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I. THREE MALIGNED THEOLOGIANS.

Dr. John A. Broadus was fond of telling how his father proved, from the Bible, "there is no God." Calling his son to him and placing his finger over the first line of the 14th Psalm it read, "there is no God." The boy was satisfied, the Bible said it, and that ended it. When his father removed his finger it read, "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God." It has occurred to us that this is not an unfair illustration of the manner of proof offered in the discussion now pending regarding infant salvation. We wish to set this forth particularly in reference to John Calvin, Dr. William Twisse and Jonathan Edwards.

Calvin formulated and left to the world a system of theology; the sweep of this subject should have corrected what was believed by many, owing to the bearing of certain great doctrines of the Bible on infant salvation, independent of their relation to theology as a whole.

We propose to show from Calvin's writings that he states in language as unmistakable as "there is no God," that infants are condemned, and to prove from the context that the declaration is as foreign and untrue to his mind regarding those dying in infancy, as the above declaration is to the mind and context of the Bible.

These men wrote in times of controversy and much of their writing is controversial and the figure of hypothesis is frequently used. In proving the justice of God's decrees, hypothetical sentences are used too severe not to be rep-

pellant. Many such passages are found involving the destiny of infants. The failure of regarding them in this light has given the impression of the harshness of Calvinism that many have who know little of this system.

INSTITUTES.

We undertake to show that Calvin states positively that infants are condemned, and that he exempts from condemnation those dying in infancy.

The first writing of consequence Calvin gave the world was his "Institutes;" the last important literary work of his life was the revising of the Institutes. These, then, may be consistently termed the Alpha and Omega of his writings, having revised the Institutes in 1559, just five years before he died. His works are voluminous; many of his essays and sermons remain as he left them, and have never been published in any form. The work that bears his own mark as expressing his final opinions should constitute authority for his beliefs. To these Institutes we appeal for proof of our proposition.

It is easy to see that in Calvin's clear and bald method of stating the distinctive features of his system, he is concerned with the system itself, independent of any consequences that may follow from an honest statement of any of the points confirming the system as a whole. His statements therefore may, and do, fail to take cognizance of any issue save the one in hand. Foreknowledge and Predestination, for instance, are stated by him in such manner as to establish the doctrines as facts, and leave many questions unanswered in consequence of such statement; among the unanswered questions is notably the one of the destiny of infants. We will take Calvin's statements:

"When we attribute foreknowledge to God, we mean that all things have ever been, and perpetually remain, before his eyes, so that to his knowledge nothing is future or past, but all things are present; and present in such manner that he does not merely conceive of them from ideas formed in his mind, as things remembered by us appear present to our mind, but really beholds and sees them as if actually placed before him. And this foreknowledge extends to the whole world, and to all the creatures. Predestination we call the eternal decree of God, by which he has deter-

miued in himself what he would have to become of every individual of mankind. For they are not all created with a similar destiny; but eternal life is foreordained for some, and eternal damnation for others. Every man, therefore, being created for one or the other of these ends, we say he is predestined either to life or death " Book III, Chap. XX.

Here Calvin is zealous for these doctrines alone; the context shows that he was making a statement to oppose those who are attempting to make foreknowledge the cause of predestination. To relieve the doctrines of this, and this alone, he so states them; that there are other difficulties he does not hesitate to declare, for he says "it is involved in many cavils." What we maintain is, that so far as the statement of these doctrines is concerned, there was no room to except infants dying in infancy or any others. The two classes are the predestinated to life and the predestinated to damnation, and the doctrines taken alone include in these classes infants, for he elsewhere shows that they are so predestinated before they are born.

He further states,* in arguing the doctrine with those opposed to it :

"But as these virulent adversaries are not content with one species of opposition, we will reply to them all as occasion shall require. Foolish mortals enter into many contentions with God, as though they could arraign him to plead their accusations.

"In the first place they inquire by what right the Lord is angry with his creatures who had not provoked him by any previous offence; for that to devote to destruction whom he pleases, is more like the caprice of a tyrant than the lawful sentence of a judge; that men have reason, therefore, to expostulate with God if they are predestinated to eternal death without any demerit of their own, merely by his sovereign will. If such thoughts ever enter the minds of pious men, they will be sufficiently enabled to break their violence by this one consideration—how exceedingly presumptuous it is only to inquire into the causes of the Divine will; which is in fact, and is justly entitled to be, the cause of everything that exists."

Here it is clear that no distinction other than the two classes of the predestinated to life and to death is in his mind. That this statement was meant by Calvin to include infants, we shall presently show. He bases the doctrine on the will of God, and nothing else.†

*Book III, Chap. XXIII.

†Book III, Chap. XXIII.

Discussing the Fall, we find strikingly given Calvin's mind on the consequences to infants :

"But whether they wish it or dread it, predestination exhibits itself in Adam's posterity. For the loss of salvation by the whole race through the guilt of one parent, was an event that did not happen by nature. What prevents their acknowledging concerning one man, what they reluctantly grant concerning the whole species? Why should they lose their labor in sophistical evasion? The Scripture proclaims that all men were, in the person of their father, sentenced to eternal death. This not being attributable to nature, it is evident must have proceeded from the wonderful counsel of God. The perplexity and hesitation discovered at trifles, by these pious defenders of the justice of God, and their facilities in overcoming great difficulties are truly absurd.

"I enquire again, how it came to pass that the fall of Adam, independent of any remedy, should involve so many nations with their *infant children* in eternal death, *but because such was the will of God*. It is an awful decree, I confess; but no one can deny that God foreknew the future final fate of man before he created him, and that he did foreknow it because it was appointed by his own decree. If any one here attacks God's foreknowledge, he rashly and inconsiderately stumbles. For what ground of accusation is there against the Heavenly Judge for not being ignorant of futurity? If there is any just or plausible complaint, it lies against predestination; nor should it be thought absurd to affirm that God not only foresaw the fall of the first man, and the ruin of his posterity in him, but also arranged all by the determination of his own will."

From this it is explicit that Calvin believed the Fall involved man in a literal ruin. It was no fiction of thought, capable of being explained away by after considerations. His statement is that the consequences of the Fall involved the species in death, and its literalness is not to be explained by supposing a remedy. What Calvin does is this: he states the bearing of predestination, on the Fall, in such baldness as to make it impossible for any to escape, infant or adult, and he assigns no reason but the will of God. We argue that it can be proved, not alone from sentences, but from the context, so far as the subject, thus handled extends, that he teaches *infant condemnation*.

We now come to the bearing of this doctrine on justice. We wish to show that in his statement of it, not only his sentences, but his context shows that infants are condemned, and were we left without his words in the discussion of in-

fant regeneration and baptism, we should necessarily be compelled to admit Calvin taught infant condemnation. In his statement he is opposed by those who argue the injustice of God; to which he replies by arguing that the question of justice is not involved. He says:

"Therefore if any one attacks us with such an inquiry as this, why God has from the beginning predestinated some men to death, who, not yet being brought into existence, could not deserve the sentence of death—we reply by asking them in return, what they suppose God owes to man, if he chooses to judge of him from his own nature. As we are all corrupted by sin, we must necessarily be odious to God, and that not from tyrannical cruelty, but in the most equitable estimation of justice. If all whom the Lord predestinates to death are, in their natural condition, liable to the sentence of death, what injustice do they complain of receiving from him?"

We propose to show that Calvin did not believe predestination consigned infants dying in infancy to condemnation; this we shall do from his own words. It must be clear that if predestination and election are concerned with men before they are born, then there must be infants predestined to condemnation and non-elect infants, since all must pass through the infant stage before becoming adults. If it be asked, according to Calvin's writings on predestination and election can it be determined whether infants dying in infancy are saved? The answer is, it cannot; but it can be determined elsewhere in his writings that he did believe all infants dying in infancy were saved, and he so taught.

In arguing the fitness of infants for the sacrament of baptism, we shall find Calvin's words very significant when we remember he is opposing himself to those who did not believe in infant salvation, for the reason that they did not believe in their fitness for baptism. Here, we have the strange picture of a man who is charged with believing in infant condemnation, arguing infant salvation, in overthrowing objections to infant baptism.

Speaking of circumcision and baptism, Calvin says:

"The thing signified in both is one and the same thing, namely, regeneration." The question then is, can infants, incapable of exercising faith through the hearing of the word, be regenerated?" Calvin answers:

"If it be enquired whether baptism may be rightly administered to infants, shall we not pronounce it an excess of folly, and even madness, in any one who resolves to dwell entirely on the element of water and the external observance, and cannot bear to direct his thoughts to the spiritual mystery? But if they are partakers of the thing signified, why shall they be excluded from the sign? If they obtain the truth why shall they be debarred from the figure? Though the external sign in the sacrament is so connected with the word, as not to be separated from it, yet if it be distinguished, which shall esteem of greater importance? Certainly when we see that the sign is subservient to the word, we shall pronounce it to be inferior to it, and assign it the subordinate place. While the word baptism, then, is directed to infants, why shall the sign, which is an appendix to the word, be prohibited them?"

This is Calvin's argument to show that infants of believers should be baptized, for he says, "It must be evident that the covenant which the Lord made with Abraham continues as much in force with Christians in the present day, as it did formerly with the Jews." He says further :

"For the sign of God, communicated to a child, like the impress of a seal, ratifies and confirms the promise given to the pious parent, declaring that the Lord will be a God, not only to him, but also to his seed, and that he is determined to exercise his goodness and grace, not only towards him, but towards his posterity even to a thousand generations. Nor shall I regard an objection, if it should be urged, that the mere promise of God ought to be sufficient to assure us of the salvation of our children ; since God, who knows our weakness, and has been pleased in this instance to indulge it has decided otherwise. Let those, therefore, who embrace the promise of God that he will perpetuate his mercy to their offspring, consider it their duty to present them to the Church to be signed with the symbol of mercy."

