistent form, the supralapsarian conception, we mean, as held by Calvin himself, though not generally by his followers. According to that conception, as is well known, the decree of election, issuing in the salvation of the elect as the last end of God's works, so far as man is concerned, is taken to precede and govern in the order of being, not simply the idea of redemption, but the idea also of the fall itself; the amount of which is, that God, having in mind his own glorification in the salvation of the elect and perdition of the non-elect, determined first the creation of the race, and then its fall, in order to make room

for what was his ulterior purpose in that other form. Dr. Hodge does not, indeed, in so many words, adopt this supralapsarian theory; but it is the only view, we think, that suits what he says of the predestination of a fixed number of human beings, from all eternity, to everlasting life. It is certain, at all events, that this decree is made by him to be the *principium* of everything that is comprehended in the scheme of redemption itself, and that all its arrangements and provisions, accordingly, are considered as being circumscribed and limited by it in their force. They are universally for the elect only, and no part of the fallen world besides. Their scope and efficiency are absolutely bounded by the range of this narrow circle, unalterably settled in the Divine mind from all eternity, and cannot be said to extend beyond this really in any direction whatever. Predestination in this sense, and no other, is the "primal fountain," we are told, "of all spiritual blessings," as involving for the saints their "election to holiness before the foundation of the world." The mystery of the Incarnation thus took place only for the elect, whom it was determined beforehand thus to save. Aside from them, it would not have occurred at all; and for the rest of the world it has in fact no saving purpose or power of any sort. The rest of the world is not in a salvable state; for the economy of the Gospel is such, that the principle of its grace, considered here as an absolute decree in the Divine mind, cannot be said to reach even potentially those who stand outside the circumference of this decree. Salvation, as a possibility only, has just as little significance for them, as it would have if they belonged to another world entirely. Power to become the sons of God, the great privilege and prerogative of as many as receive Christ (John 1: 12), belong, exclusively, to the elect. All others are doomed to hopeless impenitency and unbelief. Alas, what *should* they believe, if this view of the Gospel be itself the very truth of God which they are bound, under pain of damnation, to receive? For any of the non-elect to believe that Christ died for *them*, or that he is willing now to save them, must

be, according to Dr. Hodge's scheme, to believe what is absolutely and eternally untrue. To agree at all with the actual truth of things, *their* faith must own and confess precisely the reverse. All this, we know, sounds monstrous enough. But we hold it to be a perfectly fair, unvarnished representation of the theology, which Dr. Hodge has brought with him as the compass and pole-star of his observations at St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. The doctrine of election, as he holds it, involves beyond the possibility of logical escape, the notion of a corresponding partiality and limitation in all the arrangements of grace. Make such a decree the principle of salvation, and it must necessarily reduce the means of salvation throughout to the measure of its own action and intention. It will be no longer true, that Christ died for all men, made atonement for all, triumphed over death for all, and now reigns head over all things to the Church for all, having sent forth his ministers to preach repentance and faith to all, that they might be saved. Regarded as a merely external administration indeed, Christianity may claim and appear also to possess such universality of character. But looking to its proper spiritual economy, we find all to be different. In God's mind, it is a plan to save the elect only; the agency of his Spirit goes along with it, to make it certainly efficacious for this end; beyond this it carries in it neither purpose nor power of grace for any of the children of men.

Such a predestination to eternal life, moreover, must necessarily draw after it, in the case of those who are its subjects, whatever is required to go forward in their personal experience, in order that they may be prepared finally for this glorious result. The beginning and end of revelation, for every predestinated saint, are joined together with unalterable necessity from the start. No room is left thus to conceive of any real power on the part of men themselves, either to defeat or make sure their heavenly calling. What may *seem* to be attributed to human agency in this way by the Scriptures, must be regarded as having place in show only and outward appearance. The decree of election

rules all, and turns the subjective side of redemption, as well as its objective side, into a sort of unreal parade, in which shadows are set before us continually for actual substances and really existing things. Dr. Hodge takes it for granted everywhere, that those whom St. Paul addresses as the "called of God in Christ," are such as have been individually and separately predestinated to salvation from all eternity, and that it is of course impossible for them in such view not to be saved. This does not imply that they can be saved in their sins, or without means and conditions; but it does unquestionably mean, that whatever may be needed in such form for the final result, is made infallibly certain by the same decree that fixes the certainty of the result itself. Predestination involves as its necessary indissoluble sequences, in the case of every individual to whom it extends, effectual calling, justification, sanctification, the resurrection of the just, and full glorification finally in heaven. There is no room in the theory for distinguishing between what is potential only and what is actual. Election to certain blessings, is taken to include as a matter of course the consequence of coming into their possession and fruition. The "elect" addressed by St. Paul, according to the Commentary before us, are "the actual recipients of the blessings spoken of, viz: holiness, sonship, remission of sins, and eternal life."

Out of this way of looking at the subject arises of necessity a corresponding view of the Church. It is confessedly the body of the "elect," in the New Testament sense of that term. It is made up plainly, in St. Paul's view, of those whom he addresses as "saints," as the "called of God," as those who are "sanctified in Christ Jesus," as those whose vast privileges he describes as being in their measure a sort of counterpart of the resurrection and exaltation of Christ himself. It is a conception for him plainly, which is of one and the same measure precisely with these titles and representations. Settle it then that the true Scriptural sense of such terms is what we find it assumed to be always by the system before us, and we may see

at once how the notion of the Church must shape itself to agree with the requirements of the case. It can no longer be considered as an outward and visible organization at all, except in an imperfect and improper sense. In its true nature, it can be regarded only as an invisible constitution, the community of the righteous as they are known to God. Such is the view presented to us very explicitly by Dr. Hodge. Election, he tells us, does not regard "any external community or society as such" (p. 29). Again we are told, that if election is to holiness, it follows that "individuals, and not communities or nations are the objects of it" (p. 35). Again, commenting (in his usual style of begging dogmatically the whole question he pretends exegetically to settle) on the words *which is his body*, he says: "This is the radical or formative idea of the Church. From this idea are to be developed its nature, its attributes, and its prerogatives. It is the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ, that constitutes the Church his body. And, therefore, those only in whom the Spirit dwells are constituent members of the true Church. But the Spirit does not dwell in church officers, nor especially in prelates, as such; nor in the baptized, as such; nor in the mere external professors of the true religion; but in true believers, who therefore constitute that Church which is the body of Christ, and to which its attributes and prerogatives belong" (pp. 87, 88). The following is still more distinct: "The idea of the Church which underlies this paragraph (Eph. 2: 19-22), is that which is every where presented in the New Testament. The Church is the body of Christ. It consists of those in whom he dwells by his Spirit. To be an alien from the Church, therefore, is to be an alien from God. It is to be without Christ and without hope. The Church of which this is said is not the nominal, external, visible Church as such, but the true people of God. As however the Scriptures always speak of men according to their profession, calling those who profess faith, believers, and those who confess Christ, Christians; so they speak of the visible Church as the true Church, and predicate of the former

what is true only of the latter. The Gentiles while aliens from the Church were without Christ, without God, and without hope; when amalgamated with the Church, they became the habitation of God through the Spirit. Such many of them truly were, such they all professed to be, and they are, therefore, addressed in that character. But union with the visible Church no more made them real partakers of the Spirit of Christ, than the profession of faith made them living believers" (pp. 123, 124).

How exceedingly arbitrary all this is, and how little it agrees with the plain text of St. Paul himself, it is not our business just now to show. We bring it forward simply to exemplify the view which Dr. Hodge takes of the Church, from one end of his Commentary to the other. It agrees in full with his conception of the nature of Christianity, as being essentially a scheme of pure abstract spiritualism, starting in the election of certain individuals to salvation, and having no real significance or force beyond the carrying out of this purpose, which, at the same time, it cannot fail infallibly to reach. Under no such aspect can the Church be regarded as an outward and visible organization, carrying in it as such the powers of a higher world. Indeed it can be no *organization* at all; except in the character of a mental notion merely employed to generalize what are held to be the common attributes of its constituent members, as they are known certainly to God, though with no certainty to the world or to one another. It answers only to the invisible process of redemption, as it lies behind the dramatic show with which it is made to play its part in the outward world, and not at all to this show itself. These two conceptions fall asunder completely. There is no inward connection between them. The invisible fact and the visible fact come to no organic union whatever. They do not meet together in the idea of any single constitution, but present to our contemplation always what must be regarded as two Churches in truth instead of one. The scheme in this view is grossly dualistic.

Such dualism subverts really the old doctrine of the

Church, as it entered into the faith of the first ages, and continues to challenge the faith of the world still in the Apostles' Creed. It converts its whole being into a shadow, which, while it seems to promise much, means at last literally nothing for the process of man's salvation. Neither the true Church, in the sense of Dr. Hodge's distinction, nor the Church which is such in name only and outward show, can be said to add anything really to the "mystery of godliness," as otherwise ordered and made sure for its own ends. Neither the visible nor the invisible Church can be regarded in the light of a constitution, intervening with any real force between heaven and earth, and serving as the necessary form of all actual correspondence between them in the way of grace.

So far as the visible Church is concerned, this is at once plain. The system makes it to be, in and of itself, a mere profession of Christianity, a simply human association, a name and form at best and nothing more. If the presence of the Spirit go with it at all, it is there as something outwardly and mechanically joined with the other conception, and not as really belonging to it in any proper sense whatever. There is nothing indeed which the system is more ready to denounce, than the imagination of any sort of virtue or force for the purposes of salvation in the forms of religion as such; an imagination, indeed, which all may easily enough see to be both dangerous and absurd, if the premises of this judgment relating to the nature of the Church itself be allowed to go unquestioned. Grant that the visible side of Christianity in such view, its outward profession and forms, its whole constitution as a Church, carries in it no necessary relation whatever to its invisible privileges and powers; and it needs no farther argument certainly to prove that it must jeopardize then all the interests of piety, to lay stress on any such visibility and externalism, as having in themselves anything to do really with the proper kingdom of God, which is described as being within men, and as being "not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." The

dualistic stand-point of the system in question, shuts it up to this judgment, and renders it, we may say, logically impossible for it to look at the subject in any other light. It is ever ready, accordingly, to disparage all trust in the forms of religion, and to insist on the claims of its inward life and spirit, as something wholly independent of every such external aid. It is the foe constitutionally of the churchly, the priestly, the sacramental in religion, under every form and shape. Dr. Hodge himself loses no opportunity of striking at these conceptions, wherever they come in his way; and often, indeed, allows himself to go out of his way for the purpose.

But the invisible Church of this dualistic theory is no more suited than its notion of the visible Church, for the office here in question; and just as little account is made of it in fact under any such view. It adds nothing to the conception of Christianity, as apprehended without it. It is in truth nothing more than this conception itself, thus previously full and complete. It is at best the comprehension only of the "elect," whose salvation is a fact already secured under quite another aspect and view, and who thus bring with them in their character of saints all that is made to belong to them in its communion.

What has been now said may serve sufficiently to show the general nature of the Calvinistic hypothesis, on which Dr. Hodge relies so confidently for the right interpretation of the Epistle to the Ephesians. It is sufficient also to show, we think, how unequal his Commentary must necessarily be to the task of meeting and solving what we have already seen to be the fundamental exegetical problem brought to view in the structure of the Epistle itself. The hypothesis does not answer at all to the terms and conditions of this problem, as it has been already stated and described. It does not even seek to reconcile and unite the two apparently discrepant views of Christianity that run through the Epistle. It throws itself upon one of these views in a great measure exclusively of the other; and in this way violently breaks the knot which it has no power

to unloose. It does well in asserting over against Arminianism the claims of grace as forming in the work of redemption an order of life and power distinct from nature and above it ; but doing this in such a way as practically to sunder the two spheres altogether, it falls into a like one-sidedness in the opposite direction, making so much of God's agency as to turn the activity of man in fact into mere dumb show. With such a character, how can it possibly do justice to the text of the New Testament, or serve as a mirror to reflect the mind of St. Paul ? Looking at the theory then as it is in itself, and comparing it with the plain demands of the case, we have the most perfect right to anticipate not any more particular investigation, and to say beforehand that the Commentary before us cannot possibly give us the true scope and sense of the Epistle it pretends to expound. The difficulty is not with the learning or ability of its distinguished author. These may be all that could be expected or desired. It lies in the preconceived scheme of thought which he feels himself bound to apply to the text, as the necessary norm of its meaning ; but which is found to be in truth so foreign from the genius of the text itself, that no amount of learning can ever be able to interpret this faithfully and fairly by its means.

If this general *a priori* judgment in regard to the work at large be at all correct, we may take it for granted that it cannot fail to be corroborated and confirmed by an examination of it in its details. It is only what might be anticipated, therefore, when we look into it, and find its actual course of exposition attended with embarrassment and contradiction from the very start.

Take first of all the topic of election, which is found to be of such cardinal significance for the interpretation of the whole Epistle. With the merits of the doctrine itself in its Calvinistic form, as held by Dr. Hodge, we are not here immediately concerned. We have nothing to do with it now as a question of metaphysics or of general theology. What we have before us is a simple point of exegesis, which is not to be settled by any such speculation one way or the

other. We ask not, whether the Calvinistic dogma, in itself considered, be right or wrong; but whether it be really and truly what was in the mind of St. Paul in writing this Epistle to the Ephesians, so as to be still the proper key to the actual sense of the Epistle itself. That is now the only question; and it is one which we find ourselves at no loss whatever to answer. The election of grace on which so much stress is laid by St. Paul, and which is made by him here and elsewhere to underlie the whole conception of the Christian Church, is *not* just of one and the same order with the "absolute decree" of Calvinism, regarded as determining the destination of every man to glory or perdition from all eternity. To settle this point, it is not necessary that we should be able to explain in full the relation of the two forms of thinking to each other; nor even that we should have it in our power to comprehend precisely the actual view of the Apostle at all points. It is enough to see, that the suppositions and assumptions which are involved in the one hypothesis, cannot be brought by any strain of logic to agree with what is plainly postulated and required by the other. No rule can be more sure or easy of application than this; and we need no other, for fully deciding the question here in hand.

The Calvinistic theory of election, presented to us in the Commentary, connects the beginning of salvation for all who are predestinated to life indissolubly with its end. There is no room to conceive of it coming short of its ultimate purpose in a single case. In addressing then "the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus" at Ephesus, St. Paul is to be regarded, according to this view, as having in his mind's eye directly those in whom this absolute decree had already begun to work surely towards its own end, and no others. None besides may be thought of as having any true denizenship in the kingdom of God. The conception of that kingdom is held to be necessarily of one and the same measure, with the actual operation of this absolute decree in those who are its subjects. They alone have part really in the "vocation" of the Gospel; and for them

this heavenly calling is itself the guaranty and pledge, most surely, of everlasting life.