Bearing in mind that Calvin is arguing the regeneration of infants, it is clear he has no doubt about the salvation of at least some of the infants of believers. The covenant made with the Jews passes over to the Gentile nations, and, at least, the children of believers are included. Now let us see if Calvin included others. He says :

"Wherefore the Lord Jesus, to exhibit a specimen from which the world might understand that he was come to *extend* rather than to *limit* the mercy of the Father, kindly received the infants that were presented to him, and embraced them in his arms, chiding the disciples who endeavored to forbid their approach to him because they would keep those, of whom was the kingdom of Heaven, at a distance from him, who is the only way of entrance into it. But some one will object, what resemblance

does the embrace of Christ bear to baptism? for he is not said to have baptised them, but to have received them, taken them into his arms and blessed them; therefore, if we desire to imitate his example, let us assist infants with our prayers, but let us not baptize them. But it is necessary to consider the conduct of Christ with more attention than it receives from persons of this class. For it is not to be passed over as a thing of *little importance*, that Christ commanded infants to be brought to him, and added as a reason for this command, 'For of such is the kingdom of Heaven;' and afterwards gave a practical testimony of his will, when embracing them in his arms he commended them to his Father by his prayers and benedictions. If it be reasonable for infants to be brought to Christ, why is it not allowable to admit them to baptism, the symbol of our communion and fellowship with Christ? If of them is the kingdom of Heaven, why should they be denied the sign, which opens, as it were, an entrance into the church; that being received into it, they may be enrolled among the heirs of the Heavenly kingdom? How unjust shall we be, if we drive away from Christ those whom he invites to him; if we deprive them of the gifts with which he adorns them; if we exclude those whom he freely admits? But if we examine how far what Christ did on that occasion differs from baptism, how much greater importance shall we attach to baptism, by which we testify that infants are included in the covenant of God, than to the reception, the embrace, the imposition of hands and the prayers by which Jesus Christ himself acknowledged them as his, and declared them to be sanctified by him!

"The other cavils by which our opponents endeavor to elude the force of this passage, only betray their ignorance. For they argue that as Christ said, 'Suffer little children to come,' they must have been grown to such an age and stature as to be capable of walking. But they are called by the evangelist *βρεφη* and *παιδια* two words used by the Greeks to signify little infants hanging on the breast. The word 'come,' therefore, is merely used to denote *access*. To such evasions are persons obliged to have recourse who resist the truth. Nor is there any more solidity in the objection that the kingdom of Heaven is not said to belong to infants, but to those who resemble them, because the expression is not 'of them,' but 'of such is the kingdom of Heaven.' For if this be admitted, what kind of reason would it be that Christ assigns, with a view to show that infants in age ought to be prevented from approaching him, when he says, 'Suffer little children to come unto me.' Nothing can be plainer than that he intends those who are in a *state* of real infancy? And to prevent this from being thought unreasonable, he adds, 'of such is the kingdom of Heaven,' and if infants be necessarily comprehended, it is beyond all doubt that the word 'such' designates both infants themselves and those who resemble them."

From this it is certain that Calvin had no doubt about the salvation of those who were known, to the Spirit, to be like

little children. It is absurd to infer that he could believe that one who was in reality in the infant *state*, being taken away, could possibly find a place anywhere but in the kingdom of God. When you establish likeness in things they belong to the same class. He argues that this is a class declared by Christ to be fit for the kingdom of heaven, 'for of such is the kingdom,' then they certainly should be fit for the sacrament of baptism, which is only an outward sign of what they inwardly are.

This distinction is as clear as could be made, marking the classes which are saved. Calvin uses one mark, or characteristic, to distinguish them. The fewer the number of marks, the greater the number of objects included under them, and vice versa. The *state* of actual infancy includes *all* infants dying in infancy; it is therefore impossible, from this statement, for one dying in this *state* to be lost. He here speaks positively that infants dying in infancy are saved.

This class can be known by the ordinary sense of man. The other class certainly saved, is that which is like infants; there is no doubt of their salvation, but who compose this class we cannot affirm, as in the case of the infants. "By their fruits ye shall know them." But men are so limited and so liable to deception that we cannot individualize and say this one is saved, or that one is; but we maintain from Calvin's own words he does say that infants who go out of this world in a *state* of actual infancy are saved. He proceeds in the next place to show how they are saved.

In arguing with those who denied that infants were fit subjects for baptism, and yet did not affirm that they were consequently lost, he shows how infants are regenerated. He says :*

"They consider themselves as advancing a most powerful argument for excluding infants from baptism when they allege, that by reason of their age they are not yet capable of understanding the mystery signified in it; that is, *spiritual regeneration*, which cannot take place in *early* infancy. Therefore they conclude they are to be considered in no other

*Book IV, Chap. xvi.

view than as children of *Adam*, until they have attained an age which admits of a second birth. But all these things are uniformly contradicted by the truth of God. For if they must be left among the children of *Adam*, they are left in death, for in *Adam* we can only die. On the contrary Christ commands them to be brought to him. Why? Because he is *life*. To give them *life*, therefore, he makes them partakers of himself; while these men, by driving them away from him, adjudge them to death. For if they pretend that infants do not perish, even though they are considered as children of *Adam*, their error is abundantly refuted by the testimony of Scripture. For when it pronounces that 'in *Adam* all die' it follows that there remains no hope of *life* but in Christ. In order to become heirs of life, therefore, it is necessary for us to be partakers of him. So when it is said in other places that we are by nature the children of *wrath*, and conceived in sin, with which condemnation is always connected, it follows that we must depart from our own nature, to have any admission to the kingdom of God. And what can be more explicit than this declaration, that 'flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God?' Let everything of our own, therefore, be destroyed which will not be effected without *regeneration*, and then we shall see this *possession* of the kingdom.

"Lastly, if Christ speaks the truth when he declares himself to be 'life,' it is necessary for us to be ingrafted into him, that we may be rescued from the bondage of death. But how, it is inquired, are infants regenerated, who have no knowledge of good or evil?

"We reply, that the work of God is not yet without existence, because it is not *observed or understood* by us. Now it is certain that some infants are saved, and that they are previously regenerated by the Lord is beyond doubt. For if they are born in a state of corruption it is necessary for them to be purified before they are admitted into the kingdom of God, into which "there shall in no wise enter anything that defileth." If they are born sinners, as both David and Paul affirm, either they must remain unacceptable and hateful to God, or it is necessary for them to be justified. And what do we require more, when the Judge himself declares that there is no entrance into the heavenly life except for those who are born again. And to silence all objectors, by sanctifying John the Baptist in his mother's womb, he exhibits an example of what he is able to do for others. Nor can they gain any advantage by their frivolous evasion, that this was only a single case, which does not justify the conclusion that the Lord generally acts in this manner with infants. For we use no such arguments. We only mean to show that they unjustly confine the power of God within those narrow limits to which it does not suffer itself to be restricted.

"Their other subterfuge is equally weak. They allege that according to the usage of the Scriptures, the phrase *from the womb* denotes *from childhood*. But it is easy to see that in the declaration of the the angel to Zacharias, it was used in a different sense, and that John was to be fill-

ed with the Holy Spirit even before he was born. Let us not attempt, therefore, to impose laws upon God, whose power has sustained no diminution, but is able to sanctify whom he pleases, as he sanctified this child."

It is apparent in this argument that Calvin is trying to conform infant salvation to regeneration, and if we may be allowed the expression, finds in the case of infants an *exception* to the ordinary method by which the Holy Spirit regenerates the adult. The adult hears the Word and exercises faith; the infant neither hears the Word nor exercises faith. Regeneration is the same in both cases, the manner is different. In the one case we can understand and explain the method; in the other case we cannot explain how it is done. Here then is one obstacle to infant salvation removed. They are regenerated. The clause "some infants are saved" has been taken to mean that some infants are lost, while nothing could be farther from Calvin's mind. Consider what he is establishing. He is showing that every person who is saved must be regenerated, if not in the ordinary way, then in the exceptional way; and he takes the case of infants whom the Scriptures declare are saved, to show that infants must and can be regenerated.

The conclusion must be, not that some infants are not saved, but that infants dying in an actual *state* of infancy are regenerated and saved. The fair inference is if God regenerated John the Baptist in his mother's womb, who lived to adult age, we have an example of the power of God to regenerate all dying in infancy. And if regeneration, the barrier to the kingdom of God, be removed, no objection should be raised to giving the sign of baptism to that class which certainly are fit for the kingdom of heaven.

We propose to show next, that Calvin was so thoroughly convinced of the salvation of infants dying in infancy, that he accepted the statement "of such is the kingdom of heaven" as satisfactory, independent of any external sign, and argued the case of an adult to prove his claim * He says:

*Book iv. Chap. xvi.

"It is further evident that their notion ought to be exploded, because it adjudges all unbaptized persons to eternal death. Let us suppose their tenet to be admitted and baptism to be administered to adults alone; what will they say becomes of a youth who is rightly instructed in the first principles of piety, if he desires to be baptized, but 'contrary to the expectation of all around, happens to be snatched away by sudden death? The Lord's promise is clear; "Whosoever believeth on the Son shall not come into condemnation;" but "is passed from death unto life." We are nowhere informed of his having condemned one who had not yet been baptized.

By this I would not be understood as implying that baptism may be despised with impunity; for so far from attempting to excuse such contempt, I affirm it to be a violation of the covenant of the Lord; I only mean that it is not so necessary as that a person, who is deprived of the opportunity of embracing it, must be immediately considered as lost. But if we assent to their notion, we shall condemn all without exception, whom any circumstances whatever prevents from being baptized, whatever faith they may otherwise have, even the faith by which Christ himself is enjoyed. Moreover, they sentence all infants to eternal death by denying them baptism, which according to their own confession is necessary to salvation. Let them see now how well they agree with the language of Christ, which adjudges the kingdom of heaven to little children. But though we should grant them everything they contend for relative to the sense of this passage, still they will gain no advantage from it, unless they first overturn the doctrine which we have already established respecting the *regeneration* of infants."

We find nothing in Calvin's writing that will in any way imply that he thought that any infants in the infant *state* who pass out of the world, are not regenerated. It is clear that no regenerated person, infant or adult, can be lost, so independent of all, but regeneration, Calvin declares, that the adult having this must be saved, and having shown that infants in the infant *state* are regenerated, unless the *regeneration* of infants is set aside, then infants dying in infancy must be saved.

We will take words from Calvin, upon which we make two observations.*

"But our opponents say, 'Faith cometh by hearing,' of which they (infants) have not yet acquired the use, and they cannot be capable of knowing God; for Moses declares them to "have no knowledge between good and evil." But they do not consider, that when the apostle makes hearing the source of faith he only describes the ordinary economy and dispen-

*Book iv, Chap. xvi.

sation of the Lord, which he generally observed in the calling of his people, but does not prescribe a perpetual rule for him, precluding his employment of any other method, which he has certainly employed in the calling of *many* to whom he has given the knowledge of himself in an internal manner by the illumination of his Spirit, without the intervention of any preaching. But as they think it would be such a great absurdity for any knowledge of God to be given to infants, to whom Moses denies the knowledge of good and evil, I would beg them to inform me what danger can result from our affirming that they already receive some portion of that grace, of which they will ere long enjoy the full abundance. For if the plenitude of life consists in the perfect knowledge of God when *some of them*, whom death removes from the present state in their earliest infancy, pass into eternal life, they are certainly admitted to the immediate contemplation of the presence of God. As the Lord will therefore illuminate them with the full splendor of his countenance in heaven, why may he not also, if such be his pleasure, irradiate them with some faint rays of it in the present life; especially if he does not deliver them from all ignorance before he liberates them from the prison of the body? Not that I would hastily affirm them to be endued with the same faith which we experience in ourselves, or at all to possess a similar knowledge of faith, which I would prefer leaving in suspense."

In this passage Calvin teaches the possible salvation of adults who may never have heard the preached Word, but who are renewed by the Spirit independent of the Word. The language is explicit. This from one so accused of narrowness is indeed surprising. How could the man who believed this believe in infant damnation for lack of the changing power of the Spirit? The clause in this argument, "When *some of them*, whom death removes from the present state in their earliest infancy, pass into eternal life" has been taken to mean that others whom death likewise removes pass into eternal death. Nothing could be further from the point. The contrast is not between infants saved and damned, but between infants dead who are enlightened by God, and infants alive who may be enlightened by him. The "*some*" is inclusive of all dead infants. If they pass into the immediate contemplation of the presence of God, why may not "*some*" who are not taken away in their earliest infancy have some "faint rays" of the knowledge of God in the present life; this construction is apparent to all who do not wish to cavil merely.

In speaking of election,* Calvin says :

"But what necessity is there for citing the testimony of Bernard, since we hear from the Master's own mouth, that 'No man hath seen the Father save he which is of God,' which implies that all who *are not regenerated* by God, are stupefied with the splendor of his countenance. Faith, indeed, is properly connected with election, provided it occupies the second place. This order is clearly expressed in these words of Christ: 'This is the Father's will, that all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing. And this is the will of him that sent me, that that every one which believeth on the Son, may have everlasting life.' If he willed the salvation of all, he would give them all into the custody of his Son, and unite them all to his body by the sacred bond of faith. Now it is evident that faith is the peculiar pledge of his paternal love, reserved for his adopted children. Therefore Christ says in another place, 'The sheep follow the shepherd, for they know his voice; and a stranger will they not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers.' Whence this difference, but because their ears are divinely penetrated? For no man makes himself a sheep, but is created such by Heavenly grace.

"Now, with respect to the reprobate, whom the apostle introduces in the same place; as Jacob, without any merit yet acquired by good works, is made an object of grace, so Esau, while yet unpolluted by any crime, is accounted an object of hatred. If we turn our attention to works, we insult the apostle, as though he saw not that which is clear to us. Now, that he saw none, is evident; because he expressly asserts the one to have been elected and the other rejected, while they had not done any good or evil; in order to prove the foundation of Divine predestination not to be in works.

"Secondly, when he raises the objection whether God is unjust, he never argues, what would have been the most absolute and obvious defence of his justice, that God rewarded Esau according to his wickedness but contents himself with a different solution—that the reprobates are raised up for this purpose, that the glory of God may be displayed by their means.

"Lastly, he subjoins a concluding observation, that, 'God hath mercy on whom he will mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.' You see how he attributes faith to the mere will of God. If, therefore, we can assign no reason why he grants mercy to his people but because such is his pleasure, neither shall we find any other cause but his will for the reprobation of others. For when God is said to harden or show mercy to whom he pleases, men are taught by this declaration to seek no cause beside his will."

In this passage all unregenerated persons are non-elect,

*Book III, Chapter XXIII.

and all regenerated persons are elect. The barrier to infant salvation is *regeneration*. Christ declares that the *state* of infancy is such that those in it can be regenerated; this barrier then goes. The passage also states that some infants are elect, and some non-elect, and a specific instance is given in Jacob and Esau. Now what we maintain is that this passage on election and its bearing on infants, and Calvin's own words on infant regeneration and salvation, cannot be reconciled unless we concede that he believed all infants dying in infancy are elect infants, and are regenerated and saved. Nay, we do not say it must be conceded, but we affirm that it cannot be denied from his writing without making him ridiculous in his reasoning, which we think none will undertake to do; wherefore, we conclude—

From this statement of election and what we have found him to state regarding the regeneration of infants, it is evident that all infants dying in infancy, are considered by Calvin as elect infants. The words "of *such* is the kingdom of Heaven," meant to Calvin that Christ made a statement which relieved the mind of suspense regarding the salvation of children, when he taught that provision for all the limitations of infancy is provided in himself. It is clear that Calvin intended, not to specify any particular infants, but wished to relieve *infancy* of those barriers that theology had, apparently, put in the way of salvation.

To illustrate: it may have been true that one, or some, of the very infants that Christ took in his arms were non-elect infants; if so, it would not in the least affect the truth Christ was inculcating, viz: that provision being in himself for infancy as a *state*, we are relieved regarding the salvation of all in that *state* so long as they are in it, for we cannot say what infant will survive the state of infancy, and what one will not; surely, then, should one die in this *state*, it must be saved, because the Lord expressly declares that he has provided for this *state*. Now suppose that one of the identical infants Christ took in his arms survived the state of infancy, and was a non-elect infant, and was finally a lost adult; it could not possibly affect the truth Christ

taught, that against infancy as a *state* there was no barrier to salvation.

The two classes that Calvin says are saved, are infants in the state of infancy, and those like infants; beyond this he could not go, for the word of God goes no further.

How in accord with this are his words against Servetus, who argued for infant damnation:

"I likewise oppose a contrary argument; all those whom Christ blesses are exempted from the curse of Adam and the wrath of God; and as it is known that infants were blessed by Him, it follows that they are exempted from death."

Calvin puts infants in the condemnation of death in consequence of the fall of Adam. In Christ the consequence of the Fall is destroyed, unless by actual sin one may incur the consequences. There is left, then, only the corrupt nature, consequent to the Fall, in infants. Having shown in his argument that infants can be regenerate, and regeneration renewed the nature, there stands against this class of infants who are regenerated absolutely nothing from Adam's fall or the wrath of God; consequently, they shall not see death.

Let us ask, what infants compose this class? Those regenerated in the womb, as was John the Baptist, certainly do, and those whom Christ blesses. What infants did he bless? Is it to be inferred that he blessed all infants, or that taking infants in his arms he blessed this *state*? If the latter, then those dying in the *state* of infancy are the "of such is the kingdom of heaven." Or did he bless infants in the sense that against the class, because of his work, the curse of Adam and the wrath of God did not stand? If in this sense, those dying in this *state* are necessarily saved. It is certain that Christ could not have blessed *all* infants in the sense of exempting them from death, since some infants passing beyond the state of infancy, do incur the penalty of death. If this blessing of Christ means regeneration, as Calvin maintains, for only regenerated persons can be exempt from death, and if all infants were blessed by Christ, then he involves himself in the absurdity of saying some whom Christ exempted from death in infancy are in adult

age put back under the penalty of death by actual sin. For he says :

“ All those whom Christ blesses are exempted from the curse of Adam and the wrath of God ; and as it is known that infants were blessed by him, it follows that they are exempted from death. ”

The case of Esau alone shows that all infants are not exempt. What are we left to but to conclude that Christ blessed the *state* of infancy, and assured us that those dying in this *state* are regenerated by the Spirit and saved. With this there is no conflict with anything Calvin elsewhere says, when he states that the predestinating and electing to life or death, is based solely on the will of God. It only shows that here the will of God has been revealed to us regarding the election, at least, of this class.

This leaves it clear that there may be infants predestinated to eternal death ; it only asserts that they do not die in infancy.

The argument so far is concerned with the “ Institutes ” alone.

OTHER WORKS.

We have claimed that prior to Calvin and Zwingli theologians did not seem to permit the doctrine of regeneration to be applicable to those who could not hear the Word and exercise faith ; and that when it was conceded that infants could be regenerated, and the Scriptures gave instances of their having been regenerated in their mother’s womb, we would naturally expect from so important a concession a decided change in the theological views of all who so believed and taught.