But now it must be plain, we think, for any unsophisticated reader, looking into the Epistle itself, that its theory of distinguishing grace, whatever it may be, is something widely different from this, something which refuses to coalesce with it altogether, and that demands absolutely quite another construction of Christianity. The "elect," whom St. Paul addresses, whom he describes as "called to be saints" and as "sitting in heavenly places in Christ Jesus," and who form for him the idea of the Church which is "the body of Christ, the fulness of him that filleth all in all," are *not* at once, to his mind, such as have been predestinated by an absolute decree, from all eternity, to everlasting salvation, and are now regarded as moving forward by the power of it, with unerring certainty, to this pre-ordained result. We have plain evidence of the contrary in every part of the Epistle. The difficulties it offers in the way of Dr. Hodge's scheme, are of the most unyielding kind; and they come up in every chapter, we had almost said in every paragraph and verse; so that recourse must be had everywhere to arbitrary and unnatural suppositions, to set them aside. The Epistle goes throughout on the supposition, (common, we may add, to the entire New Testament,) that those whom it addresses as Christians, chosen and called of God to the high and glorious privileges of the Church, might still fail to "make their calling and election sure." This single fact, too plain to be disputed by any honest and unprejudiced mind, is sufficient to settle the question under consideration. It shows conclusively that the "elect" in the sense of St. Paul, are not the same with the "elect" in Calvin's sense; and that the New Testament conception of the Church is something much wider than any theological view, by which it is made to be the invisible comprehension simply of that favored class whom God has predestinated to everlasting life, and in whose case thus the work of salvation once begun has no power ever to fail.

"Those who were once enlightened," we learn from Heb. 6: 4-6, "and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come," may after all so fall away that it shall be impossible to renew them again to repentance. Much ado has been made by some with this passage, on account of its broad opposition to the Calvinistic theory of grace, and strange shifts have been resorted to for the purpose of bending it from the plain natural sense of its own words; as though it formed a sort of solitary exception to the general tenor of the New Testament teachings on the same subject. But the truth is, the only singularity of the passage consists in the immediateness and strength of the terms it employs, to express the general thought with which it is charged. The thought itself, so far as its material substance is concerned, forms the very hinge, we may say, on which the instructions and warnings of the Epistle to the Hebrews most manifestly turn from beginning to end. Throughout it goes upon the supposition, that there is such a thing as sinning wilfully and fatally after men have received the knowledge of the truth (ch. 10: 26-29); that those who have been "illuminated," and who have passed through many trials joyfully in the service of Christ, may yet "cast away their confidence," and so lose all the benefit of their previous good confession (v. 32-35); that those who have believed, and need only patience and perseverance to win the crown of life, may still "draw back unto perdition" (v. 36-39); that as the ancient Israelites came short of the land of promise, so Christians now may come short of the heavenly rest (ch. 3: 7-12); that the apostacy of the Old Testament people of God forms a fair and legitimate example for the warning of his people under the New Testament (ch. 4: 1-3); that there is full opportunity and occasion, therefore, for exhorting these last to "take heed," to "fear," to "labor," lest any of them should be "hardened through the deceitfulness of sin," and so "fall after the same example of unbelief" (3: 12-14. 4: 1, 11). The great object of

the Epistle indeed is to fortify the Hebrew converts to whom it is addressed, against the peril of falling away from their Christian profession and hope; a peril, which is regarded not only as conceivable, but as absolutely imminent and hard at hand, creating just cause for earnest fear, and needing to be met with the most constant watchfulness and care. It deserves to be well considered, moreover, that the point of apprehension throughout is made to be, in the case of these converts, not the reality of their conversion itself as a past or present fact, but wholly and only its endurance in time to come. The question is not whether they had been already truly joined to Christ, whether they had experienced at all the power of the new truth, and so possessed in themselves the proper evidences of being in a state of grace, and having the inward life of religion as distinguished from its outward profession and form; but simply, when they should continue faithful and true to the privileges of their actually existing condition, which is presumed, as a matter of course, it would appear, to include in it all that is needed for their salvation. All depends on this perseverance. "We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the *beginning* of our confidence steadfast unto the *end*" (3: 14). We must not be slothful, but "followers of them who through *faith* and *patience* inherit the promises" (6: 12). "Let us *hold fast* the profession of our faith *without wavering*; for he is faithful that promised" (10: 23). Such is the general tenor and burden of exhortation from one end of the Epistle to the other; involving the assumption everywhere that the Christians for whom it was written belonged really and truly to the "household of faith," and yet had no security whatever of being finally saved for this reason. An assumption, it is hardly necessary to say, with which the Calvinistic notion of the Church can never be made to agree by any ingenuity or art.

Two different ways indeed have been tried, to get clear of the difficulty; but they deserve to be considered miserable *evasions* only, and nothing more. Only to state them, is to expose their dishonesty and want of force. One of

them consists in a resort to the most arbitrary imagination, that the case towards which these warnings are directed is *hypothetical* only, without the possibility of its ever becoming actual and real. "*If they shall fall away,*" expresses a contingency, possible enough on the side of believers themselves, against which in such view, accordingly, it is right that they should be solemnly warned; but which is, at the same time, on God's side, made to be graciously impossible, in the case of all, who, as the objects of his election in eternity, are the only real subjects of his salvation in time. So from first to last, the Epistle to the Hebrews is to be regarded as an argument and warning powerfully turned towards a form of danger, represented as urgent and dreadful, which nevertheless the inspired writer himself, (not less knowing in the matter, we may suppose, than Calvin,) well understood to be for the really elect, and therefore really "*illuminated,*" (the only true membership of the invisible and only true Church,) a fiction simply of the common understanding, and no proper reality whatever! It is difficult to conceive of any exegesis, more monstrous than this. The other evasion, however, carries with it just as little title to respect. It consists in supposing, that the possibility of apostacy contemplated in the Epistle holds good only of such as own the claims of religion in an outward way, without being brought savingly under its power; and that this, therefore, is the only case, which was really before the mind of the sacred writer, in the strong language he allows himself to use on the subject. He is to be considered thus as writing in such strain, not really for the elect (in Calvin's sense), but for the non-elect; who, strictly speaking, had no saving grace, nor even so much as the possibility of it, to fall away from; no heavenly birthright to sell for any price, great or small; no faith whatever from which to draw back to perdition; but who might be warned against the guilt and danger of apostacy notwithstanding, in form merely and for the sake of effect, as having it in their power to fall away at least from the semblance of grace, and to give up a hypocritical

profession of religion for no profession at all ! The imagination is purely absurd. It stands before us, without a shadow of reason to shield it from contempt. The Epistle is addressed throughout, not to the world at large, but to those who are regarded and spoken of as believers gathered out of the world into the bosom of the Christian Church ; not to such under any divided view, as having been partly true saints and partly saints only in name and form, with an eye now to the one class and then again to the other, but to their whole society collectively taken ; and those so addressed, are presumed to be in this collective capacity or character, " holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling," possessing by their Christian profession a real, and not simply nominal, interest in the privileges of the Church, its opportunities of grace, its full powers of salvation ; while at the very same time, and under the same general view, they are presumed again to be exposed most really to the possibility of losing all and perishing finally through unbelief.

And so with the Epistles of the New Testament in general. They look, in all their communications, directly and exclusively to the Church as distinguished from the world, to the congregation of those who are denominated saints, and described as the chosen and called of God in Christ Jesus. They keep themselves continually to this rule. They have to do only with " them that are within " (1 Cor. 5 : 12), and not at all with " them that are without." With them that are within, moreover, they have to do plainly in their collective character. It is not to a part only they speak, a still narrower circle mentally described within the limits of this first outward distinction. Not a particle of evidence do they show, in favor of any such arbitrary supposition. They speak to bodies of men, separated from the rest of the world in a visible, external way ; and to these, as such, they refer without hesitation the lofty titles, the high privileges, the heavenly immunities and prerogatives of the Christian Church. Yet of those who are regarded as partaking of this glorious distinction, in such

general view, do they again go on with just as little hesitation, to predicate, at the same time, directly and indirectly, the real possibility of sin, in forms involving an entire forfeiture of every advantage they had come to possess. However it may be with the Calvinistic doctrine of election, it is certain that the election and vocation here brought into view, carry with them no sort of guaranty whatever for the final salvation of their subjects.

The "elect" of St. Peter, chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1 : 2), "begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (v. 3), "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation" (v. 5), "redeemed from their vain conversation received by tradition from their fathers, not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (v. 18, 19), who had "purified their hearts in obeying the truth through the Spirit" (v. 22), who were "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people," appointed and set apart to "show forth the praises of him who had called them out of darkness into his marvellous light" (2 : 9); the "elect" of St. Peter, we say, who hold so high a place in his mind, and into the mystery of whose vocation even "the angels desire to look" (1 : 12), are still to his inspired view compassed about with all sorts of temptation and danger, requiring them to "pass the time of their sojourning here in fear" (v. 17), and need to be exhorted against all sorts of deadly sin, in a strain which clearly implies everywhere the apprehension of its full *possibility*, as something to which the privileges of their Christian state formed neither bar nor let in any sense whatever. It is not enough in his view, that those whom he addresses had "obtained like precious faith with himself through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1 : 1); nor that "his divine power had given unto them all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through

the knowledge of him that had called them to glory and virtue" (v. 3); nor that "having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust," they had it in their power by the exceeding great and precious promises" of the Gospel to be "partakers of the divine nature" (v. 3). All this only opens the way for the successful cultivation of the Christian graces and virtues (v. 5-7); and so it is added: "If these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that *he was purged from his old sins*. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to *make your calling and election sure*; for if ye do these things ye shall *never fall*: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." If these words mean anything whatever, their plain sense undoubtedly is, that those who were elected and called to salvation, in St. Peter's sense, and who had been purged also from their old sins, were capable, nevertheless, of reverting again to their former state, and of so falling as never to enter heaven; the very case, indeed, of some he speaks of as "having escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," and being "again entangled therein and overcome," so that "the latter end was worse with them than the beginning" (2: 20). In full conformity with this view, accordingly, all ends with the exhortation: "Ye, therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness" (3: 17).

In like manner, the "elect" again of St. Paul are plainly represented to us in every direction, as being highly exalted indeed by their position in the way of opportunity and power to be saved; nay as possessing in such form the grace of incipient salvation itself; but never as being set apart to salvation in full, with infallible certainty, and beyond the possibility of failure, in the Calvinistic sense.

The very opposite of this, on the contrary, is presumed in every sort of way. Throughout his Epistles, precepts and exhortations and warnings of the most solemn kind, which we have no right surely to regard as the empty skiomachy of one who beats the air, bear witness to the earnest apprehension he had of the liability of Christians to be overtaken with errors and sins involving a complete defection from the Christian faith ; while complaints of heresy and corruption actually at work in the Churches furnish ample evidence, mournful and sad, that this apprehension was by no means without ground. What strange forms of seemingly incompatible carnality and worldliness, do we not find mixing themselves with the Christian profession of the Church at Corinth, composed of " them that were sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be saints " ? Theirs, it is signified to us, was no common election. " I thank my God always on your behalf," writes the venerable Apostle, " for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ ; that in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge ; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you : So that ye come behind in no gift ; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ ; who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom ye were called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord " (1 Cor. 1 : 4-9). And then follows, almost in the same breath, a severe reprimand of their divisions and contentions ; in reference to which he says subsequently : " I brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat ; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal ; for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal and walk as men ? " (3 : 1-3). And this is only the beginning of censure. The case grows worse as we proceed ; and forms of evil come into view, as really existing, or at any rate, as really conceivable in this organization of saints " called

into the fellowship of Jesus Christ," which it is hard in truth to reconcile with our common ideal of a primitive Apostolical Church, and which for the honor of Christianity we might almost wish to have been either unnoticed altogether, or at least noticed in a more guarded and qualified way. There was no security in their communion, it seems, with all its celestial privileges, from the presence of even gross sins. A man that was called a "brother," one among the number of the "*ἑταῖροι ἀγαθοί*," might be nevertheless "a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner" (5 : 11); a monstrous case of course which is noticed only as calling for discipline and exclusion; the very supposition of which, however, is sufficient to show how real and near at hand for the Apostle's mind the whole bad possibility was of which we are now speaking, and how wide a range also he was willing to concede to it in his theory of the Christian Church. Here is another passage which sounds strangely, bearing on the same point : "Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded? Nay, ye *do* wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren! Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such *were* some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God" (6 : 7-11). And yet with all this purgation from their old sins, environed still, it would seem, with the danger of again coming under their power, and needing to be sharply warned of the fact, in terms that strike the ear certainly as better befitting the "children of disobedience" than the "household of faith"! Take another example: "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid."—"Flee fornication.

Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication, sinneth against his own body. What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" (6 : 12-20.) Only reflect on the opposite terms of this bold hypothesis, and then consider how much is signified by the *possibility* it serves to set before our view.

It would be easy to multiply exemplifications of the same general thought still farther from both the Epistles to the Corinthians. But the argument does not require it; and so we stop. It would be easy, moreover, to take St. Paul's other Epistles, one after another, and to show that they are all constructed throughout on precisely the same view of Christianity. But neither is this now necessary. The matter is abundantly plain, for all who care to study it in the light of the observations already made. These Epistles are all for Christians, for those who are considered and spoken of collectively as the chosen and called of God; and yet it is continually taken for granted in them, notwithstanding, that it was most perfectly possible for these very same persons to walk unworthily of their vocation, to forfeit their privileges, to part with their glorious birthright, to turn the grace of God into licentiousness, to make shipwreck of the faith, and so to come short eventually of everlasting life. Cases of such defection, as having actually occurred, are brought into view largely and without the least reserve; examples of unfaithfulness looking towards it are set before us under all imaginable aspects and forms; while the danger of it, as something not simply imaginary but most real and close at hand, (the "easily besetting sin" of Heb. 12: 1,) is everywhere powerfully and irresistibly implied by cautions and persuasions, admonitions and exhortations, prohibitions and precepts, which must be considered absolutely void of meaning in any other view.

We repeat then what we have said before. The doctrine of election in the common sense of the New Testament, and as we have it proclaimed alike by St. Peter and St.