Dr. George L. Prentiss, a professor in Union Theological Seminary, New York, says :

“ The change from the position generally held by Calvinistic divines at the beginning, or in the middle, of the seventeenth century, to the ground taken by Dr. Charles Hodge in 1871, in his *Systematic Theology*, is simply immense. It amounts to a sort of revolution in theological opinion ; a revolution all the more noteworthy from the quiet, decisive way in which it was at last accomplished, the general acquiescence in it, and also the apparent unconsciousness of its logical consequences ? ”

We are of the opinion that the change from the positive

statement of Augustine, Tertullian and others, that infants were subject to a mild hell (if we may so express it) because they could not be regenerated, to a positive assertion of their regeneration and salvation without the Word or the exercise of faith, is a change indeed immense, and of such importance that we should not be surprised to find the men who brought it about as large in their beliefs regarding the salvation of children as was Dr. Chas. Hodge.

We wish to set forth the clearness with which many of this transition period spoke, at least, regarding the children of believers. The Catechism written by John Calvin in 1556 contains the following :

M. Seeing all this is required in the right using of Baptisme, how is it that little children bee baptised ?

C. I did not meane that faith and repentance ought alwayes to goe before the ministration of this Sacrament ; for that is onely requisite in them that be of age and discretion ; so that it is sufficient, if the little children shew forth the fruits of Baptisme, when they are come to sufficient age to knowe it.

M. How wilt thou prove that there is no inconvenience in this doing ?

C. For in like manner circumcision was a sacrament of repentance, as Moses and the Prophets doe witnesse; and also a sacrament of faith, as Saint Paule teacheth; and yet God did not debarre little children from the receiving of the same. Deut. 10, 15 and 30, 6. Jer. 4, 4. Rom. 4. 11.

M. No; but art thou able to prove sufficiently that there is as good reason that they should be received to Baptisme, as that the other should bee circumcised ?

C. Yea; for the same promises which God did make in time past to his people of Israel, are now extended unto all coastes of the worlde.

M. And followeth it, therefore, that we must use also the signe ?

C. Yea, if wee will consider the thing effectually: for Christe hath not made us partakers of that grace, which belonged in time past to the children of Israell, to the intent he woulde in us diminish or obscure it; but rather to shewe forth his goodnesse more evidently, and in greater abundance.

M. Doest thou count, then, that if we did denie Baptisme to little children, the grace of God should be diminished by the coming of Christ ?

C. Yea, surely: for we should be by that means destitute of the expresse signe of God's bountifull mercie towards our children, the which thing they that were under the Law, had: And in very deede this thing serveth highly to our comfort, and to the stablithing of the promise, which hath bene made unto us from the beginning.

M. Thy mind is then, that forasmuch as it pleased God in old time to declare himself to bee the Savior, yea of little children, and that he thought it also good to seale his favourable promises in their bodies by an outward Sacrament, that therefore it is very good reason, that there be no lesse tokens of assurance after Christe's comming, since the selfsame promise continueth still, and is more openly uttered as well by word as deede.

C. Yea; and moreover it seemeth a thing worthy of notable reprehension, if men would doe so much wrong unto children, as to denie them the signe, which is a thing of lesse price, since the vertue and substance of Baptisme belongeth unto them, which is of much higher estimation.

M. For what consideration ought we to baptize little children?

C. In token that they are inheritors of the blessing of God, which is promised to the seede of the faithfull, that when they come to age, they should be instructed what the meaning of Baptisme is, to profite themselves thereby."

The Palatine Catechism published in Edinburgh in 1615, reads :

Q 74. Ought infants also be baptized?

A. Yea truly; for seeing they belong to the Covenant and Church of God, as well as those that be at Years of Discretion: and seeing unto them is promised by the Blood of Christ, Forgiveness of Sins, and the Holy Ghost the Worker of Faith, no less than the other; they ought also by Baptism to be ingrafted into the Church of God, and to be discerned from the children of Infidels, as they were in the Old Testament by Circumcision, in place whereof was ordained Baptism in the New Testament.

Craige's Catechism :

Q. "Howe then may little children receive baptisme?

A. Even as they received Circumcision under the law.

Q. Upon what ground were they Circumcised?

A. Upon the ground made to the Fathers, and their feed. Gen. 17. Acts 7, verse 8.

Q. Have we the like promise for us, and our children?

A. I no doubt, seeing Christ came to accomplish the same to the faithfull.

Q. What if our children die without baptisme?

A. Yet they are saved by the promise.

Q. Why are they baptised, seeing they are yong and understand not?

A. Because they are of the seed of the faithfull.

Q. What comfort have we by their baptisme?

A. This, that we rest perswaded, they are inheritours of the kingdom of heaven. "

Q. "Upon whom doth he shew justice?

A. Upon all the rest of Adams prosperity, which are called the Children of wrath.

Q. When doth he this?

A. When he suffereth them patiently to walk according to their owne corrupt nature.

Q. What followeth upon that walking?

A. Eternall perdition infallibly, according to God's eternall decree."

"And as for us, their posterity, we cannot be better nor they whome of we come, and stock out of the whilk we are hewin. For wha can bring ane clean thing out of filthinesse? and sa, as we say, we haue sin by kinde we cost it not. And David saith, behald, I was born in iniquitie, and in sin did my mother conceave me. And this is that originall sin whairwith the hail rase of mankinde is infected, the rewarde whereof is death; as the power that very natural death hath ower infants that sinne not after the manner of Adam and others, (wha sinnes with knowlege) is a sure argumēt, because being included in sinning with Adam, they are sinners; and meikle mair they and all we gyilty of condemnation, when actual sinne followeth thairupon. Then, as by ane maⁿ sin entered into the world, and death by sinne; so death went over all men, forasmuch as all men have sinned."

Calvin says :*

"That in baptism remission of sins, as well as the grace of the Holy Spirit, is offered and exhibited to us, all the pions confess. They also acknowledge that infants have need of it, not as a necessary help to salvation, but as a seal divinely appointed to seal upon them the gift of adoption. For Paul teaches that the children of believers are born holy (1 Cor. vii-14.) And, in deed, baptism would not be at all suitable to them if their salvation were not already included in this promise, 'I will be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.' For they do not become the sons of God through baptism; but because, in virtue of the promise, they are heirs of adoption, therefore the Church admits them to baptism. And as of old, when the children of the Israelites died before the eighth day, they suffered not by wanting the sacrament of circumcision, so now, provided there is no contumacy or negligence on the part of the parents, the simple promise by which the children of believers are from the womb adopted into the fellowship of the Church suffices for their salvation. For injury is done to Christ if we imagine that the grace of God is impaired by his advent. But God once gave the name of *sons* to all who should be born of Israel, (Ezek. xviii, 4.) Nor do we read that Johu was baptised, though he was the minister of Baptism to others. We ought, therefore, to hold that, as in Abraham, the father of the faithful, the righteousness of faith preceded circumcision, so in the children of the faithful, in the present day, the gift of adoption is prior to baptism. According to the words of the promise, 'I will be a God to thy seed.'

*"Tracts," Vol. I.

(Gen. xvii, 7). Baptism, however, is a confirmation of this gift and a help to our faith."

COMMENTARIES.

"Suffer children. He declares that he wishes to receive *children*; and at length, *taking them in his arms*, he not only embraces, but *blesses* them by the *laying on of hands*; from which we infer that his grace is extended even to those who are of that age. And no wonder; for since the whole race of Adam is shut up under the sentence of death, all from the least even to the greatest must perish, except those who are rescued by the only Redeemer. To exclude from the grace of redemption those who are of that age would be too cruel; and therefore it is not without reason that we employ this passage as a shield against the Anabaptists. They refuse baptism to *infants*, because infants are incapable of understanding that mystery which is denoted by it. We, on the other hand, maintain that, since baptism is the pledge and figure of the forgiveness of sins, and likewise of adoption by God, it ought not to be denied to *infants*, whom God adopts and washes with the blood of His Son. Their objection, that repentance and newness of life are also denoted by it, is easily answered. *Infants* are renewed by the Spirit of God, according to the capacity of their age, till that power which was concealed within them grows by degrees, and becomes fully manifest at the proper time. Again, when they argue that there is no other way in which they are reconciled to God, and become heirs of adoption, than by faith, we admit this as to adults, but, with respect to *infants*, this passage demonstrates it to be false. Certainly, the *laying on of hands* was not a trifling or empty sign, and the prayers of Christ were not idly wasted in air. But he could not present the infants solemnly to God without giving them purity. And for what did he pray for them, but that they might be received into the number of the children of God? Hence it follows, that they were renewed by the Spirit to the hope of salvation. In short, by embracing them, he testified that they were reckoned by Christ among his flock. And if they were partakers of the spiritual gifts, which are represented by Baptism, it is unreasonable that they should be deprived of the outward sign. But it is presumption and sacrilege to drive far from the fold of Christ those whom he cherishes in his bosom, and to shut the door, and exclude as strangers those whom he does not wish to be *forbidden to come to Him*.

"*For of such is the kingdom of heaven.*" Under this term he includes both little children and those who resemble them; for the Anabaptists foolishly exclude children, with whom the subject must have commenced; but at the same time, taking occasion from the present occurrence, he intended to exhort his disciples to lay aside malice and pride, and put on the nature of *children*. Accordingly, it is added by Mark and Luke, that no man can enter into the kingdom of heaven unless he be made to resemble a child." *

* Harmony of the Gospel, Vol. II, pages 390-391.

From this passage we shall first ascertain what proposition the great Reformer is laying down. It is, that the whole race of Adam is shut up under the sentence of death. "All, from the least even to the greatest must perish, except those who are rescued by the "only Redeemer." The exposition of this passage of Scripture is an endeavor to escape from the consequences of this terrible truth as to infants. In doing so, Calvin lays down as a corollary to his proposition, that to cause new-born infants to perish eternally is too cruel a conception to entertain concerning God; therefore he reasons, they are not excluded from the benefits of redemption. For he states, and this statement is worthy of note, "To exclude from the grace of redemption those who are of that age would be too cruel." This sentence determines the interpretation of the exposition Calvin gives of this Scripture.

As a secondary consideration he turns the force of this exposition upon the Anabaptists, regarding infant salvation. Their belief was that all perish since none were capable of the exercise of faith. We have set forth our belief regarding Calvin's interpretation of the *state* of infancy, showing that Christ blest this *state* and taught the world that as long as infants remained in it there should be no apprehension for their safety; and should they die in it, there should be no fear for their eternal salvation. In confirmation of this view, we ask the reader to consider this sentence: "But it is presumption and sacrilege to drive far from the fold of Christ those whom he cherishes in his bosom. and to shut the door and to exclude as strangers those whom he does not wish to be *forbidden to come to him.*"

Dr. Henry Van Dyke indicates, in the following, that he entertains no doubt as to Calvin's position on this great subject :

"He (Calvin) assumes as a premise, which it is 'impossible to deny,' that God by his decree of predestination, and for no other reason than because it seemed meet to him to do so, has involved the infant offspring of many nations in eternal death without remedy. This is what he calls

the camel. He tells his opponents that they have swallowed it; and he tells them the truth, for since the days of Augustine all Christians, except a few heretics, believed in infant damnation. Calvin on this point was only teaching up to the times. And he goes on to reason *a fortiori*, that having swallowed this camel, they ought not to strain at the gnat, viz.: 'The Scripture doctrine that all were in the person of one made liable to eternal death.' As against the opponents with whom he thus reasons, Calvin's argument was *ad hominem* and unanswerable. But the times have changed, and the whole attitude of the argument is changed also. In our day even (Westminster) Calvinists do not swallow the camel. The doctrine that election runs the line of separation between the innumerable multitude upon whom natural death passes before they sin after the similitude of Adam's transgression, predestinating some of them to salvation, and others to eternal death, without remedy, has passed away with other superstitions from the faith of the Protestant world. So far as the Presbyterian Church is concerned, no man has contributed more to indicate and to produce this change than Dr. Charles Hodge. The salvation of all dying infants, with all the consequences it involves, is a characteristic feature of Princeton Theology. Not exclusively so, of course. The same truth is accepted and taught in all our Theological Seminaries. But where is the recognized Calvinistic authority prior to Hodge's Theology, in which it is taught explicitly and without qualification, that 'All who die in infancy are saved.' (Theology, Vol. I, 26.) Lay this parallel with Calvin's horrible decretum, and follow out the Scripture argument by which it is sustained till it culminates and is crowned with the declaration, 'it is more congenial to the nature of God to save than to destroy,' and how wide is the difference, how marked the contrast, in the spirit of their reasoning and in the conclusions they reach, between the Calvinism of Geneva and the Calvinism of Princeton.*

We are somewhat surprised to find any such interpretation of the language of the great Reformer as Dr. VanDyke has given. He seems to labor at proving what none who read Calvin deny, that God's decree of predestination has involved the offspring of many nations in condemnation without remedy. That infant damnation was believed in to the time of Calvin, we concede, and, so far as we have been able to learn, others concede as much.

The camel swallowed is nothing more than that Adam's sin involved the whole human race in ruin, and the gnat, that anti-Calvinists have strained at, is the "Scripture doctrine that all were made liable to eternal death."

*The Variations of Calvinism, pp. 40, 41.

Dr. VanDyke argues that such changes have taken place in theological thought that Calvinists no longer swallow this camel, from which we beg leave to dissent.

We have already indicated that the change from belief in the damnation of infants, because they could not be regenerated, to the belief of the Scripture doctrine of the regeneration of infants without the hearing of the Word or the exercise of faith is a more remarkable transition than the supposed change from the Westminster divines to the Princeton Theology. In the latter the change is the enlightenment, of the people, concerning the teaching of Calvin and the Westminster fathers, during the last 250 years. There is nothing remarkable in this.

Frequently a writer's opinion on a particular question, may be the better ascertained by studying him on other questions than the one we may be investigating, a kind of indirect testimony. This is true concerning Dr. Charles Hodge on infant salvation. It does not appear that Dr. Hodge considered his views on this subject at all remarkable, nor does it appear, as Dr. Van Dyke indicates, that he sees any difference between his views and those held by all evangelical churches long before pen was put to paper to write his great work on theology.

More than this Dr. Hodge holds to the theory of the immediate imputation while Calvin is a traducionist. We know this distinction had not been made in Calvin's time but if we classify his works they belong in this school. This distinction is very important in considering Dr. Van Dyke's rhetorical expressions in distinguishing the theology of Geneva from that of Princeton. We must confess that to us it appears much kinder for the Supreme Being to tell us that our guilt is due to transmission from our first parent than to tell us that every soul, newly created in this world, is created with a nature liable to become sinful. To the common mind it looks as though our great Father had it in his power to give each one a new chance, or that it was optional whether he would create them holy and confirm them in holiness. If Dr. Van Dyke really wants to advance a more

liberal theological teaching, than the great man at Geneva gave the world, we would suggest that he advance his own beliefs and not ask men to swallow the "camel" Dr. Charles Hodge has given the world. It may be our blindness or ignorance, but we certainly fail to see the advance of Dr. Hodge's teachings on those of John Calvin regarding this vital subject.

If Dr. VanDyke will view original sin from this point it will be awful still, but not so awful as from the point of immediate imputation, and Calvin will not be so inhuman. If Calvin's "*decretum horribile*" is shocking to Dr. VanDyke, we must confess, that if God has decreed to deal with infants after the theory of immediate imputation, this is a "*decretum horribile*" that is repellant beyond expression. Lest we appear extravagant, we bring to bear the words of Dr. Robt. L. Dabney, one of the mightiest minds the Presbyterian Church has had, North or South. He says:

"Turretin states the view of immediate imputation, which has since been defined and asserted in its most rigid sharpness by the Princeton School. It boldly repudiates every sense in which we really or actually sinned in Adam, and admits no other than merely the representative sense of a positive covenant. It says that the guilt of Adam's first sin, which was personally nobody's but Adam's own, is part of the penalty of death, due to Adam's sin, and is visited on Adam's children purely as the penal consequence of the putative guilt they bear. For sin may be the punishment of sin. Very true, after depravity of nature thus becomes personally theirs, it is also an addition of personal guilt, for which they are thenceforward punished, as well as for actual transgressions."

... "This distinction between "mediate" and "immediate" imputation should never have been made. . . . It causelessly aggravates the difficulties of the awful doctrine of original sin, exaggerating needlessly the angles of a subject which is, at best, sufficiently mysterious; that the arguments by which the immediate imputation must be sustained misrepresent the doctrines of the spiritual union and justification; and especially, that it is false to the facts of the case, in a mode the counterpart of Placæus'. It represents the child of Adam as having a separate, undepraved, personal existence, at least for an instant; until from innocent, it becomes depraved by God's act, as a penal consequence of Adam's guilt imputed as *peccatum alienum* solely.'"*

*Dabney's Theology. Pages 341, 342.

Those who may desire to know more of the feelings of John Calvin on this great question may find the deepest emotions of his heart revealed in his letter to Viret on the death of his only son.

We wish to call special attention to the interpretation Dr. VanDyke gives to this passage :

Iterum quaeno, aeternae morti involeret lapsus Adae absque, remedio, nisi quia. Deo ita visum est? Hic ob mutescere oportet tam dicaces alioqui linguas. Decretum quod idem horribile fateor ; inficiari tamen nemo poterit quin praesciverit Deus, quem exitum esset habiturus homo, antequam ipsum conderet—et ideo praesciveret, quia decreto, sua sic ordinarat. In praescientiam Dei si quis hic invehatur, tempere et inconsulte impingit.

The translation of *absque* has led Dr. Van Dyke to indicate that no remedy could ever after be supplied. He has translated *absque* as though equivalent to *sine*, indicating a defect in reality, while *absque* is equivalent to *nisi*, indicating a defect in conception. The translation without remedy indicates that the ruin into which man has fallen is not to be considered a fiction by supposing God had permitted the fall foreseeing the remedy. It is to be looked upon as teaching that all were in the person of one made liable to eternal death.

The 'infant offspring of many nations' is here used as though it were in contrast with the infant offspring of other nations, while the context indicates that it is only a variation of the expression that Adam's transgression involved the race in literal ruin. The statement previous to, and the one immediately following, shows that all Adam's posterity were involved in the ruin of original sin.

We will now consider the following :

" If Pighius holds that original sin is not sufficient to damn men and that the secret counsel of God is not to be admitted, what will he (Pighius) do with children and infants who, before they have reached an age at which they can give any such specimens, (of good or evil works) are snatched from this life? When the conditions of birth and death was alike to infants who died in Sodom and in Jerusalem, and there was no difference in their works, why will Christ at the last day with some standing at his right hand, separate others at his left? Who will not adore the wonderful judgment of God, whereby it comes to pass that

some are born at Jerusalem, whence soon they pass to a better life, while Sodom, the entrance to the lower region, receives others at their birth? Moreover, I by no means deny that Christ awards the meed of righteousness to the elect, so the reprobate will then suffer for their impiety and their crimes. '*

This passage is conclusive to those who assert Calvin taught infant damnation. What is the distinct thing Calvin undertakes to do in this passage? It is to show the consequences of Pighius affirming "that original sin is not sufficient to damn men." How does he do it? By asking two questions. The first question is, What will he (Pighius) do with infant children, who, before they have reached an age at which they can give any such specimens (of good or evil works), are snatched from this life? Since it "is to be held for certain, that all who are destitute of the grace of God are included under the sentence of eternal death; whence it follows that the children of the reprobate, whom the curse of God follows, are subject to the same sentence." Calvin on Isaiah xiv:21.