Paul, is not the doctrine of election which is set before us in the theology of John Calvin. This is our thesis ; and for the present, (let it be well kept in mind,) nothing more than this. Our business now, as has been already said, is not with the merits of the Calvinistic dogma absolutely considered. The argument for it in its philosophico-theological form, as set forth for example by Schleiermacher, is one certainly which it can never be easy to meet. But the question now before us, is not one of philosophy or general theology. It is a question purely of exegesis. What we deny, is not the truth of metaphysical Calvinism as such, but its identity with the idea of election as it is found to underlie the conception of the Church in the sense of the New Testament. The two forms of thought, we say with the greatest confidence, are not the same. We hold it, therefore, for a fundamental fault in this Commentary of Dr. Hodge, that the difference between them is altogether overlooked, that St. Paul's doctrine of the "election of grace" is arbitrarily taken to be precisely of one measure with the doctrine of predestination to eternal life as held by Calvin, and that this last is then used as a key throughout, instead of the first, to open and expound the deep meaning of the Epistle to the Ephesians.

The consequences of so radical a mistake cannot fail, of course, to extend very far. They must affect the complexion of the entire Commentary, and may be expected seriously to vitiate the value of its expositions at every point. Our limits, however, will not allow us to pursue the subject any farther at the present time. We hope to take it up again hereafter, in another article. This will give us an opportunity of examining more fully the true import and bearing of St. Paul's idea of election ; as it will make it necessary for us also, to go somewhat particularly into the consideration of his doctrine of the Church ; the proper parallel of that other idea, by the help of which alone it is possible to satisfy the opposing conditions of the great exegetical problem which runs, as we have already seen, through all his Epistles, so as to bring into their exposition

the feeling of order, harmony and light. The true doctrine of the Church here is for the Calvinistic and Arminian theories, what the true doctrine of Christ's person was in the first centuries for the dreams of the Gnostic on the one side and the dreams of the Ebionite on the other, the glorious everlasting synthesis under a real form of what they have no power to unite except in the way of shadow.

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ART. IV.—THE CHURCH SYSTEM AND THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM.

ALL false religions are dark unconscious endeavors toward the true. They are the creations and projections of human wants. In them we see fallen nature, under a sense of its misery, feeling after God. They are as the unsubstantial shadow on earth of the eagle which soars in life, and freedom, and glory above.

These outgoings of nature after the true good, are what vegetable growths are without the light of the sun from above upon them:—without strength, use or beauty, they fall back in helplessness and confusion to perish on the earth whence they sprang. They are not glorified in fruit. To the perfection of vegetable life, it is necessary that its upward endeavors be met by responding powers from heaven down; and these two must become one in the life of the plant. Every perfect plant unites in itself heaven and earth. So in true religion there must be a union of the heavenly and the earthly—the divine and the human. The deep, solemn soundings of humanity's heaving bosom

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ART. I.—THE IDEA OF THE PARABLE.

THE New Testament parable—*παραβολή*, from *παρα*, to or against, and *βαλλω*, to throw, that is, to throw forward or against, to place one thing by the side of another—consists in bodying forth through language a supernatural truth in a natural fact, either actual or supposable. It is the peculiar union of the infinite and finite. The one is the substance, the other the form; the one is the spiritual meaning, the other the verbal expression. The one is a vast profound deep into which the reason may sink by the power of the Spirit, but which it can not fathom; the other a placid beautiful surface, indicating the mystery beneath by the varied rays of light which it reflects. To get an idea of the parable it is necessary, therefore, to apprehend both spheres of being; to stand in the element of the supernatural and invisible by faith, and at the same time to understand, in some measure at least, the natural and visible by means of reflection and study—to be in living sympathy with the spiritual meaning which it bears in itself on the one hand, and on the other, to know the nature of the outward form which its spiritual meaning assumes. As the outward form, however, is the medium through which the internal spiritual meaning addresses the faith and understanding of the Christian, it becomes in turn the medium through which the Christian may approach the internal spiritual meaning; the medium through which he may come to possess the

ART. II.—HODGE ON THE EPHESIANS.

SECOND ARTICLE.

IN resuming this subject, it seems proper to bring into view again, in the way of brief recapitulation, the leading topics or heads of argument discussed in our previous article.

The New Testament Epistles in general proceed throughout on the supposition of two different sides in Christianity, which, to a certain extent, oppose each other, and yet are quietly presumed always to be equally essential to its true constitution. In one direction all stress is laid upon its supernatural distinction, the fulness of divine grace which is comprehended in it for the salvation of its subjects. In virtue of this, they are represented as having a present interest in the privileges of Christ's redemption, which sets them high above the common level of human existence, and involves for them potentially all that is required in order to everlasting life. All the blessings of the new creation in Christ Jesus are regarded as already theirs, with a form of real possibility, such as we have no right to conceive of as existing for the world in any other circumstances, or under any different view. This is one aspect of the case. In another direction, however, we are met with such a representation of the simply human and earthly side of the same Christian state, as seems at times completely to obscure the glory of the other conception, and to bring all down again to the range of the most common every day experience. The powers and possibilities of a higher world, are found to be strangely at the mercy of the sins and frailties of the present world. The opportunities of grace show themselves as liable to be neglected, frustrated, or abused, as the corresponding opportunities of nature. Thus it is, that heavenly and earthly, divine and human, move hand

in hand together throughout the whole economy of the Gospel, as it is here offered to our contemplation. So in the case of the Epistles of the New Testament generally ; and so particularly, we may say, in the case of this Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians. It is palpably constructed on such a double or twofold view of Christianity, from beginning to end.

This being the case, it follows that no theological system or scheme can be relied upon as sufficient here for the purposes of exposition, which either fails to recognize at all the true and proper structure of the Epistle in this view, or brings with it no power to do fair and full justice to both sides alike of the peculiar hypothesis on which it is thus found to rest. The solution must answer to the nature of the problem, which requires to be solved. The key must agree with the wards and turns of the lock it is employed to open. The commentary must be as wide as the text it pretends to explain, meeting its requirements with equal readiness and ease all round, and satisfying them in a natural and harmonious way.

From the nature of the subject, there is room thus for exposition to become false and inadequate here in two general ways. The simply human and earthly side of Christianity may be allowed to throw into the shade entirely its proper supernatural significance and force ; or the wrong may be reversed, by making all of this latter interest, at the cost of what rightly belongs to the first. In either case, we shall have an imperfect onesided theory of religion, that can never answer to unfold the full meaning of the sacred text. These two kinds of theological obliquity may be characterized by the terms Arminian and Calvinistic, as serving at once to express their general bearing.

The Arminian tendency makes no earnest account of the supernatural side of Christianity, the order of grace as distinguished from the order of nature. It confesses indeed the presence of the supernatural in its own way ; but under the view only of such a relation to the constitution of nature as virtually resolves it into a mere abstraction, belong-

ing properly at last to the life of nature itself. No room is left thus for the conception of another economy, different from mere nature, above it, and yet joined with it in the way of inward lasting union, in the bosom of which the powers of salvation are to be regarded as permanently comprehended, under a form not known in the whole world besides. The distinction between the Church and the world on the outside of the Church, loses thus all proper reality, and resolves itself into a simple word or name.

Such a scheme can have no power of course to do justice to the double aspect, under which Christianity exhibits itself to our view in the Epistles of the New Testament; and it is very easy, accordingly, to convict of palpable and gross failure any Commentary, which may pretend to expound these Epistles by its aid.

The opposite Calvinistic tendency, however, is not for this reason any more worthy of regard or trust, in the same exegetical view. It affects to do justice to the strong terms in which the supernatural side of Christianity is spoken of; but in doing so, it wrongs its proper natural or human side. The work of redemption is taken to be, not for the human race, as such, but for a certain portion of the race elected from all eternity to such distinction; and in this view it is regarded as the irresistible execution or carrying out of God's decree for this purpose, in favor of those who are thus predestinated to everlasting glory. In this way, the transaction of salvation is not so much a real historical process in the world itself, as the playing into it rather of supernatural forces, which are supposed to be at work above and beyond it, and yet come not really to any true union with its proper life. Whatever of human activity may seem to be concerned in it, must be considered as phenomenal more than actual and real, the mechanical echo or reflection simply of the divine activity that sets all in motion from behind the scenes. The two worlds thus come to no organic conjunction. There is no bridging over really of the deep chasm which lies between them. Natural and supernatural, human and divine, are held apart for

the imagination, so as to exclude entirely the conception of any intervention, serving to mediate between them, and having power to bring them together in a real and constant way. It is taken for granted, that the action of the higher world upon the lower can be direct only, reaching over into this last under its own natural constitution, immediately and at once, without the help of any other constitution whatever. So we lose again the true idea of the Church; and for the conception of grace in its legitimate character, we are put off with what seems to be too often little better than the notion of magic.

This Calvinistic theory rules the thinking of Dr. Hodge. His Commentary on the Ephesians lives, moves, and has its being in it, from the first page to the last. It is an attempt throughout, to construct the sense of the Epistle according to this scheme. He does not extract his scheme, in the first place, from the text. It can hardly be said, that he pretends to do any thing like that. Most clearly, he brings it along with him to his work, as something already settled and fixed. The Calvinistic theology is to his mind one and the same thing with the doctrine of the Gospel; how may it be imagined then that St. Paul, rightly interpreted, should fail to agree with it in any of his Epistles? Thus it is, that the scheme, as an established preconception, is allowed to anticipate and forestall for the thoughts of the Commentator the general meaning of his text, and goes before him shaping the exposition of it everywhere into conformity with its own requirements. It is presumed, that St. Paul had in his mind exactly the same view of religion that is embodied in the writings of Calvin; that he was familiar with the same theological positions and distinctions; and that these, as a matter of course, were continually before him when he penned his Epistles; so that they must be considered to furnish now also the only key by which they can be properly understood or explained. The Commentary before us is a vigorous trial of this exegetical rule upon the Epistle to the Ephesians. The author shows himself in general true to his system through-

out; not shrinking to follow it out, as it would seem, even to the full length of supralapsarianism itself. The principle of the whole process of redemption is taken to be God's decree of election, in favor of a definite number of persons ordained from all eternity to salvation. Under such view, the process can have no reference really to those who are beyond the range of this decree. It carries with it the certainty of salvation for the elect, but includes no possibility of salvation, no actual provision of grace in order to salvation, for any others. All the arrangements of grace are at once bounded and circumscribed by the measure of the decree in whose service they stand, and can never have any force truly beyond the range of operation with which it is carried forward invincibly to its appointed end. The fall, it would appear, took place in subordination to this decree, to make room only for the restoration of the elect, while it served to doom all men besides to hopeless destruction. At all events, Christ became man, and died, not for the world at large, as the Scriptures seem to assert, but for the elect exclusively and alone. The promises are for them only. They alone can make any valid use of the means of grace; since to all others they are means in form and show only, and not so as to carry along with them any intrinsic significance really for the ends towards which they are made to look. The articles of the Creed are required necessarily to narrow themselves throughout to the same particularistic view.

Knowing the Commentary to be constructed on this scheme, we have a right to consider it a failure even before any more particular examination; just as we might come to a similar judgment by anticipation, in the case of a Commentary pretending to take the full measure of the Epistle, from the opposite stand-point of Arminianism in its vulgar rationalistic form. No such onesided view can possibly do justice to its twofold constitution. The true conditions of the problem to be solved are either misapprehended or ignored from the very start. How then should the solution be expected to succeed? In such circumstances, any Com-

mentary must, in the very nature of the case, prove wholly unequal to its proposed task. No ability or learning can help it.

The work before us corresponds in fact with this unfavorable presumption. As an exposition of the Epistle to the Ephesians, we cannot help feeling that it is lame and imperfect throughout. It fails to reach the deep sense of the Epistle, and comes short altogether of its grand and magnificent scope.

One general example and proof of its insufficiency meets us immediately, in the way it takes for granted everywhere that the idea of election, which plays so prominent a part in the Epistle, is of one nature precisely with the dogma of election as held by Calvin. We have taken some pains to show, that this imagination is wholly gratuitous and groundless. The two conceptions do not correspond at all. In saying this, no judgment whatever is pronounced upon the merits of the Calvinistic dogma, in itself considered. In its own form and place, it may be entitled to respect. The question here is not at all concerning the light in which it should be regarded as a point of metaphysical theology; but only concerning the use of it for exegetical purposes, in the exposition of the New Testament. Are the references to the idea of election in the New Testament such, as a general thing, that they may be fairly construed in the known and established sense of the Calvinistic dogma; or are they so circumstanced and conditioned as to require plainly a different interpretation? On this point, there is no room really for any serious doubt. The New Testament doctrine of election, as it meets us, for instance, in the Epistles of St. Peter, and rules continually the thinking and writing of St. Paul, is something essentially different from the doctrine of election which is presented to our view in Calvin's Institutes. The proof of this is found sufficiently in one single consideration. The Calvinistic election involves, beyond the possibility of failure, the full salvation at last of all those who are its subjects; there is no room to conceive of their coming short

of this result, in any single instance, made certain as it is in the form of a specific purpose and predetermination in the divine mind, from all eternity. Election and glorification, the beginning and the end of redemption, are so indissolubly bound together, that they may be considered different sides only of one and the same fact. The "elect," in Calvin's sense, have no power really to fall from grace, or to come short of everlasting life. But, plainly, the "elect" of whom the New Testament speaks, the "chosen and called of God" in the sense of St. Peter and St. Paul, are not supposed to possess any such advantage. On the contrary, it is assumed in all sorts of ways that their condition carries with it, in the present world, no prerogative of certain ultimate salvation whatever. They may forget that they were purged from their old sins, lose the benefit of their illumination, make shipwreck of their faith, and draw back to everlasting perdition. They have it in their power to throw away the opportunities of grace, just as much as it lies in the power of men continually to waste in like manner the opportunities of mere nature. Their salvation is after all hypothetical, and suspended upon conditions in themselves, which are really liable to fail in every case, and which with many do eventually fail in fact. Hence occasion is supposed to exist, in the sphere of this election itself, for all sorts of exhortation and warning to those who are the subjects of it, having the object of engaging them to "make their calling and election *sure*." The tenor of all is: "Walk worthy of your vocation. Only such as endure unto the end shall be saved. So run, that ye may obtain."

Plainly, we repeat, the two conceptions are not the same. The difference here brought into view is such as to show unanswerably, that the Calvinistic dogma is one thing and the common New Testament idea of election altogether another. The Calvinistic election terminates on the absolute salvation of its subjects; that forms the precise end and scope of it, in such sort that there is no room to conceive of its failing to reach this issue in any single case.

The New Testament election, as it enters into the thinking of St. Peter and St. Paul, terminates manifestly on a state or condition short of absolute salvation. Whatever the distinction may involve for those who are its subjects, in the way of saving grace, it does not reach out at once to the full issue of eternal life. The fact it serves to establish and make certain for them, is of quite another character and kind. It sets them in the way of salvation; but it does not make their salvation sure.

All this is so clear, that we may well be surprised to find no account whatever taken of it by Dr. Hodge; while it is at the same time of such far reaching import, that his want of attention to it must be considered as forming at once a fatal objection to his whole Commentary. He confounds here, from the very start, two materially different conceptions, in a way that cannot fail to bring uncertainty and confusion into every part of the Epistle he seeks to explain. Those whom St. Paul addresses as the subjects of God's election and vocation in one view, he considers to be addressed as the subjects of such election and vocation in quite another view. For the Pauline idea of election, he substitutes at once, as though there were no room to imagine any sort of difference between them, the idea of election as held by Calvin; and then proceeds, accordingly, to measure the mind and sense of the Apostle, from first to last, by this hypothetical theory alone, reducing all to conformity with it as he best can. What must be regarded as in fact a fundamental mistake, is made thus to condition and govern throughout the formation of his work. St. Paul writes to the "saints at Ephesus" under one view; Dr. Hodge has them in his thoughts under another view altogether. The case which is before the mind of the Apostle, as the general object of his address, is not the case which is before the mind of the Commentator, as the general object of his exposition. It is not necessary to say, that Dr. Hodge's scheme of election is anti-scriptural and false. We pronounce no such judgment upon it here. It is enough for us to know, that whether true or false, it is

not what was present to the mind of St. Paul, in writing this Epistle to the Ephesians. He was not thinking at the time of the metaphysical subtleties, since known as the theology of Calvin. These furnish, therefore, no true rule for the interpretation of what he has written. He wrote from a widely different stand-point. How is it possible then that Dr. Hodge, with all his learning and piety, refusing to see this plain fact, should be able to make us acquainted fully and fairly with the sense of the Apostle's text? Must it not be more or less travestied in his hands throughout? How shall it pass through such Procrustean exegesis, (forcing all ruthlessly to the measure of its own iron bed,) without being subjected to serious dislocations and wrested into all manner of false proportions?

Before proceeding, however, to notice farther the difficulties and defects that grow out of Dr. Hodge's system of interpretation, it may facilitate the order of our discussion to consider here more particularly what that election of grace is, (in distinction from the Calvinistic predestination to eternal life,) on which the whole doctrine of the Church is made to rest, with St. Paul, in this Epistle to the Ephesians, as well as in his Epistles generally.

It determines, we have just said, not the certainty of final salvation for its subjects, but only the possibility of it, in such a form as places it really and truly within their reach, while it leaves it in their power, notwithstanding, to come short of it altogether. In this view, their condition is represented to be parallel precisely with that of the ancient Israelites, who were chosen and set apart by solemn covenant to the possession of certain great and glorious privileges, in the way of possible future good, which yet carried along with them no sort of guaranty whatever, as was proved by the event on a large scale, that what was thus possible should at last become actual and real. All were under the cloud of the Divine Presence, we are told (1 Cor. 9: 1-5), and all passed through the consecrating miracle of the Red Sea; so as to be baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. All partook moreover of the manna in the

wilderness, and of the water that flowed from the rock. Their relation to God, as his covenant people, was most real. Its privileges were such as to exalt them far above every other people. All was ordained and designed, at the same time, to bring them into the full possession finally of far greater blessings, the natural and proper end of the covenant, to which none might hope to come beyond the range of its peculiar grace. "But with many of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness" (v. 5); and now they are held up, in such view, as examples of warning and admonition, for those who have been chosen and called out of the world to enjoy the opportunities and privileges of the Christian state, under a like real view (v. 6-11). Indeed no parallel is more familiar than this to the mind of the sacred writers; and it is of itself sufficient to show at once, what view they were accustomed to take of the grace which was supposed to be involved in the Christian profession generally, for those who were "called to be saints," and distinguished as the "faithful in Christ Jesus." It was, in their way of looking at the subject, such grace as made room for salvation, opened the way to it, secured a full right and title to it, rendered it in all respects practicable and possible, while it allowed full occasion still for the exhortation: "Let us fear lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it!"

Here, however, all depends on having some right idea of what is meant by the real possibility of salvation, which is thus made to be the peculiar and characteristic distinction of the state in question.

It may be so taken, as to amount to little or nothing more than the relation of the world at large to the Gospel, so far as this has come to be published and known. There is a sense, of course, in which Christianity is for men in general, offering to all alike, wherever it comes, the opportunity of having part in its glorious benefits. So much the Arminian has full right to assert, over against the false particularism of the Calvinist, which seeks to restrict this op-

portunity to one part of the human race exclusively, in such a way as to place all the rest of it beyond the reach of salvation entirely. The commission which commands the Gospel to be preached to every creature, and which makes the obedience of faith also to be incumbent on every one to whom it is thus preached under pain of eternal damnation, is amply sufficient of itself to prove that what all are so required to believe is really and truly for all a divine fact that may and should be believed. It is no empty word merely sounding forth the phantom of a sense which is not in it actually and in truth, but in all respects, as St. Paul terms it (1 Tim. 1: 15), "a faithful saying," a word credible and "worthy of all acceptance," when we are told that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," and that God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son (John 3: 16), "that *whosoever* believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." We have no right to narrow the meaning and force of the Christian salvation a whit within these catholic limits. In its own nature, it is as wide as the power of the curse from which it proposes to set men free, as fully universal as the wants and necessities of our whole fallen race. Take men just as they are then, in the order of nature, all the world over, and wherever the Gospel is preached to them, we may say that in a most important sense it makes it possible for them to have part in its grace. Christianity is applicable to their circumstances, addresses itself to their wants, and verifies for them the full signification of that word: "Say not in thy heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.) The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach: that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10: 6-9).

It may be supposed now, as we have already intimated, that this general relation of the world to the grace of the

Gospel, forming what may be denominated the opportunity of salvation in the order of nature, the possibility of redemption as it extends to the world at large along with the diffusion of Christianity, includes really all that is comprehended in the gracious condition or state of which we are now speaking, as that distinction of Christians on which so much stress is laid in the New Testament. To such rationalistic extreme the Arminian habit of thought always tends, running its natural course through Pelagianism out to the open, bleak and dreary waste of Unitarianism itself. Men may be regarded, according to this view, as possessing in the bosom of regularly organized Christian societies or churches, certain advantages and helps for the cultivation of religion, which they cannot have to the same extent in the surrounding world; just as they may be assisted in any other pursuit by similar organizations voluntarily formed for the purpose; but it is not to be imagined, that they should come thus within the range and scope really of a new and higher form of grace altogether, "powers of the world to come," means and appliances of salvation armed with divine virtue and supernatural force, for the action of which no room is to be found in the whole compass of the world's life besides. The conception of the Church falls, in this way, to the reigning level of man's ordinary natural existence. It is one simply among the other forms of its proper social order, the result of its general relation to the powers of religion; just as the organization of a school in politics or science may be considered the product of the general spiritual tendency it serves to represent. So far as the actual efficiency of the heavenly forces of the new creation is concerned, they cannot be said to be in the Church in any other sense than as they are in the world at large. Their relation to the world generally is taken to be immediate and direct, needing no intervention in any such form to make room for their saving action on the souls of men. The very notion of any such mediating constitution, indeed, is boldly repudiated, as something supposed to be fundamentally at war with the entire genius of the Gospel.

The order of grace, in such view, is confounded with the order of nature; the wall of distinction between them falls to the ground; in such sort that there ceases to be, for faith, any order of grace whatever in the Christian economy. All resolves itself into the life of nature, acted upon through its religious powers by influences supposed to proceed from a higher world. Looking at the subject in this way, the distinction of the Christian profession, of which so much account is made by St. Paul, must be considered more nominal than real; and it becomes necessary, therefore, to allow, that much of his language in regard to it carries with it a certain hyperbolical sound, which needs to be toned down exegetically to a much more moderate key, in order that it may suit fully for our common thinking the actual nature of the case. In the hands of a Commentator, like Paley, or Taylor of Norwich, this is done to some purpose. The "saints" at Ephesus or Philippi, we are told, are only those who have been gathered outwardly into the bosom of the Christian Church. So much is clear. But no such merely outward state, as such, can be supposed to carry along with it really any supernatural grace. What St. Paul seems to say of it, therefore, in such view, must be looked upon as a sort of figure of speech merely, a mode of thought transferred from the relations of the Old Testament to the different relations of Christianity, in conformity with the mental habit of the Jewish nation, for the purpose of effect. Election, vocation, translation from darkness to light, exaltation to heavenly places in Christ Jesus, sonship in the family of God, sanctification itself in the primary sense of the term, mean nothing more here than the powerless fact, that those of whom these high sounding terms are used have been led to make an outward profession of Christianity, and are to be regarded as having so far gone before others in seeking to improve the resources of salvation which it offers for the use of all in its proper higher and more spiritual form. The great things which are spoken of their state are either shorn thus of all proper significance, or come to be referred to an ideal Christianity,

whose actualization cannot be said to depend on the resources of this state in any exclusive sense whatever. The possibility of salvation which is secured to Christians in the Church, turns out to be at last nothing more than the general possibility of salvation which is set before men universally, wherever the Gospel comes with its message of grace and peace.

How little this agrees with the plain sense of St. Paul, we need not be at any pains to show. The Calvinist has a most perfect right, on his side again, to protest against it, as a view of Christianity which goes to destroy the idea of supernatural grace altogether; although he can have no right, for this reason, to force upon us his own theory of partial redemption, as if *that* were the only and, therefore, necessary alternative of what he feels thus bound to reject. The possibility of salvation which is put forward as the general distinction of the Christian state in the New Testament, is neither one nor the other of these antagonistic views, but carries with it a form which plainly excludes them both. It is not for those only who are predestinated to eternal life in Calvin's sense, and so have no power to come short of it in the end; for it is everywhere taken for granted, that the state or condition in question includes no such certainty of salvation whatever. And yet it is just as much taken for granted everywhere, that the condition is one which offers, not to some only, but to all who have part in it, a form of grace which is not to be found in the constitution of man's life under any other view, and in virtue of which salvation is brought nigh to them with such a character of real and full possibility as is not known in the whole world besides.

Those whom St. Paul addresses collectively as saints, chosen of God to be holy, partakers of the heavenly calling and heirs of eternal salvation, are not regarded by him certainly as the possessors of a merely nominal and imaginary distinction, over against the world at large with which their state is thus broadly contrasted and compared. It is not in the way of compliment only or conventional form, most

clearly, that he can be supposed to speak of it in such lofty terms. Nothing can be more plain, than that for his mind the difference between their condition and that of the world around them, was most substantial and real, and of a kind to warrant in full all the strength of language he was accustomed to use in regard to it. His sense of difficulty, in setting forth the significance of the distinction, is not that his terms are too high for his subject, but only that they come not up to the proper greatness of it, as he finds it overwhelming his own thoughts. It is no simply outward separation alone, no merely nominal peculiarity of position, which in the view of the Apostle goes to make up the true idea of the Christian profession, the state into which men are brought by entering the hallowed precincts of the Church. This state, as he looks upon it, sets all who are in it, whether the privilege be properly improved or not, in a relation to God which cannot be said to exist at all for others. The possibility of salvation here is made to assume a far higher form, than all it is ever found to be in the world at large. It is no longer the mere capability of being saved, but in a most material sense salvation already begun. The difference of relation to the powers of redemption is not merely in degree, but actually and truly in kind. A new order of life has been entered, the order of grace as distinguished from the order of mere nature. In this respect, the state includes a strictly supernatural character. Those who are in it stand, by virtue of their position, in correspondence with the powers of a higher world, the mysterious forces of the new creation in Christ Jesus, in a way not possible to men in any other condition. They are brought within the range and sweep of that victorious dispensation, which having run its course first in the person of the Saviour himself, is now revealing its presence in the world, through the Spirit, for the final and complete salvation of his people. To this salvation they have already a full title. It is theirs by covenant and promise, and they have full opportunity to come at last into its possession.

Such clearly is the conception of the Christian state, in its distinction from the general condition of the world, as it dwells in the mind of St. Paul. And this conception forms for him precisely the idea of the *Church*; the sense of which enters so largely into all his Epistles, but most of all we may say into this Epistle to the Ephesians; underlying as it does here the universal course of his thought, and forming in truth the key note around which it seems to proceed throughout, as a grand and magnificent anthem belonging not so much to earth as to the skies.

Answering to the view now described, the Church is regarded by St. Paul as a real constitution, of supernatural origin and force, existing in the world under an outward historical form, and comprehending in it the opportunity and possibility of salvation as they are to be found nowhere else. It finds its symbol or type in the Ark, which served in the days of Noah to save those who sought refuge in it from the waters of the deluge. So far as it lay in the power of the unbelieving and disobedient generally, at that time, to give heed to the Divine warning and betake themselves to the hope which was set before them in this form, it might be said that there was a possibility for them to be saved. But the possibility of salvation for those who had already entered the Ark, as we can see at once, was of a very different kind. It was not such indeed, in its own nature, as to make it absolutely necessary for them to be saved. There was no room, it is true, for any question in regard to the full sufficiency of the Ark for this purpose. But it was possible for those who were in it, to frustrate for themselves its merciful purpose and design. They might forsake it through unbelief; or staying in it, they might neglect the needful conditions of life, so as to come short finally of the proper end of their probation. Notwithstanding all this, however, their state was already one of glorious miraculous privilege, as compared with the condition of the world at large. It placed them in a new order of existence, and brought them into living actual communication with the scheme of grace which God had been pleased to

provide for the deliverance of his people. It was in such view this deliverance itself, already in sure progress towards its appointed end. In these circumstances, those who were in the Ark might be spoken of easily enough as possessing from the first the full and entire salvation which was really comprehended in its constitution for their benefit; although this was not yet reached, and might possibly never be reached by all of them in fact; since that must depend, in the nature of the case, on their own persevering use of the means they enjoyed for this purpose. Still all might be said to be theirs, as soon as they passed from the sphere of nature here into the sphere of grace. They were rescued from the general condemnation of the world. They were made secure from its impending destruction. They were prepared to outlive the flood. They might be said even to have a present footing on the shores of the new earth, which they were called to seek through its waters.