The second question is, "Why will Christ, at the last day, separate some to stand at his right hand, others at his left."

Could anything be plainer than that Calvin is arguing *ad hominem*? He is discussing with one who already believed in the condemnation of infants to eternal death. Why should he be asked any such question unless it be to show the absurdity of their being damned under the doctrine of works?

The injustice of condemning the infants of Sodom, without works, is made apparent by saving the infants of Jerusalem without works. Calvin's position was that infants are regenerated and saved in an exceptional way. The man who so believed could well ask the question, "Why will Christ separate some on his right hand and others on his left," knowing no answer could be given?

What is the answer that the question should have received if Pighius was right? That Christ would do so because some infants were judged by good works and others by bad works.

*De æterna Dei Predestinatione. Tom. VIII.

What reply would be made to such an answer? "For inasmuch as the conditions of birth and death were alike to infants who died at Sodom and those who died in Jerusalem; and there was *no difference* in their works!" Then Christ cannot, separate some on his right hand from others on his left, for this cause.

How, then, could infants be involved in eternal death? In consequence of original sin, "for they bear corruption shut up in the soul, so that before God they are damnable."

Why, then, are infants, who die in the infant state, not damned? Because Christ removes from them the curse of Adam and being renewed in nature, by the Spirit, working when and where it to him seemeth good, there is nothing against this class.

From this conclusion there is no escape.

This manner of stating the case would force Pighius to the bald position of declaring that "infants torn from their mother's breast," had been eternally damed for their evil works. The absurdity of the Romish doctrine of infant damnation could not have been thrust with a keener blade. Pighius was an orthodox Roman Catholic priest. He was made provost of the church of St. John at Ulrecht under Pope Paul III, and hoped to get a Cardinal's hat for his attack on Calvin.

To confirm this view we will quote from Calvin in a passage purely sarcastic—continuing his argument against Pighius, he says: "Who will not adore this wonderful judgment of God, whereby it comes to pass that some are born at Jerusalem, whence soon they pass to a better life, while Sodom, the gates of the lower regions, receives others at their birth?" Let the reader answer *who* would "adore this wonderful judgment of God" and he will understand the sublime nature of the man who was hated by the Catholics, by Anglican bishops and divines, by Arminian theologians, by Free Thinkers, by Secular Republicans, by the Sons of Light and Culture, because he opposed them with the *Verbum Dei*.

If we consider that Calvin, on the great doctrines of Pre-

destination, Election and Foreordination, concedes that had God seen fit to have condemned every infant, since Adam was created, His justice would not be involved, since all were worthy of condemnation on account of original sin, and would have been condemned, had not God provided the "only Redeemer," we can understand why it would be patent injustice for God to condemn infants, who died in the destruction of Sodom, and saved infants, who died in the overthrow of Jerusalem, "when the condition of birth and death was alike to infants who died in Sodom and in Jerusalem, and there was no difference in their works."

In the first supposition, the justice or injustice of consigning all dying in infancy to hell, could not be determined by man. He would have nothing to compare it with, and would be left to the conclusion that the Judge of all the earth must do right. In the second supposition, Pighius demands that condemnation must be conditioned on bad works and salvation on good works. Calvin retorts by asking the question, "What will he do with infant children who, before they have reached an age at which they can give such specimens [of good or evil works], are snatched from this life?" Here it is apparent that Calvin means if there is not an atom in the scale, to show a difference between the infants in Jerusalem and those in Sodom, it would be a manifest injustice for God to condemn the one and save the other. Here we can make comparison, and can determine justice from injustice.

Calvin's conclusion is, infants are not under condemnation on account of works but on account of original sin; and since Christ removes all consequences of original sin from infants that, therefore, all infants, dying in infancy, must be saved, not according to divine justice alone but also according to the abundant mercy of God made manifest in Jesus Christ. From this conclusion there is absolutely no getting away.

We think our interpretation of this much-abused passage is further confirmed by Calvin's great pains displayed in showing the relation of works to reprobation. He says :

“Moreover I by no means deny that as Christ awards the meed of righteousness to the elect. so the *reprobate* will then suffer for their impiety and their crimes.” Take the two marks, *impiety* and *crimes*, and tell us if any sane man will affirm that these marks, in any scientific, religious, theological or common-sense manner, describe infants? Blindness shows evil intent as well as a hellish deed.

To confirm this interpretation of the passage still further we will turn to Calvin’s exposition of the Scriptures where the destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah is related. He says:

“And as it is often asked from this passage, ‘What had infants done to deserve to be swallowed up in the same destruction with their parents?’ The solution of the question is easy; namely, that the human race is in the hands of God, so that he may devote whom he will to destruction, and may follow whom he will with his mercy. Again, whatever we are not able to comprehend by the limited measure of our understanding, ought to be submitted to his secret judgment. Lastly, the whole of that seed was accursed and execrable, so God could not justly have spared even the least.”

In the same volume, in speaking of Lot’s wife, he says: “Although it is not lawful to affirm anything respecting her eternal salvation, it is nevertheless probable that God, having inflicted *temporal* punishment, spared her soul. After stating that the destruction of these cities was intended, by God, to be an example for the benefit of all the ages of the liability of wickedness to *temporal* punishment. He says: “If the severity of the punishment terrifies us, let us remember that they sin, at this day, not less grievously, who, being delivered, not from Sodom but from hell, fix their eyes on some other object than the proposed prize of their high calling.”

We are enlightened in this passage as to the nature of the death that befell the infants in Sodom and Jerusalem. It was temporal death, as a punishment, due to the fault of another, for he says: “As to the infants they seem to perish not by their own fault, but by the fault of another. But there is a double solution. Though sin does not yet appear in them, yet it is latent; for they bear corruption shut up in the soul, so that before God they are damnable.”

Here we have the whole matter, and what are we to conclude? Is it not apparent that when we apply Calvin's argument on the regeneration of infants, we establish the folly of Pighius and others regarding the doctrine of *works* and at the same time relieve Calvin's teaching of every vestige of infant condemnation to eternal death?

Castalio made an attack on Calvin in the following words:

"All laws condemn men after actual sin and on account of actual sin. But this God of Calvin has condemned and reprobated impious men before they exist, even before they are impious and have sinned; and since he has condemned them before their sin, he compels them to sin, forsooth that he may appear to condemn them justly."

To which Calvin made the following reply:

"As to your objection that no one can be justly condemned except on account of actual sin, and after actual sin, there is no dispute between you and me concerning the former; since everywhere I teach that no one will perish unless by the just judgment of God. I may not disguise, however, that there is a hidden venom under your words; for if the comparison which you propose be admitted, God will be unjust who involves the whole race of Abraham in the guilt of original sin. You deny that it is right for God to condemn any mortal except on account of actual sin. Countless mortals are taken from life while yet infants. Now put forth your virulence against God, who hurls innocent new-born babes, torn from their mother's breast, into eternal death. Whosoever will not detect this blasphemy, wherever it is publicly exposed, may revile me as much as he pleases. For I dare not ask to be exempt and free from the insults of those who do not spare God."

Opera, Tom. viii, "De Occulta alei Providentia."

We interpret this passage as follows:

If one denies that God condemns any mortal except for actual sin, he involves himself in the dilemma of either charging God "with hurling innocent new born babes, torn from their mother's breast, into eternal death, since countless mortals are taken from this life while yet infants."

Or else, he must deny condemnation for original sin since infants have no actual sin, and declare all infants born in a state of innocency. This latter was unthinkable to Calvin, and the former was to him the grossest blasphemy.

Calvin's argument plainly is: If one has no more reverence for God's revealed word than to deny a fundamental doctrine, like original sin, it being one of the five points in

his system, and so involve God in so dreadful a thing as condemning innocent infants to eternal death, "then he may revile me as much as he pleases. For I do not ask to be exempt and free from the insults of those who do not spare God."

It will be noted that Calvin transposes Castalio's language—"After actual sin and on account of actual sin." Calvin changes to read "on account of actual sin and after actual sin." This is done to show that Calvin believed that the just judgment of God would only consign to eternal death those who had sinned in act.

For argument we will suppose a process of reasoning for Calvin. While "I teach that no one will *perish* unless by the just judgement of God" when you assert that none can be condemned until "after actual sin," you are not affirming what is in your first proposition, but you are aiming at vilification of the doctrine that in Adam all were made liable to eternal death. The condemnation you speak of in your first clause is what I mean by the eternal perishing of those who sin in act. The condemnation I speak of under original sin, is the liability of all to death before actual sin, and should I admit your comparison I would be denying the doctrine of original sin, which is the first point in my system of doctrine. I may not disguise, therefore, that I see the hidden venom under your words. You think that conceding, as I everywhere do, that it is alone for actual sin that any eternally perish, that therefore, having stated elsewhere that infants, hanging on the breast, are guilty of original sin, "this God of Calvin's has condemned and reprobated impious men before they exist, even before they are impious and have sinned; and since he has condemned them before their sin, he compels them to sin, forsooth that he may appear to condemn them justly."

"You deny that it is right for God to condemn any mortal except on account of actual sin. Countless mortals are taken from life while infants. Now if my doctrine of original sin involves infants in eternal death, "put forth your virulence against God, who hurls innocent new-born babes,

torn from their mothers' breasts, into eternal death." It is a fact that I teach everywhere that original sin involves infants in condemnation, and it is a fact that countless infants are taken from life while yet infants. When the facts are construed by you to mean what you affirm, viz., "that God hurls to eternal death the innocent who are incapable of any actual sin," whosoever will not detest this blasphemy, whenever publicly exposed, may revile me as much as he pleases. For I dare not ask to be exempt and free from the insults of those who do not spare God."

If this interpretation is not true, then, as Dr. Charles W. Shields says: Calvin "premises that no one can be justly damned and perish except for actual sin; if he afterwards maintains that infants are damned and perish without sin, he would be nonsensically saying and unsaying the same thing in the same argument." Or changing Dr. Shields' words a little: "If it is not true, then Calvin has characterized reprobate infants as innocent, he has brutally described them as torn from their mothers breast, and impiously depicted the Almighty as an inhuman monster plunging them into eternal death, he has affirmed the perdition of *all* infants as a class, he has denied what, at first he affirmed that both his premise and the premise of his opponent preclude the perdition of infants. This is a little too much to ask any man to believe Calvin would do.

In his Institutes Calvin has already demonstrated the exemption of infants from the grace of salvation "as an idea not free from execrable blasphemy."

The meaning of the words "condemn" and "actual" as used by Castalio remain to be considered. We shall waive all other considerations except that of common sense and ask: does any one suppose "condemn," to him, did not mean, to eternal death, or that "actual" did not mean sin in act? If Calvin agrees with him, is it possible for Calvin to believe that infants, whom he affirms again and again have no "actual" sin are damned in the sense of eternally perishing? Is it possible for the language, "God who hurls new-born babes torn from their mothers' breasts into eternal death,"

to be the language of Calvin? Is it possible for this passage to mean anything except to deny that the doctrine of original sin involves God so as to make him unjust to innocent babes? Is it possible for it to be less than blasphemy when the holy and just God is charged with condemning eternally those whom his Son declares are "exempt from the curse of Adam and the wrath of God?"

We wish to buttress this interpretation with the following :

"Servetus flatters himself that he has framed an irrefutable syllogism : "Every one who does not believe in the Son of God, remains in the death of Adam and the wrath of God abideth on him ; baptised infants do not believe in the Son of God, therefore they remain in the death of Adam. That they cannot believe is plain, because faith comes by hearing." Before I may untie this Gordian knot, I can oppose it with a contrary syllogism : "Whomsoever Christ blesses He exempts from the curse of Adam and the wrath of God ; but infants, it is known, were blessed by Him ; therefore, they are exempt from the wrath of God." Moreover, the solution of the syllogism is easy ; since Christ does not summon infants as accursed to the tribunal of God, but only denounces judgment on the contumacious, who reject the teachings of the Gospel which they have heard."*

He further states in the same work :

"Meanwhile he adjudges them to death and hell. If one may here reason after the manner of Servetus, will not there be a plausible complaint against God, who pardons the impious and criminal, but in a manner less than human deprives wretched and innocent infants of all remedy? That he is even cruel, who, gratuitously condoning the crimes of His enemies, has not rescued from death His own most innocent images."†

It may be that we are fools; if so, we prefer to be called the worst of fools, than argue, that the man who, further back than 1594, wrote words like the above, could believe in the eternal damnation of those—any of those—whom he carried like lambs in his bosom.

Being charged by Westphal with suspending infant baptism upon secret election, Calvin replies: "I have written much and the Lord has employed me in various kinds of discussion. If out of my lucubrations he can produce a sylable in which I teach that one ought to begin with predes-

*"Refutatio Errorum Michaelis Serveti," Opera, Tom. VIII.

†"Refutatio Errorum."

tionation in seeking assurance of salvation, I am ready to remain dumb."*

In determining Calvin's meaning, when he speaks of the condemnation of infants, not to be that *all* infants are condemned to eternal death and that *none* dying in infancy are, we assert that the expression "reprobate infants" cannot be found in his writings. If it can be, then we are ready to remain dumb.

The Synod of Dort declared that the infants of believers were exempted from eternal death. Dr. B. B. Warfield says: "No Synod probably ever met which labored under greater temptation to declare that some infants are reprobated, than the Synod of Dort." It is more than probable that the private opinion of some of its members was that there are such infants, but the deliverances show that the Synod declared there were no such infants.

In undertaking to establish the certain salvation of any given class, we must necessarily feel the force of *the single* exception. In the case of believers Calvin mentions Esau. We are confronted with this condition. Calvin's works, the catechisms and deliverances we have cited, assert positively that the believer can rest secure in the certainty of the salvation of his children. And yet the same authorities admit an exception. The paradox is—All children of believers are certainly saved—some children of believers are not saved. We will take the statement of one who lived in the time of the controversy, to show the dilemma.

Leydecker says:

"The faith demanded of parents in the formula of baptism is *indefinite*. This, to wit, that godly persons' infants are sanctified in Christ. And that faith is true, although there should be here and there *an exception*. . . . That divine promise has a *common* truth, though God *reserves to himself*, according to his own power and liberty, *the exclusion of some infants*. Faith. . . . performs its office when it lays hold of the promise *as it is given*, and reverently leaves to God *liberty of application*. The believer is bound. . . . to acquiesce in the promise given. . . . and to trust in it, or, in the judgment of charity, to hope well concerning this infant which is to be baptized—nay, to believe that *this* infant belongs to Christ, *unless* God, by a singular decision, *will its ex-*

*Second Defence of Sacraments—"Tracts,"

clusion. The faith demanded of parents is not vain. . . . though *here and there one* (of the infants) *does not belong to the election.* . . . although there is not an internal baptizing of exactly all infants."

From this we do not see how to escape the conclusion that this writer believed all infants excluded come to years of accountability and are finally condemned for actual sin, or as Dr. Twisse would put it, "willfully committed, contumaciously continued in, by them that come to ripe years." This is much more sensible than to conclude, as some have done, that Calvin would have explained the reprobation of Esau by charging the parents with violating the Covenant, when Jacob, a twin with Esau, was a non-reprobate. The authorities we have cited were designedly giving an answer to parents on the final state of infants dying in infancy. The answer is not uncertain in its sound. It is a word that all can understand. If there is a single exception to it, then it is no answer at all, for a parent, enough concerned to ask the question, would be too deeply concerned to rest satisfied with the possibility of his infant being the excepted one. He could rest satisfied with the assurance that, the baby presented for baptism, if death came upon it in infancy, was certainly saved, but possibly, should it come to years of accountability the adult might not be of the elect.

Dr. Lyman Beecher and Dr. Chas. Hodge said they never knew a Calvinist who held the doctrine of infant reprobation. They could not find it in the works of Calvin nor in the catechisms and standards of the church. Nor can we.

It is by no means conclusive, to some of the very best minds we have had in the Presbyterian Church, that the Westminster Standards teach the possible damnation of infants. Many would be led to believe, from the extravagant statements in the literature we have been discussing, concerning the personnel of the Westminster Assembly, that it was.

Dr. Shedd says:

"As the tenet ('elect infants') was formulated by the Assembly. it has been understood to mean: (a) that all infants dying in infancy are elected as a class, some being saved by covenanted mercy, and some by un-

covenanted mercy; (b) that all infants dying in infancy are elected as a class—all alike, those within the church and those outside of it, being saved by divine mercy, nothing being said of the covenant; (c) that dying infants are elected as individuals, some being elect and some non-elect. Probably each of these opinions had its representatives in the Assembly, and hence the indefinite form of the statement. The writer regards the first-mentioned view as best supported by Scripture and the analogy of faith; but there are many who advocated the second view, and perhaps there may be some who hold the third."

It does not appear that this writer regarded it certain that any of the Westminster divines believed in infant reprobation. It is beyond doubt that the deliverances of this Assembly were never so construed by him.

DR. TWISSE.

We will now consider the views of Dr. William Twisse, the prolocutor of the Westminster Assembly. Dr. Twisse, like Calvin, is arguing with objectors in much of his writing and consequently is forced to use language he would not use were he discussing the matter in hand, independent of the objections. We have claimed that Calvin, when discussing such subjects as Predestination and the justice of God, uses language in answering the objectors that indicates some infants are condemned. He speaks of God's justice in such manner that had he seen fit to have condemned every living soul in the infant state, he would not have involved this attribute since all were justly worthy of eternal death owing to original sin.

In discussing Predestination he finds but two classes: those predestinated to death and those predestinated to life. When the objectors complained that infants were involved he did not exempt them; for this doctrine, independent of God's revealed will on other subjects does not. Under regeneration he does exempt them. Dr. Twisse seems to argue in a similar manner. Dr. Briggs quotes Dr. Twisse as follows: "If many thousands even all the infants of Turks and Sarazens dying in original sin are tormented by him in hell fire, is he to be accounted the father of cruelties for this? And I profess I cannot devise a greater show and appearance of cruelty than in this. Now I be-

seech you consider the spirit that breatheth in this man (Heard, against whom he is here writing); dares he censure God as a father of cruelties for executing eternal death upon those who are guilty of it?"

It must be kept in mind that Dr. Twisse is here arguing against cruelty on the part of God, in a work that bears this title, "Riches of God's Love to Vessels of Mercy Consistent with his Absolute hatred, or Reprobation of Vessels of Wrath." This work was strongly recommended by Dr. Owen. With such a subject the language quoted above is consistent with not believing in infant condemnation. Whatever use Dr. Briggs puts the quotation to some have taken it as expressing his belief that Dr. Twisse taught some infants dying in infancy were damned.

Dr. Henry Van Dyke credits Dr. Twisse with the following: "Many infants depart from this life in original sin, and consequently are condemned to death on account of original sin alone; therefore, from the sole transgression of Adam, condemnation to eternal death has followed upon many infants." The *Independent* of August 30th, 1900, quotes the same sentence as Dr. Twisse's opinion. The *Literary Digest* of September 29th, 1900, does likewise.

Dr. George L. Prentiss says:

"If a single one of the Westminster divines believed that all who die in infancy are elect and consequently saved, he never, so far as is known, avowed such belief."

It would have been better for Dr. Prentiss to have said, "so far as is known to me."