Behold a true figure of the Christian Church (1 Peter 3: 21), as it appeared to the mind of St. Paul. It stands as contrasted with the world in its natural character, under the most real view, as a different order of life altogether. The world in its natural character is fallen, alienated from the life of God, and literally under the power of Satan; who is styled, for this reason, "the god of this world" (2 Cor. 4: 4), and "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph. 2: 2). The redemption of man, in these circumstances, called for the intervention of grace under a wholly new form of existence. This was accomplished by the mystery of the Incarnation. Here the "Word became flesh"; in such a way as to bind heaven and earth together in a new mode of human life, which comprehended in itself supernaturally the power of surmounting and overcoming the evils that press upon this life in its natural and merely **A**damic form. Christ came into the world, not simply to make known the will of God, and to preach righteousness, as the last and greatest of all the prophets; but primarily and mainly to actualize God's will, to create righteousness, to bring grace and truth for men into being. The salva-

tion of the world stood, first of all, in his own person. It was there as a real outward constitution, an act of self-revelation on the part of God, set over against the order of nature, the presence of a higher economy brought down into the midst of it from above, and making room within its bosom for all the grace that is comprehended in the idea of the Gospel. "In him was life; and the life became the light of men." He was himself the way to the Father, the absolute truth, the resurrection and the life. It is in this deep sense originally, that the Gospel is represented to be "a new creation;" for it is in fact no modification merely of the old Adamic order of man's life, but the introduction into the world really and truly of a new and higher mode of being, through the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the flesh. The case required, however, that this new creation should not remain an isolated fact in Him, who was thus constituted its original ground and foundation. Hence the process of redemption, in the ordinary sense of the term, including the whole conflict of Christ with the powers of darkness, the satisfaction which he rendered to the broken law of God, his sufferings upon the cross, his voluntary bowing to the stroke of death, his descent into hades, his resurrection from the dead, and his glorious ascension into heaven; all designed to complete the full sense of the mystery which lay hid in his person, by advancing his Mediatorial life to its proper position of actual victory and superiority over the whole world of sin and death, that it might become thus for men generally, through the mission of the Spirit, the principle and fountain of life after its own kind, thenceforward to the end of time. Such is the order of salvation, as we find it embodied in the Apostles' Creed. The constitution of grace in distinction from the constitution of nature, as it appeared originally in Christ's single person, was never designed certainly to be a mere temporary fact, passing out of the world entirely when he was "put to death in the flesh," only in order that he "might be quickened in the Spirit," and so enter into his glory, and take possession of his king-

dom in its true and proper form. No thought could well be more remote than this from the habitual thinking of St. Paul. The constitution of grace, to his view, becomes fully established in the world, only after Christ's glorification; and then it is identical for him with the idea of the Church. He sees in the Church always, accordingly, a peculiar and distinct order of existence, an economy of life absolutely different from the constitution of the world under every other view, in which is comprehended the actual presence of forces and powers for man's salvation that are strictly supernatural; not belonging at all to the world in its merely Adamic life, and not to be measured by the capabilities of this in any way; but such as are derived wholly and entirely from the new creation in Christ Jesus, carried out to its proper completion in his glorification at the right hand of God. He reigns there as "head over all things to the Church;" which in this very view is denominated "*his Body*, the fulness of him that filleth all in all;" as being the form of his continual presence in the world, as well as the organ and medium of his grace through all time. Here he works with a power, which goes altogether beyond the strength of nature, transcending its whole fallen constitution, and producing results that cannot possibly be reached in any other way. The Church is the Home of the Spirit, and the true Ark of Salvation; offering to men under a real form the supernatural resources, by which alone it is possible for them, so to "pass the waves of this troublesome world, that finally they may come to the land of everlasting life."

So apprehended, the Church is found to be, in a most important sense, the necessary medium of salvation for men. How should it be otherwise, if it be indeed the constitution of grace itself, the only form in which the powers of the new creation are at work in the world; while all beyond resolves itself into that mere life of nature, from the weakness and curse of which it is the object of the Gospel to set men free? To say that no such intervention is needed, to make room for the course of the Christian sal-

vation, is virtually to deny and reject the truth of all that has now been said concerning the difference between the order of nature and the order of grace, and to hold that men may be saved absolutely in the order of nature itself without any order of grace at all ; which is such an error again, as necessarily involves at last, when carried out to its legitimate end, the denial and rejection of the whole mystery of the incarnation. If the grace by which salvation is made possible be in the world only as a supernatural system, flowing from Christ, and if this system be itself the Church, related to him as the body to the head, it follows forthwith that there can be no ordinary salvation out of the Church, that it is the first duty of all to seek refuge in its bosom from the wrath to come, and that those who do so are at once made to have part in such full power and possibility of being saved as may be said to be in fact salvation already begun. So much, accordingly, is involved everywhere for St. Paul, in his established idea of the Church. He has no difficulty whatever in assuming continually, that it sustains to the world a relation corresponding in full with all that the Ark was, in the days of Noah, to the men of his generation.

Apprehended as it is by St. Paul again, the Church has necessarily an objective organic life. It is in this respect a system or constitution parallel in full with the constitution of the world, under its simply natural form. It is made up of manifold forces and powers, working with a vast array of outward historical results, through successive ages, which are yet all bound together as one general movement, and capable of being referred to a common principle or source. That principle is Christ. The Church starts from him, and stands in him always, as its perennial undying root. Whatever of grace, power, opportunity and possibility, there may be in it, as distinguished from the universal range of man's life on the outside of it, all proceeds from the new order of existence which was introduced into the world by his incarnation, and in virtue of which he now reigns at the right hand of God. It is a

sphere of being, which refers itself back organically to the principle of the new creation in such view, even as the sphere of nature, with all its powers and possibilities, refers itself back organically also to the principle of the old creation, advanced to its highest form in the "living soul" of Adam.

Such in general is St. Paul's conception of the Church. It unites in itself at once the two sides of the peculiar and truly enigmatical hypothesis, on which we have found all his Epistles to be constructed; doing full justice to both, and causing their seeming contradictoriness to disappear; for which very reason also it offers to us the only satisfactory solution of their sense, the only key by which it is possible to expound them in any full and harmonious way.

It is easy to see, that no like idea of the Church is at all attainable for either of the onesided tendencies, which allow themselves, as we have seen before, to turn the true synthesis of the Christian mystery into a false antithesis, by separating its factors, and then exalting one at the sore cost and sacrifice of the other. It is very certain, on the contrary, that these schemes must lead necessarily, each in its own way, to a different notion of the Church altogether; and it is very certain, moreover, beforehand, that no such different notion can ever be made to square exegetically with the true meaning of St. Paul's Epistles, but must serve rather to involve the exposition of them in endless and hopeless embarrassment.

Neither the Arminian nor the Calvinistic extremes can make true earnest with the proper objective and historical character of the Church, regarded as a constitution of grace in distinction from the constitution of nature. Neither of them can do justice to the idea of its organic nature, the unity and continuity of its being, considered as the power of a new creation in Christ Jesus. With neither of them can it ever come to a true acknowledgment of the position which properly belongs to it in the supernatural economy of salvation, as a part of the "mystery of godliness," itself a mystery, and in such view fairly and of right an object of

faith, as it is made to be in the Apostles' Creed. For neither of them is the Church, in any sense, what the Ark was in the time of Noah, the bearer actually of the redemption which it offers to those who are invited into its bosom, the very organ and medium of grace, the home of the Spirit, the sphere of celestial powers, through whose intervention alone the blessings of the Gospel are made to be available and possible truly for any of the children of men. Both schemes are careful in fact to denounce the idea of all such interposition and mediation in any form, as interfering with what they take to be the proper freeness and directness of Divine grace, and as tending in their apprehension to rob religion of that character of inwardness and spirituality, which forms its highest distinction, and which it is held to admit only in the form of an immediate personal transaction between every man and his Maker.

In the case of the Arminian or Pelagian theory, (having its natural end in Socinianism,) all this is at once plain. It brings the whole economy of salvation, regarded as a process upon the earth, down into the order of nature, in such a way as to leave no room truly for any order of grace whatever. Grace, with it, is at best the presence of supposed heavenly forces, coruscations of power from a higher world, playing over into the world of nature in a purely magical way; which remains in such view throughout the real field of action, where all is carried forward and brought to its conclusion. The Church cannot be considered thus as any thing more, than a particular province of the general life of man, defining and taking in his religious relations, just as his social relations are variously embodied and expressed in other provinces of the same life, without its being imagined for a moment that these form in any separate view the actual ground of their being.

The Calvinistic theory, sublimating as it does the idea of grace, and laying all stress on what it conceives to be the strictly supernatural side of religion, would seem to offer room, on first view, for a much more honorable notion of the Church. Who can fail to be impressed by the well

c known lofty and solemn terms, with which Calvin himself approaches the topic in the last book of his *Institutes*? "Coming to speak now of the visible Church," he says, chap. I, §. 4., "let us learn from the single title *Mother*, how much lies for us in the knowledge of it; since there is no other entrance for us into life, unless she conceive us in her womb, unless she give us birth, unless she nourish us from her breasts, unless finally she hold us under her tutelage and care, until having put off our mortal flesh we shall be as the angels (Matth. 22: 30). For our infirmity will not allow us to be discharged from school, till we shall have finished the whole course of life as pupils. Add, that beyond her bosom no remission of sins is to be hoped for, and no salvation." All this sounds like a true echo of the ancient faith, as it might have been pronounced with unfaltering voice by St. Augustine or St. Cyprian, the faith of the universal Church in the beginning, according to the plain sense of the Creed. It is, however, in truth, the old doctrine in sound only, and nothing more. Calvin's conception of the Church, after all, is by no means the same with that contained in the Creed; and it is easy enough to see, how his theological system is at war with this, and leads necessarily to a wholly different view. This comes out fully with Dr. Hodge. He too has much to say of the Church; and is forced to allow it a prominent place in his Commentary; as how indeed could it be otherwise, in endeavoring to explain an Epistle like that to the Ephesians, which is so full of it from beginning to end? But the article, in his hands, is conditioned by the Calvinistic notion of election and predestination, in such a way as to bear almost no resemblance whatever to the light in which it was regarded by St. Paul. A passage, quoted from his work, may assist us in coming to some right apprehension of this point.

"The purpose of election," he tells us, (pp. 30, 31), "is very comprehensive. It is the purpose of God to bring his people to holiness, sonship, and eternal glory. He never intended to do this irrespective of Christ. On the contrary

it was his purpose, as revealed in Scripture, to bring his people to these exalted privileges through a Redeemer. It was in Christ, as their head and representative, they were chosen to holiness and eternal life, and therefore in virtue of what he was to do in their behalf. There is a federal union with Christ which is antecedent to all actual union, and is the source of it. God gave a people to his Son in the covenant of redemption. Those included in that covenant, and because they are included in it—in other words, because they are in Christ as their head and representative—receive in time the gift of the Holy Spirit and all other benefits of redemption. Their voluntary union with Christ by faith, is not the ground of their federal union, but, on the contrary, their federal union is the ground of their voluntary union. It is, therefore, in Christ, i. e., as united to him in the covenant of redemption, that the people of God are elected to eternal life and to all the blessings therewith connected. Much in the same sense, the Israelites are said to have been chosen in Abraham. Their relation to Abraham and God's covenant with him, were the ground and reason of all the peculiar blessings they enjoyed. So our covenant union with Christ is the ground of all the benefits, which we, as the people of God, possess or hope for. We were chosen in Christ, as the Jews were chosen in Abraham. The same truth is expressed in 3: 11, where it is said that the carrying out or application of the plan of redemption is 'according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.' God purposed to save men in Christ, He elected them in him to salvation."

So Dr. Hodge expounds theologically the clause: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world" (1: 4). All this means plainly, that the economy of redemption starts in God's absolute unconditional decree of election, terminating first of all on a certain definite number of the human race, singled out as individuals, without any respect whatever to the mode and manner of their salvation; for whom, and in whose behalf exclusively, it is then purposed to provide a Redeemer, who

should be constituted from all eternity, in God's mind, their federal head and representative, having authority to undertake for them in the covenant of redemption, and power to execute in full afterwards the terms of this covenant, by accomplishing all that their salvation required ; in which view they may be considered to have been chosen *in him* to holiness and eternal life before the foundation of the world ; just as he forms now actually in time the instrumental medium, through which the purpose of election in their case is carried forward to this its necessary end. Christ, in this view, is not first in the order of the decree, but only second. He is not the primary and main object of it, but only a subordinate provision brought in for the purpose of carrying it into effect.

Now the first thing that may well strike us with surprise here is, that this view does *not* correspond at all with the case which is brought forward by Dr. Hodge himself as its proper parallel, the relation namely of the Israelites to Abraham. "We were chosen in Christ," he says, "as the Jews were chosen in Abraham." Very true. But if so, then most certainly not in the sense of this Calvinistic decree. To bear out any such analogy as that, the Abrahamic covenant must be supposed to have sprung primordial-ly from an unconditional eternal purpose, on the part of God, to separate and call to the peculiar benefits of this covenant a certain fixed portion of mankind, chosen simply as so many individual units of the race, and without any reference whatever to their subsequent nationality as Jews; in the service of which decree then, Abraham himself was also preordained to be the instrument both of their national existence and of its covenant blessings ; so that they might be said to have been chosen in him to Judaism and its privileges, before all time. Only so would the case offer a fair and true parallel with the other representation. But who seriously believes anything like this to be the actual signification of the Abrahamic constitution ? Who does not feel rather, that the whole subject is caricatured by being placed in any such monstrous light ?

Looking at the Abrahamic constitution in its true light, we have before us here, in fact, two altogether different forms of election. We may distinguish them as mechanical and organic. The scheme set before us by Dr. Hodge is strictly of the first character; the reigning Biblical scheme is altogether of the last. The difference between the two conceptions is so important, that we may well be at some pains to have it clearly in mind.

If a man should suppose a law in nature to be of one measure exactly with its phenomenal results, the numerical comprehension of these and nothing more, a mere term to express and set forth the general truth of their existence as so many separate facts, it would be an example of a mechanical notion coming short entirely of the real nature of its object. The case calls for an organic conception. Such a law is not the product merely of its own results, (a contradiction in terms,) nor yet an instrument simply for bringing them to pass; but the very power itself of their existence.

To bring the matter nearer to the case in hand, take now the common relation of a tree to its branches, blossoms and fruit. If these should be supposed to exist in any certain quantity and form aside from the tree itself, and there to be joined to it in an outward way, causing it to appear as the instrumental bond and bearer of their collective life, the conception would be again purely mechanical; whereas the actually existing relation itself, as all may easily see, is organic; the tree being in fact the true ground and foundation of all the life that is comprehended in its branches, blossoms, and fruit; to such extent, that they cannot exist at all, nor be so much as conceived even to exist, except through its presence and power.

Make such a case, in the next place, the object of God's decree; which must be considered in truth to extend to all his works; and we may readily see how there is room here again for the same difference of conception, accordingly as the decree may be taken to agree with one or the other of these views. What the tree is really, it must be consider-

ed in any right view to be ideally also in God's eternal purpose and plan. The order of its being, in both modes, must be intrinsically the same. The decree looks to the branches, blossoms, and fruit, only through the tree, which forms the whole ground of their being and life. They are viewed as being in fact a single constitution. To will their existence, is to will, not secondarily but primarily, the existence of the tree itself. In such sense only, may they be said to be chosen in it to what is at last their actual destination. The election, by which this is secured, is organic. Dr. Hodge, however, to be consistent with his own theological theory, would need to reverse the order of the conception altogether. The branches, the blossoms, the fruit, are to be considered as all predetermined to their existence in time, in the first place, just so many, neither more nor less; and then, next in order, and for the purpose of bringing this to pass, must be supposed to follow the preordination of the tree, fitted and contrived to serve as an instrumental medium for reaching the end in view. This is the mechanical notion of election. The two schemes, in this case, may be distinguished without any great difficulty; and it is by no means hard to say, which of them is entitled to the most respect.

Take now, finally, the natural constitution of the human race, flowing from Adam; which is so often referred to in the New Testament, and especially by the Apostle Paul, as forming a general parallel with the new order of life in Christ. All proceeds from God's eternal purpose or decree; and we may say of men universally, that they have been chosen in Adam before the foundation of the world, to become what they are actually afterwards in time. It makes all the difference in the world, however, in what sense this election may be taken. Conceive of it under the mechanical character which Dr. Hodge assigns to the corresponding election of grace, and it must be held to mean, that the decree starts with the purpose of calling into actual existence, under a human form, a distinctly settled number of possible beings, irrespectively altogether of any in-

tervening condition, and then falls upon the expedient or device of making the whole process centre in Adam, as it does now in fact; a view that is not likely to be entertained seriously here, we think, even by Dr. Hodge himself. The organic conception alone falls in rationally with the demands of the case. So apprehended, the decree coincides with what we are irresistibly constrained to regard as the world's actual constitution. The relation of Adam to men generally is seen to be an organic law; through the presence and power of which alone they come to be what they are; and aside from which, therefore, there is no room really to conceive of their existence at all. To be the object of God's purpose then in any way whatever, they must be regarded by it from eternity in this form and no other. The Divine decree terminates on the whole race immediately and at once, as a constitution derived from Adam, and holding in him continually as its natural root.

Such unquestionably is the eternally established order of the Adamic constitution, as it presented itself to the view of St. Paul; and with this corresponds in full also, we are bound to believe, his doctrine of election as applied to the new creation in Christ. The decree of creation, so far as the human race is concerned, looks to men as being in Adam, that is, as having part in the conditions, and qualities of humanity, the order or sphere of life that grows forth from him as its organic principle and root. He is the law, in which is comprehended the whole real possibility of their being. They are elected in him, so far as they are ever to exist at all, to whatever of worth and significance there may be in the simply natural life, into which they are introduced only by being born of his blood. And just so Christ is considered to be, only in a far deeper way, the principle and root of the new and higher order of life, which is supposed to be comprehended in the Church, as distinguished from the world. The "faithful" are held, by the very conception of their faith itself, to be in Christ; and with this order must be allowed to correspond also, in their case, the decree of salvation. It is strictly organic.

It looks to them only through Christ. They are chosen to salvation, not as being out of him and beyond him in the order of nature, but as being in him, and so in the order of grace.

It may be said, indeed, that even under this view it must be owing to God's purpose and election at last, that some are brought to be in Christ, and so to have part in the constitution of grace, while others fail to enter it and perish; just as it may be said also, that the specific results of any organic law in the sphere of nature are all numerically foreknown, and so necessarily foreordained, in the Divine mind, from all eternity; that every particular tree, for instance, and every particular herb and plant, produced by the law of vegetation, must be viewed as being chosen out of all possible entities, and determined to the order out of which it then actually grows and proceeds; or that, in the case of any single tree, its countless leaves, and buds, and blossoms, are all numerically willed to exist, and fixed to their several places, and ordained to their various individual contingencies and fortunes, from all eternity, in the same way. All this may be said; and we are quite willing to allow, that the metaphysical argument for predestination, when thrown into this broad and universal form, is one which it is by no means easy to meet. Three things, however, are to be observed in relation to it.

In the first place, this metaphysical view of foreordination, as it may be supposed to lie back of all organization, deciding and fixing in every case its precise contents and results, is not the view of St. Paul presented to us in the Epistle to the Ephesians. We do not say that it is one which he was not prepared to understand or acknowledge, in its proper place. That is another question. What we mean is, that it was not in his mind at all, not present to his thoughts in any way, in writing this Epistle; and that it cannot be used, therefore, as a true key to its sense.

In the next place, the conception in question does not offer itself as one that is peculiar in any way to the sphere of religion. It looks to the universal constitution of the

world. So far as it goes, the order of grace is viewed as being the real counterpart and parallel of the order of nature. That is just what it is made to be in the thinking of St. Paul. The one is to him as really as the other an objective constitution, having in itself its own laws and powers, and working organically for the accomplishment of its own ends. With what may be supposed to lie behind all this in either case, the metaphysical conception of the Divine decree, he does not allow his mind to concern itself in any way whatever.

In the last place, it makes a vast difference, whether this metaphysical conception be allowed to form directly one notion of election as in the mechanical scheme, or be simply thrown as an impenetrable mystery behind it, according to the organic view. In the first case, it becomes absolutely unconditional, having regard to no conceivable relations or qualities whatever; as being itself necessarily the ground and reason of all such distinction; in which view, we can think of nothing more perfectly abstract. In the other case, it is at once conditional; eyeing all existences from eternity as they actually are in time; seeing the whole always in its parts, and the parts in their whole, as well as in the relations they bear mutually among themselves; determining and fixing things concretely; the only way that can be said to answer truly at last to their being; the only way, indeed, in which they can ever be really and truly the object of either purpose or thought at all.

Such is St. Paul's idea of election, we repeat, as applied to the economy of the Christian Church. It is not mechanical but organic; not abstract, but concrete. It has to do with men, not in the general view simply of their common natural humanity, but under the conception of their being Christians, such as have come to stand, through the obedience of faith, in the bosom of the new order of life which is revealed in the Church; without any reference immediately to the way in which this may be supposed to have come to pass. What the Apostle has immediately in his eye, is not so much the election of men into Christ, as their elec-

tion in him ; the heavenly prerogatives, the glorious privileges, possibilities, opportunities and powers, that are comprehended in the new creation of which he is the Alpha and Omega, and to which they are chosen in fact by being embraced in its organic sphere. Just as, by being in the vine, its branches may be said to be elected and chosen in it to all the fruitfulness, which is made possible for them in this way, and in this way alone.

The grand object of the whole purpose is primarily and fundamentally the Lord Jesus Christ himself. All else is seen as having place only in him and by him. What fills the soul of the Apostle with adoring admiration, is the thought of the glorious constitution of grace in his person, considered as present to the mind of God from all eternity, and as forming in truth the ultimate scope of all his counsels and dispensations towards the human race, though in the unsearchable depths of his wisdom it was not allowed for ages to come fully into view. Through all the graces of nature, made subject to vanity by reason of sin, its gloomy forebodings, and wild utterances of despair; through the long night of expectation that went before the Flood and followed after it; through the clouds and darkness, which shrouded the mysterious presence of Jehovah during the whole period of the Old Testament ; this was the end, towards whose revelation, in the fulness of time, the universal plan of the world had been directed from the beginning, and in the advent of which alone was to be reached finally the full resolution of its inmost sense. All looked in this way to the new constitution which was to be ushered into the world by the glorious fact of the incarnation, carrying with it redemption and victory over the powers of sin and hell, for all who should come into its bosom, and use faithfully its grace. And now God's eternal purpose was fulfilled. The mystery of ages was no longer hid, but open. Christ had come in the flesh ; and by his death and resurrection room was made for the Church, which now stood among men, accordingly, and was destined to do so to the end of time, as the comprehension of the unuttera-

ble blessings which had been procured for the world by his mediation. Into the bosom of this Divine economy, both the Apostle himself, and those to whom he writes, had been already brought. There was nothing doubtful or uncertain, to his mind, about the reality of their privilege in this view. They had submitted themselves, with the obedience of faith, to the authority of the Christian constitution, coming into its supernatural order by the holy sacrament of Baptism; and they were regarded as being, for this reason, certainly in the sphere of redemption, with a full title to all its privileges and powers. The Apostle does not allow himself to be disturbed for a moment, by the consideration that some of them, in all probability, were not what their profession called for, and that it was possible for such to come short of salvation altogether. He sees in them all notwithstanding, the subjects of a true heavenly distinction. Use it as they might, their Christian birth right was a present boon, the value of which was not to be expressed by any earthly arithmetic. They were elected in Christ to everlasting life; called and set apart in him to be saints; brought out of the order of nature, where neither sanctity nor salvation were possible, and placed in the order of grace, where there was room and power for both. What if some prove false to their vocation, faithless to the covenant of life in Christ Jesus? "Shall *their* unbelief make the faith of God without effect?" Shall it be said that there was no reality in God's purpose here, no actual meaning in the election of grace on his part, because men fail to "make their calling and election sure," and, it may be, turn his grace itself to the purposes of licentiousness and sin? God forbid: yea, let God be true, though every man be found a liar (Rom. 3: 4).

As viewed by St. Paul, the being of the Church, the power of Christianity, is not just the aggregate of actual piety which may be found among Christians at a given time; but something far wider than this; even as a true law of life in any case, forming objectively a new and distinct sphere of existence, must ever go far beyond the measure

of its actual products, quantitatively considered, being always in truth of endless force and fulness in its own order. It is a constitution, as real as the constitution of nature, starting from its own principle, and carrying with it a whole world of powers for its own purposes and ends. It is of itself a supernatural, or more than merely natural, condition and state, over against the vanity and misery of the world in every other view; and simply to be in it, therefore, is to be *εν τοις επουρανιοις εν Χριστω*, with an emphasis of meaning that comes up fairly to the full strength of the expression itself. It is the sense of all this, reigning in the heart of the Apostle, that gives form and tone to his whole address directed to the "saints at Ephesus." In view of this, they are congratulated as the chosen of God, whom he has been pleased to "bless with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." With reference to this, he prays that their understanding may be enlightened to know what was actually comprehended in the Christian calling, "the riches of the glory of God's inheritance in the saints, and the exceeding greatness of his power towards them that believe." On this, as a foundation, he rests the whole plan and scope of the Epistle, all its instructions and all its exhortations, from beginning to end.

With his Commentator, Dr. Hodge, all is different. He has in his mind another notion of election altogether; and along with this, consequently, an altogether different notion of the Christian Church. Such a notion in fact as really destroys the very being of it entirely, in any form answering to the idea of St. Paul. Christianity, with Dr. Hodge, is the product of a purely mechanical decree on the part of God, terminating at once in the eternal salvation of its objects, considered under the most abstract view, without the intervention of any really objective and concrete constitution of grace whatever. Of course, then, it can be only for the "elect" in this miserably narrow sense; having as little to do with others, as though they belonged to a different world altogether. It is easy to see, in these circumstances, what must become of the Holy Catholic

Church. It must resolve itself into an abstraction or an empty form. Regarded as the comprehension of those who are really so in Christ, as to be sure of final salvation, the case of the elect only, it takes necessarily the first character, being in truth but the generalization of this fact as it dwells in the knowledge of God. Regarded as the "body of those who profess the true religion," and nothing more, it just as necessarily takes the second character, being at best an outward show and name only employed to represent something which it is not in fact. The first conception is that of the invisible Church; and it is the only one which deserves, from these premises, to be considered valid; as it is the only also, indeed, with which Dr. Hodge pretends to make earnest, as answering at all to the "glorious things which are spoken of Zion" in this Epistle. The other notion is that of the Church visible or empirical; which, however, is not considered to exist necessarily under such view, in the form of any general organization, nor even in the form of any number of particular organizations as such; but if we are to believe Princeton, may be in the world without any organization at all, "so long as professors of the true religion exist" (Bib. Rep., Oct., 1856, p. 696), being the collective body only of such as own this faith in any and every way. So all runs out here again also into a sheer generalization, a mere word or notion simply employed to bring a certain class of persons outwardly under a common view. The whole theory, at the same time, is perfectly dualistic. It gives us in fact two totally different notions of the Church, instead of one; for there is no sort of common life really between the two spheres which are thus baptized with a common name, as though they were opposite sides merely of the same fact. There is not so much as the shadow of an organic relation, joining them together, and making them unitedly the subject of any common predicates whatever. Each has its proper being really on the outside of the other; and each moves in its own separate orbit, much as it might do if the other had no existence at all. Such duplication, however,

brings with it here no gain, but only wide and heavy loss. With its show of two Churches, the theory in effect leaves us none ;—none, we mean, that can be said to possess in any way the true and proper attributes of the Church, or to fulfil its needful offices and functions in the economy of redemption ; none answering in such view to the place which is assigned to the article in the Apostles' Creed ; none that could possibly have satisfied the mind of St. Paul. In neither view does it come before us in the character of a real constitution or order of grace, whose existence is at once objective, historical, organic, and concrete. In neither view can it be said to come between God and men, like the Ark of old, as the necessary organ and medium of their salvation. Nothing of this sort, indeed, is pretended or imagined on the part of those by whom the theory in question is held. It is one of the last things precisely, which they have any disposition to admit.

So far as the doctrine of Dr. Hodge is concerned, there is no room here for any mistake. Not only does it flow necessarily from his theological system ; not only does it lie before us plainly expressed in this Commentary ; but he has taken special pains besides to make the world acquainted with it, in different articles on the subject published in the *Biblical Repertory*. Many, we believe, have been dissatisfied with these articles, even in the Presbyterian Church itself. By some they have been considered well nigh scandalous, seeming as they do to betray the cause of Protestantism completely into the hands of its foes. It must be allowed, at all events, that the ground they take is exceedingly low. It is not saying too much to affirm, that Dr. Hodge has no faith whatever in the article of the Church, in the only sense in which it was held to be in the beginning a necessary part of the Christian Creed. We make the affirmation sorrowfully, but at the same time deliberately, and with the fullest conviction of its truth. The only marvel to our mind is, that one so wise should not himself clearly perceive the fact, or that one so good should be able to do so and not be seriously troubled with the

perception. He holds what he calls the doctrine of the Church in a certain sense of his own, and considers himself at liberty then to profess the old formula of the Christian faith with this in his mind; as though in doing so, he placed himself really on the same platform of belief. But to what can any such merely verbal correspondence amount, where there is no consent after all, in so material a point, with the actual meaning of the symbol itself? To receive the Creed truly, can only be to receive it in its own original and proper sense. That Dr. Hodge, with the Puritan world in general, does not do. The sense which rightfully belongs to the article of the Church in the early Creeds is by no means doubtful or obscure. It simply echoes what we may easily know, (if we *will*,) to have been the universal faith of the true Christian world in the first ages. It is in truth determined also by the position of the article in the Creeds themselves. Between this sense and the low Puritanic conception of Dr. Hodge, the difference is very wide indeed. The Church, in the old view, constitutes an essential part of Christianity; belongs to the "mystery of godliness;" is truly and properly an object of faith; includes in itself, as such, the presence of supernatural powers under a natural form; stands in the world, indestructibly, as the body of Christ and the home of the Spirit; and challenges the obedience of all men to its high claims, in such view, under pain of eternal damnation. All this is comprehended unquestionably in the article: "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church," according to the order it holds in the Apostles' Creed. For the whole mystery of salvation, as it takes its rise in the miraculous conception and birth of Christ, and flows onward to his resurrection and ascension, is there represented as afterwards descending upon the world, through the "coming of the Holy Ghost," in the constitution of the Church; which is then immediately made to be again the comprehension of its powers, and the orb of its whole celestial action, from the one baptism for the remission of sins onward to the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Need we say, that

the Church, in which Dr. Hodge professes to believe, is of another order altogether? Under neither of its dualistic aspects, as they have come already under our consideration, can it be in truth the object of any such faith. His theory furnishes no clew for understanding at all its position in the Creed; as the whole architecture indeed of this grand and venerable symbol belongs plainly to another order of thought, and to be fairly comprehended must be seen and studied from a wholly different point of view.

But our business is not now primarily with the faith of the Primitive Church and the true sense of the Apostles' Creed. It may be said, that we are not bound here by the opinions of the first Christian ages; that their doctrine of the Church was extravagant and false; and that there is no good reason, therefore, why it should not be revised and improved, at pleasure, in the modern Puritanic and Baptist form. Let what we have just said on this subject pass, then, as merely spoken by the way. What we charge upon this low scheme of the Church at present is, that it is plainly at war with the doctrine of St. Paul. The Epistle to the Ephesians is constructed throughout on precisely the same view of the Church that is made to challenge our faith in the old Christian Creeds; whereas it wholly refuses to fall in naturally with the scheme of Dr. Hodge, and is put to exegetical torture only, in being forced, however skilfully and adroitly, into any such sense.

In the Epistle, the organic view of Christianity reigns throughout. With the Commentary, all is mechanical and abstract. In the Epistle, Christ is held to be the real root of the Church; which is then spoken of continually as an actual constitution in the world, proceeding from his person. With the Commentary, the notion of God's absolute decree is made to be the only principle of salvation; and the Church is nothing more at last than the fact of its execution in the case of the elect, a word, or at most a mere thought, employed to generalize its actual results.

The difference, in this view, between the spirit or soul of the text, as we may term it, and the spirit of the exposi-

tion, is of a kind to be felt almost everywhere. Take, for example, what is presented to us as the "analysis" of chap. 1, vs. 3-10. The Apostle blesses God, we are told, for the spiritual gifts bestowed upon his people. Of these, "the first in order, and the source of all the others, is election," vs. 3-6; the second is "actual redemption through the blood of Christ," vs. 7, 8; the third is "the revelation of the divine purpose in relation to the economy of redemption;"—as if all lay really in the form of any such logical mechanism! As if these were to be considered so many separate kinds of grace, externally brought together, instead of being taken to represent, as they do in truth, the proper wholeness, and full concrete unity, of one and the same grace. So it follows then in the particular exposition: Election first, a system purely abstract, and as such full and final in its own form. Then redemption, on the outside of this, to serve as an instrumental medium for carrying it into effect—another system, full also and final in its own form. And then, lastly, the revelation of all this, on the outside of both the other blessings, to make room for their subjective apprehension on the part of believers—still a third system, again full and final in its own form. It does not seem to come into the mind of Dr. Hodge, that both the election and the revelation of which the Apostle speaks are in Christ himself; that the mystery of election is in very truth the mystery of his incarnation and its glorious results; and that the true revelation of the Gospel is no written word or doctrine merely, no report made concerning Christ in any simply external way, but the very presence rather of what Christ actually is, under the view now stated, in his own person. Just as any living object in the world of nature, a plant, for instance, may be said at once to actualize its own idea, the thought from which it springs, and also to make this the matter of intelligence and knowledge as it can never be in any other way.

A still worse specimen of analytical logic, is presented to us in the Commentary on chap., 1, vs. 17-19, taken in connection with the verses that follow. "There are three

leading petitions," it is gravely declared, "expressed in the prayer here recorded. First, for adequate knowledge of divine truth. Second, for due appreciation of the future blessedness of the saints. Third, for a proper understanding of what they themselves had already experienced in their conversion." The first petition, according to this scheme, ends in the middle of the 18th verse, and is to be considered a prayer for spiritual illumination in general. The residue of the verse, "That ye may know what is the hope of his calling, &c," forms then a new petition; "having prayed that the Ephesians might be enlightened in the knowledge of God and of divine things, the Apostle here prays, as the effect of that illumination, that they may have a proper appreciation of the inheritance to which they have attained." Lastly. v. 19, "he prays that his readers may have right apprehensions of the greatness of the change which they had experienced." The mere statement of the scheme may enable us to presume, in what style it is carried out. "The hope of his calling," means the hope which true Christians "are now, on the call of God, authorized to indulge." There are two things which the Apostle desires they may know; first, the nature and value of this hope; and secondly, the glory of the inheritance in reserve for them. The "exceeding greatness of God's power towards them that believe," mentioned in the supposed third petition, is made to refer wholly to their experience of conversion, regarded as a past fact. "Grotius, indeed, and commentators of that class," we are told, "understand the passage to refer to the exertion of the power of God in the future resurrection and salvation of believers." But this is summarily denied. "It evidently refers to the past and not to the future." Then most characteristically: "The Apostle never compares the salvation of believers with the resurrection of Christ, whereas the analogy between his natural resurrection and the spiritual resurrection of his people, is one to which he often refers. This is the analogy which he insists upon in this immediate connection. As God raised Christ from the dead and set him

at his own right hand in heavenly places ; so you that were dead in sins, hath he quickened and raised you up together with him. This analogy is the very thing he would have them understand. They had undergone a great change ; they had been brought to life ; they had been raised from the dead by the same almighty power which wrought in Christ. There was as great a difference between their present and their former condition, as between Christ in the tomb and Christ at the right hand of God."

This, we say, is characteristic. Dr. Hodge, it would seem, has no sense for the proper wholeness of Christianity, as a fact reaching over in a real way from Christ to his people, and including in their case the entire process of redemption from the first germ of life in the soul to the full resurrection of the body at the last day. It does not occur to him, that the idea of Grotius need not necessarily be so taken as to exclude his own ; that the two things thus compared and opposed, sustain to each other the most intimate inward relation ; that the only true conception of Christianity must be allowed to involve them both at once, with all that lies between them, as going together to make up the concrete fact in which it consists. The bodily resurrection of believers, as it is to take place when Christ shall come in his glory, is not considered to be the continuation strictly of the process which begins with their new birth this side the grave—the last result of that "law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus," by which they are made free from the law of sin and death even in this world ; and it is only metaphorically, moreover, that their spiritual resurrection itself is represented as answering, in any way, to the natural resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The relation resolves itself, when all is said, into a mere "analogy" !

Afterwards, indeed, (p. 81), the representation is somewhat improved. Commenting on the words : "According to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead," v. 20, Dr. Hodge tells us they evidently mean two things. "First,

that the power which raises the believer from spiritual death is the same as that which raised Christ from the grave"; (just as one might say, we suppose, that the power put forth in the creation of Adam was the same as that employed in creating the angel Gabriel). "Secondly, that there is a striking analogy between these events, and an intimate connection between them. The one was not only the symbol, but the pledge and procuring cause of the other. The resurrection of Christ is both the type and the cause of the spiritual resurrection of his people, as well as of their future rising from the grave in his glorious likeness." This is well so far as it goes. But it falls immeasurably short of the whole truth, as it was before the mind of St. Paul. The causal relation allowed in the case remains after all instrumental only, mechanical, and outward. As for any proper apprehension of the true organic nature of the connection that holds between the resurrection of Christ and the spiritual life of his people, it would seem to be wanting altogether. Only so can we explain the truly surprising observation made on p. 82; where we are told that, the immediate subject of discourse in this chapter being the blessings of redemption conferred on believers, "the resurrection and exaltation of Christ are introduced *incidentally* by way of illustration"; and that having dwelt for a moment on the nature of this exaltation, and on the relation of Christ to his Church, (in the way of digression, we suppose,) the Apostle then, at the beginning of the following chapter, "reverts to his main topic"!

How differently all shows itself, when we take the right position for looking at it, and then simply allow the text to speak for itself. It is only strange how any one can commune with the spirit of this grand and magnificent passage at all, and not have the organic idea of Christianity and the Church irresistibly forced upon his mind. It is this precisely which imparts to the whole subject, in the mind of the Apostle, that character of greatness, which no language seems to him sufficient fully to express. What fills him with overwhelming interest, is the sense of the new crea-

tion, the mystery of godliness in its proper universal form, as it proceeds from Christ and runs its course in the Church. To his glowing contemplation, past, present, and future, rush together here with the power of a single glorious fact. The prayer with which he starts is not made up of three logically different topics, in the sense of Dr. Hodge; but wrestles throughout with one and the same general object of thought, only thrown rapidly into different aspects, till the whole loses itself at last in a sort of triumphant song of praise to the risen and glorified Christ, from whom the entire order of salvation proceeds. What he desires is, that those who have been brought to stand within the economy of grace, through the obedience of faith, may have their understanding enlightened to know, more and more, how much is comprehended in this high and glorious distinction for the purposes of life and salvation; as being not nominal merely, but replete with power; as serving to set them truly in communication with heavenly agencies and forces; as carrying with it potentially all the supernatural blessings of the new creation, from "the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost" away onward to the "resurrection of the body and the life everlasting." It was much to understand and appreciate the privileges of the Jewish covenant, in its distinction from the general life of the world; for even the Jewish covenant was by no means outward merely and nominal; but here is something which goes immeasurably beyond all that. Where Judaism had to do with shadows and types only, Christianity has to do with the very realities themselves to which these shadows and types referred. It is a constitution, which without any sort of figure may be said to carry in its own bosom actually the "powers of the world to come"—powers more than natural, having their principle in Christ, and able with him to triumph over the whole present world in every other view. All this of course, can never come within the range of mere natural observation and knowledge. How should any such intelligence transcend the order of its own life, so as to become truly cognizant of that which

is above it and beyond it altogether? The presence of such grace in the Church, as being not the shadow only of good things to come but their very image (*αὐτὴν τὴν εἰκόνα τῶν πραγμάτων*, Heb. 10: 1), is by its very nature such a mystery as can be really apprehended only by faith. Nor is it easy for believers themselves to maintain a steady practical sense of the mystery, over against the suggestions of the mere carnal reason; while the general apprehension of faith also is not of itself enough, to bring them at once to anything like a full and complete knowledge of all that is included in the mystery which they are thus enabled to own; even as it is not enough to be set down by the power of sense in the actual midst of the world of nature, that one may be prepared to take in at once the full sense of the manifold facts, relations, powers, and possibilities, which go unitedly to make up the conception of its vast and mighty organization. Therefore it is that the Apostle, here, and elsewhere, makes it the burden of his prayer for Christians, that they might be able to comprehend what was actually at hand for them in that new world of grace into which they had been introduced by their faith in Christ; that they might have some just sense of the relations of love and peace in which they were brought to stand with God, through the merits of his well beloved Son; that they might learn to think largely enough of the exceeding greatness of God's power embodied in the economy of redemption, not simply as measured by any particular effect already wrought in themselves, but more especially and mainly as taken in connection with the whole range of its action in the Church, and the glorious resurrection life of Christ in which it has its origin and source. For it is no outward analogy only, that holds between the life of Christ in this view and the mighty working of God in the Church. This last is nothing more nor less than the organic force of the new creation itself, in virtue of which Christ rose from the dead. To know what it is then in believers, and especially to know what the Church is in whose mysterious constitution it finds its enduring home in the world, we

must consider what it has been and still is in the Saviour himself. The power which appeared in his resurrection, and by which he now reigns "head over all things" at the right hand of God, is that which he puts forth by his Spirit also in the Church.

It might be interesting, as it would be easy also, to pursue still farther this sort of comparison, by bringing into view other examples of plain discordance between the true sense of the text and the sense assigned to it in this Commentary; all going to illustrate and confirm what we have already said of the different theories of religion, and different conceptions of the Church, which are involved in the case. But the length to which our article has already run, admonishes us to forbear. We may say in general, however, that wherever the text lays stress on any point under a churchly view, it is sure to be wrested by Dr. Hodge into some other aspect altogether, to suit the requirements of his own most mechanical and unchurchly scheme. The view, for instance, which is taken of the Christian ministry by St. Paul in chap. 4: 8-16, making it to be a strictly divine constitution derived from the ascension of Christ, and designed to carry forward the purposes of his glorious exaltation in the Church—a view which involves necessarily the idea of Apostolical succession, and of a true mystical force in the solemnity of ordination—fades with Dr. Hodge, we may say, almost into thin air. The ordinance of Baptism, which he allows to be the object of reference in chap. 5: 26, 27, is laboriously shorn in his hands of its true sacramental character altogether. As a matter of course again, in the exposition of chap. 5: 30-32, no proper justice is done to the mystical union and the doctrine of Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper. Here, however, it must be acknowledged there is an evident sense of difficulty, and no small amount of confusion, in the effort which is made to get through the deep meaning of the text.

On the subject of Calvin's view of the Eucharist, our author now says without any reserve: "Calvin did not hold that Christ's body was locally present in the Lord's Supper,

nor that it was received by the mouth, nor that it was received in any sense by unbelievers. He did hold, however, that the substance of Christ's glorified body, as enthroned in heaven, was in some miraculous way communicated to believers together with the bread in that ordinance. He, therefore, understands the Apostle as here referring to that fact, and asserting that we are members of Christ's body because the substance of his body is in the Eucharist communicated to us" (p. 341). This is just the view ascribed to him in the *Mystical Presence*. Dr. Hodge, however, rejects the whole idea of any such mystery, and denies besides that the passage here in question includes any allusion whatever to the Eucharist.

But what now, leaving the Lord's Supper out of view, is Dr. Hodge's own theory concerning the union of believers with Christ, as answering to the declaration: "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones"? The passage in which we have his reply to this interrogation offers too rich a specimen of his philosophical and theological style of thinking, not to be quoted here in full.

"The doctrine taught," we are told, "is not community of substance between Christ and his people, but community of life, and that the source of life to his people is Christ's flesh. In support of this interpretation it may be urged: 1. That it leaves the passage in its integrity. It neither explains it away, nor does it make it assert more than the words necessarily imply. The doctrine remains a great mystery, as the Apostle declares it to be. 2. It takes the terms employed in their ordinary and natural sense. To partake of one's flesh and blood, does not, in ordinary life, nor according to scriptural usage, mean to partake of his substance, but it does mean to partake of his life. The substance of which the body of any adult is composed is derived exclusively from his food and from the atmosphere. A few years after the formation of Eve not a particle of Adam's body entered into the composition of her frame; and yet she was then as truly as at the beginning, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, because derived from him

and partaker of his life. For the same reasons, and in the same sense, we are said to be flesh of Adam's flesh and bone of his bones, although in no sense partakers of the substance of his body. In like manner nothing is more common than to speak of the blood of a father flowing in the veins of his descendants, and of their being his flesh. This means, and can only mean, that they are partakers of his life. There is no community of substance possible in the case. What life is no one knows. But we know that it is not matter; and, therefore, there may be community of life, when there is no community of substance. There is a form of life peculiar to nations, tribes, families and individuals; and this peculiar type is transmitted from generation to generation, modifying the personal appearance, the physical constitution, and the character of those who inherit it. When we speak of the blood of Hapsburghs, or of the Bourbons, it is this family type that is intended and nothing material. The present Emperor of Austria derives his peculiar type of physical life from the head of his race, but not one particle of the substance of his body. Husband and wife are in Scripture declared to be one flesh. But here again it is not identity of substance, but community of life that is intended. As, therefore, participation of one's flesh does not, in other connections, mean participation of his substance, it cannot be fairly understood in that sense when spoken of our relation to Christ. And as in all analogous cases it does express derivation or community of life, it must be so understood here" (pp. 344-346).

We may be peculiarly constituted; but to our mind, we are free to confess, the mysticism of Olshausen is like the light of day, and as the genial breath of summer, in comparison with the hard, dry obscurity of this wonderful statement. We do not pretend to understand it, as applied to the subject in hand. It sounds to us absolutely unintelligible. Is the life of a man, then, no part of his substance? Are these two things extraneous each to the other? Or taking a man's *body* aside from his soul, does the "substance" of that stand only in what is derived "from

his food and from the atmosphere"? The law of life, the organic power, by which alone such material aliment is received, assimilated to its nature, and made to live in its constitution—is this indeed no part of its true substantial being? So Dr. Hodge would seem to think, if we may trust here the sound of his own words. For his argument allows nothing between the idea of life in its most spiritual form, and the idea of simple matter, which he takes to be synonymous with substance; and having satisfied himself that participation in the life of any one does not imply participation in his substance, under such view, that is, in the very matter of which his body is composed as such, he proceeds at once to draw what is in fact a far wider conclusion—this, namely, that it involves no participation whatever in the bodily side of his existence under any view. Making the body thus to be its own bulk of matter simply, and nothing more. As if such a man as Olshausen ever dreamed of taking the idea of corporeity (*Leiblichkeit*), in any such grossly Capernaitic sense!—But we drop the subject.

The two schemes before us, as they involve totally different conceptions of the Church, lead also to materially different notions of faith. With St. Paul, the Church, regarded as a real constitution of grace in the world, through which only the resources of Christ's resurrection life are made available for the purposes of man's "deliverance from this present evil world" (Gal. 1: 4), is of course at once an object for faith, as really as Christ's resurrection itself. It is a constituent part of Christianity, answering truly to the position which is assigned to it under such view in the primitive Creeds. It is no abstraction, no mere generalization, resolving itself at last into the mental notion by which it is apprehended; but in some form the objective presence of a true concrete fact, whose authority men are required to own in an outward practical way, as well as with the inward homage of the spirit. This practical acknowledgment forms thus an important part of the true idea of the Christian faith; nay, we may say, it is the very form in which all such faith necessarily begins. For if

there *be* any constitution of this sort really in the world, the first duty of all men must be plainly to acknowledge its supernatural claims, and to place themselves within its bosom, in order that they may be saved ; and it can never be anything better than folly for them to talk of believing and obeying the Gospel at other points, while they refuse to comply here with that requirement, which in the very nature of the case must be taken to underlie and condition all requirements besides, as offering the only way in which it is possible for them to be fulfilled ; just as it would have been the folly of madness itself, for any in the time of the Flood to have professed faith in the Ark, and firm trust in its offers of grace, whilst they continued obstinately to stay on the outside of its walls. In this light, the sense of the Apostolical commission becomes plain. It ordains a constitution, not in the world before, flowing directly from Christ's glorification, ("all power is given unto me, &c."), through the Apostles, ("go ye *therefore*, &c."), organized and set off from the world at large as a distinct sphere of life, ("preach—make disciples—baptize"); to which, accordingly, all men are required to yield the "obedience of faith," not simply by consenting to what they may hold to be the truth of its doctrines in their own minds, but by actually bowing to its claims, and coming into its bosom, through the sacramental sign and seal of baptism. Hence also the stress laid on the significance of this sacrament throughout the New Testament, (as being the entrance or birth of men into this heavenly constitution, the laver of regeneration, the washing away of sins, the counterpart of salvation by Noah's ark and the passage through the waters of the Red Sea,) all in full conformity with what is well known, (by such as *choose* to know,) to have been the universal way of thinking and speaking about it in the first Christian ages. In the Epistle to the Ephesians, as elsewhere, St. Paul's idea of faith is plainly conditioned always by this reference to the Church, regarded as Christ's "body," the necessary organ and medium of the whole Christian salvation. It never enters into his mind, certain-

ly, that any proper use of his instructions and exhortations could be made by those who were not in the Church; that there could possibly be any room to talk of faith, spirituality, charity, and good works generally, in the Christian sense, so far as any were concerned who still, in this way, showed themselves "disobedient" to the heavenly vision of the Gospel, by refusing to come within the range of its power. He writes for Christians, for the baptised, for the faithful in Christ Jesus alone. All others with him are "children of *disobedience*", and for this very reason still under the power of Satan, whose kingdom is thus assumed to be commensurate in full with the universal order of the world's life on the outside of the Church (Eph. 2: 2). All this of course the Commentary now under consideration has no power to see or acknowledge; because it moves in a wholly different sphere of thought. The Puritanic notion of faith is really independent of the doctrine of the Church altogether.

"The word *ἀπειθεῖα*," Dr. Hodge tells us on Eph. 2: 2, "means unwillingness to be persuaded, and is expressive either of disobedience in general, or of unbelief, which is only one form of disobedience. In this case the general sense is to be preferred, for the persons spoken of are not characterized as unbelievers, or as obstinately rejecting the Gospel, but as disobedient or wicked." This exegesis cuts the true nerve of the thought completely, and altogether obscures the primary sense of faith and unbelief as they were conceived of by St. Paul. "Disobedience," with him, is emphatically unbelief, considered not simply as an obstinate rejection of the Gospel in the Puritanic sense, but as the general opposite of that faith which brings men actually to bow to the authority of the Church. This is the radical sin of the world (John 16: 9), its true and proper condemnation (John 3: 19); just as faith, on the other hand, under the like practical view, is the root of salvation, the mother of all other graces and virtues belonging to the Christian life.

It is everywhere taken for granted by Dr. Hodge, in the common Puritanic style, that the presence and power of

the Spirit, which all acknowledge to be the medium of Christ's presence now in the world, are in no way bound to the Church, regarded as a fixed objective constitution in any view; that he works in the world at large; that faith in Christ may be complete, without reference to anything beyond the abstract thought of Christ himself, as having died to save sinners; that the Church indeed is only a name, used to denote collectively those who are considered to be already Christians under a different aspect altogether. No opportunity is spared of dealing what is held to be, in this view, a home thrust at the "Church system," as being supposed to obscure the proper freeness of the Gospel, and also to contradict the true conception of God's grace, by making it to depend on something beyond itself. "The only essential and indispensable condition of participation in the benefits of redemption," it is declared, "is union with Christ. And this union is effected or brought about, *by the Gospel*. It is not by birth, nor by any outward rite, nor by union with any external body, but by the Gospel, received and appropriated by faith, that we are united to Christ, and thus made heirs of God" (p. 166). "We have this access to God; we believers; not any particular class, a priesthood among Christians to whom alone access is permitted, but all believers without any priestly intervention, other than that of one great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God" (p. 175). "This is the great question which every sinner needs to have answered: How may I come to God with the assurance of acceptance? The answer given by the Apostle, and confirmed by the experience of the saints of all ages is: By faith in Jesus Christ. It is because men rely on some other means of access, either bringing some worthless bribe in their hands, or trusting to some other mediator, priestly or saintly, that so many fail who seek to enter God's presence" (p. 176).

The general drift of all this is abundantly plain. It is the key on which the unchurchly spirit is ever ready to harp. To what, however, does it amount at last? A

mere play upon words, and nothing more. All depends, of course, on faith in Christ. So much was allowed even by the ancient Gnostic, as it is allowed now also by the Unitarian. But the question is always, What does such faith necessarily involve? His real coming in the flesh, we say at once, against the Gnostic. Even the Puritan will admit, however, that this again involves his life of sorrow, his death upon the cross, his resurrection, and his ascension to the right hand of God. And now the question comes, With what reason does *he*, the Puritan, require us to stop just there with our idea of what necessarily belongs to faith in Christ, and to shut off all that follows in the Creed as something to which it need not reach. As if it were possible to believe really in the Lord Jesus Christ on to the point of his glorification, and yet not take account of what this was to prepare the way for, the mission of the Holy Ghost, and the constitution of the Holy Catholic Church. It is at best only begging the whole matter in debate, when this mutilated notion of faith is held up to our view, as being all that is comprehended in the Formula: "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." In the sense of the Creed, beyond all controversy, such faith includes necessarily an acknowledgment of the Church, under the very view that Dr. Hodge so heartily dislikes; and St. Paul here, we have no hesitation in saying, agrees with the Creed.

Many thoughts, well worthy of attention, offer themselves here for consideration, growing out of the general subject of our discussion, and bearing on the doctrine of the Church, which, however, it would carry us altogether too far to notice now in any sort of detail. If we have succeeded at all, in bringing into view the form in which this great doctrine was held by St. Paul, and the place it occupies in his writings, it must be at once plain that it is not easy to lay too much stress upon the significance which properly belongs to it in the Christian system. It is found to take its position at once very near the centre, and not simply in the outward circumference, of the general scheme

of salvation ; in a way which answers exactly to the order of the Creed, and serves to justify in full also the method or plan of its construction. The very first object of faith, following the mission of the Holy Ghost, must be in the nature of the case, (if Christianity be no mere abstraction, and no modification simply of the life of nature, but really and truly a new order of existence in the sense of St. Paul,) just what it is made to be in the Creed. Not the Bible, but the Church ; not any particular doctrine, such as human depravity, for instance, or the atonement, but the fundamental fact of Christianity itself, on the ground of which only it is possible to hold any doctrine whatever with true Christian faith. The argument for the Church, in this view, is very broad. It lies in the organic structure of Christianity itself. Once fairly apprehended, as we have it in the Creed, this is found to involve the article as a necessary part of its general conception or scheme. We may say, indeed, that the article of the Church forms the very keystone of the grand and glorious arch, with which the mystery of the new creation is represented in the Creed to span the chasm, otherwise impassable, which separates between earth and heaven, creating thus a way for the ransomed of the Lord to pass over. Only to suppose it gone, is to turn the arch itself into a Gnostic vision. The argument for the Church, we say, is comprehended mainly in the organic constitution of Christianity itself ; and this is the form precisely, in which it is made to challenge our faith, and our obedient regard, in the New Testament. The doctrine of the Church is in the New Testament just as the other articles of the Christian faith are there ; not so much in the way of single naked texts, as under the general and broad view of necessary comprehension in the Christian system regarded as a whole.

That is a most lean use of the Scriptures at best, which affects to keep itself in any case to isolated texts, and overlooks the vastly more important significance of what lies in the organic relations of the facts themselves with which the whole revelation is concerned. What are the few testimo

nies which assert in an immediate and direct way the doctrine of the Trinity, or the doctrine of the Saviour's Divinity, in comparison with the vast body of evidence for both, which is involved in the representations and assumptions of the Gospel in its universal view ? They underlie in fact the whole thinking of the New Testament, the entire universe of its gracious revelations, just as they are made to bear up the whole structure of the Creed.

And so it is with this article of the Church. There are single and separate texts which may be quoted, in proof of its being, its attributes, and its claims to regard ; more than we are able to produce in such form for the doctrine of the Holy Trinity ; more than we have for the inspiration and divine authority of the Sacred Scriptures. But it would be a great mistake, to think that the Scriptural argument for the article lies wholly, or mainly, in any such passages. The true force of this argument comes into view, only when we are brought to see how the truth of the article is everywhere assumed and taken for granted in the New Testament, as something necessarily involved in the very constitution of Christianity, and as little to be separated from the conception of the mystery in any case, as form from substance, or body from soul. Of this we have a broad and striking example, in this Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians. Strong testimonies occur in it for the doctrine of the Church, in the direct textual form ; testimonies that may well embarrass the Puritan mind, so utterly foreign are they from its whole habit of thought. But these texts are, after all, only a small fraction of the evidence, which is really contained in the Epistle for the doctrine in question. That is found, not so much in what the Apostle directly asserts on the subject, as in what he presumes to be true of it, from the salutation with which his Epistle begins to the benediction that brings it to a close. The idea of the Church runs as a silent hypothesis, or underlying assumption, through all his teachings and exhortations. It may be said to be fairly woven into his whole scheme of religion. All that he says is conditioned and

ruled continually by the thought, that those whom he addresses stood not in the general world, but in the bosom of the Church; and that their position in this view served to place them actually, and not by figure of speech only, in correspondence with the powers of a higher world, under such form as was not possible elsewhere, while it was sufficient here to justify in full the strongest language he employs in regard to their privileges and hopes. This is in fact a constant practical recognition of the article in question, as it stands in the Creed; and a recognition of it also under the same general view, as being not simply an arrangement added to Christianity from without, but a true organic part of its actual substance and proper heavenly constitution, making it to be fairly and of right an object, not of opinion merely, but of faith, for all men in all ages of the world.

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