Dr. Briggs says:

"In the seventeenth century orthodox theologians, so far as I have been able to determine, were unanimous in the opinion that the heathen infants were doomed to everlasting fire."

In answer to all the foregoing and in particular to Dr. Prentiss and Dr. Briggs, we submit the following: Dr. Twisse,* says:

"God doth not ordain any man to condemnation befores the consideration of sin. That God of his mere pleasure created all, but of his mere pleasure damneth none, but every one that is damned is damned for his

* "Riches of God's Love."

sin, and that wilfully committed and contumaciously continued in by them that come to ripe years."

In answer to Dr. Briggs we submit the following: Dr. Thomas Ridgley* says:

"That he (Dr. Twisse) reckons that controversy relating to the order of God's decrees, to be merely '*Apex Logicus*,' as he calls it. 'A Logical Nicety;' and adds that his opinion about it is well known, namely, that 'God doth not ordain any man to damnation before the consideration of sin,' and a few lines after he says, "That God of his mere pleasure created all, but of his mere pleasure damneth none; but every one that is damned is damned for his sin, and that wilfully committed and contumaciously continued in by them that come to ripe years."

From this it is clear at least one man in 1731 thought very differently about Dr. Twisse from Drs. Briggs, Van Dyke and Prentiss. The foregoing quotation is taken from the same volume from which Dr. Briggs quotes. His failure to mention it, if he has not done so, either shows mental dishonesty or unfamiliarity with writings with which he professes to be conversant. Dr. D. C. Marquiss, Professor in McCormick Seminary, said some years ago that Dr. Briggs' chief characteristic was cockishness. Not only he, but all we have named in this controversy seem so cocksure of what they say that with timidity we have been inclined to submit this view. There may be an explanation of what we have written, if so, we await the explanation with interest. Dr. Twisse died in 1646, and Dr. Ridgley gives it as his opinion in 1731 that Dr. Twisse believed all infants dying in infancy were saved. It seems to us that this should have as much weight as Drs. Briggs, Van Dyke and Prentiss, giving their opinion in 1890 that he did not so believe.

The sentence quoted by Dr. Briggs is clearly hypothetical. Dr. Twisse assumed that all were worthy of death, but admits that if God should consign infants to hell fire it would have more the appearance of cruelty than anything he could conceive, yet says this would not convict God of injustice and cruelty, since none would receive less than they merit. He maintains that infants are not exempt

*"Lectures on the Assembly's Larger Catechism."

from eternal death on account of innocence. If this be true there is no conflict between the sentences quoted by Drs. Briggs and Van Dyke and the quotation used by us. If it is not true, then, Dr. Twisse made statements that cannot be reconciled.

Dr. Whitby argues that according to Dr. Twisse men might be perfect and yet they would be damned because God had decreed from all eternity to damn them, independent of good works, and quotes this sentence in proof of his claim:

"That all, besides the elect, God hath ordained to bring them forth into the world in their corrupt mass and to permit them to themselves, to go in their own ways, and so finally to persevere in sin; and, lastly, to damn them for their sin, for the manifestation of the glory of his justice on them."

Dr. Ridgley pointed out the dishonesty on the part of Dr. Whitby in trying to fasten such views on Dr. Twisse by perverting this sentence from the plain teaching of the context of what Dr. Twisse had written, and calls attention to the fact that in the same volume from which Dr. Whitby was quoting a few sentences previous, Dr. Twisse had expressed himself on this matter in language that none could fail to understand. The reference is the quotation we have given. It is needless to state that Dr. Whitby was an Arminian. Jonathan Edwards pays his respects to Dr. Whitby in this language: "Yet this very Dr. Whitby," where Dr. Whitby argues for the "stoics" when they argue with Arminians and against them when they argue with Calvinists. It is very evident that Jonathan Edwards regarded Dr. Whitby unscrupulous in stating proof for his positions. It may be possible that all the Whitbys are not dead.

In 1810 the Cumberland Presbyterian Church was organized. That church has largely been limited to the middle west and south west. It has grown to almost the size of our Southern Presbyterian Church. The name Presbyterian is misleading, for the doctrine of this Church is Arminian, and the average man does not distinguish between government and doctrine; yet it takes advantage of every cavil in the Presbyterian Church to propagate itself on the

ground of being more liberal and reasonable in its doctrines than the Presbyterian Church. In other words it claims to have all the essentials of Calvinism without its faults. We have lived in the section where this Church thrives and know whereof we speak. The overture sent to the General Assembly asking for a revision of the Confession of Faith came from a Presbytery in Texas, and the ministers most in favor of revision are those who encounter the influence of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, which was organized purely on the ground that an educated ministry was not a necessity. This Church has taken advantage of the discussion on infant salvation, and is attempting to show that the Cumberland Presbyterian church at its organization had in view this difficulty, that the Presbyterian church is asked to confront The Rev. J. V. Stephens, D. D., has put forth a small volume of 176 pages which states this as a fact.

After the investigation we have been able to give this subject it appears to us that the discussion followed this trend of thought: First, it was agreed that infants were damned because it was acknowledged that justification must come through hearing the Word and the exercise of faith. Augustin said he believed infants were damned for this reason only. Second, beginning with Calvin, Zwingli and others, it was believed that infants could be regenerated without the hearing of the Word, by the Holy Spirit in a way that men could not understand. Third, those writers who believed in the regeneration of infants we do not think believed in the damnation of infants dying in infancy. This is the way we read the history of the belief in the salvation of all dying in infancy. The Westminster Assembly was confronted with the question, "How are infants saved?" and not "are there non-elect infants dying in infancy?" That Assembly answered: "Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved."* The Confession does not need revision, nor does it need any such weak prop as a "foot-

*Confession of Faith, Chap. x : 3.

note." The Confession needs nothing. The people need to be taught what the framers of the Confession meant and that they stated what they meant and nothing more.

We submit these views in the face of the fact it is generally conceded Dr. Biggs has a more complete library on the Westminster divines and knows more about their opinions than any living man. But we submit them in the belief that Dr. Briggs has succeeded in giving himself this reputation, and do not believe that he really knows more about them than other mortals

JONATHAN EDWARDS.

It is a singular fact that many people have come to regard the Apostle Paul, John Calvin and Jonathan Edwards as severe and harsh men, without being able to give a reason for so regarding them. It is undeniable that if we will search for traits of tenderness as many will be found in these men as are in any others. Paul mentions more friends and expresses appreciation of kindnesses oftener than any writer of the New Testament. Calvin's letters show a heart that ached for suffering humanity; Jonathan Edwards' works reveal a man as tender as an infant on its mother's bosom—yet it hangs in the air—that Calvin, or Edwards, or some of their disciples said "Hell was paved with infants' skulls."

In his little booklet, "Elect Infants," the Rev. J. V. Stephens, D. D., a Cumberland Presbyterian, has this from Jonathan Edwards :

"President Jonathan Edwards (1703-1753) teaches very plainly that some infants dying in infancy are lost. In his 'Doctrine of Original Sin Defended' he more than once strongly implies the doctrine of infant damnation. He says : 'We may well argue from these things, that infants are not looked upon by God as sinless, but they are by nature the children of wrath, seeing this terrible evil comes so heavily on mankind in infancy. But besides these things, which are observable concerning the mortality of infants in general, there are some particular cases of the death of infants, which the Scripture sets before us that are attended with circumstances, in a peculiar manner giving evidences of the sinfulness of such, and their just exposedness to divine wrath.' He then cites the destruction of the infants in Sodom, the destruction of the infants of the Midianites by the 'command of Moses,' and the destruction of

the infants in Jerusalem under the New Testament dispensation. On these instances he observes : ' And here it must be remembered, that these very destructions of that city and land are spoken of in those places forementioned, as clear evidences of God's wrath, to all nations which shall behold them. And if so, they were evidences of God's wrath towards infants ; who, equally with the rest, were the subjects of the destruction. If a particular kind or rank of persons, which made a very considerable part of the inhabitants, were from time to time partakers of the overthrow, without any distinction made in divine providence, and yet this was no evidence at all of God's displeasure with any of them ; then a being the subject of such a calamity could not be an evidence of God's wrath against any of the inhabitants, to the reason of *all nations*, or any nation, or so much as one person. ' The reasoning of President Edwards appears to be as follows : since infants frequently suffer physical pain and death because of sin, therefore some of them at least suffer eternal death for the same reason."

Again, he says :

"To think of poor little *infants* bearing such torments for Adam's sin as they sometimes do in *this* world, and these torments ending in death and annihilation (as some claim), may sit easier on the imagination, than to conceive of their suffering eternal misery for it. But it does not at all relieve one's *reason*.' *President Edwards, as many others of his time, followed a certain method of 'reason' to the unreasonable extent of consigning 'non-elect' infants to eternal misery!*"

Dr. Stephens says "the reasoning of President Edwards appears as follows: "Since infants frequently suffer physical pain and death because of sin, therefore some of them at least suffer eternal death for the same reason." At this piece of profundity we pause. Dr. Stephens is a professor in a Cumberland Presbyterian Seminary, and as professors profess to know things, the common people generally take what they say as true. For the truly learned, what we say here is not intended to enlighten.

In the passages quoted, President Edwards was writing on original sin and its consequences to the race. We shall try to come to the *therefore* by the way that Jonathan Edwards traveled. We have his views clearly stated in the following:

"And God either thus deals with mankind, because he looks upon them as *one* with their first father and so treats them as *sinful* and *guilty* by his apostacy; or (which will not mend the matter) he, *without* viewing them as at all concerned in that affair, but as in every respect perfectly *innocent*, subjects them nevertheless to this infinitely dreadful calamity.

Adam by his sin was exposed to the *calamities and sorrows of this life, to temporal death and eternal ruin*; as is confessed. And it is also in effect confessed, that all his posterity come into the world in such a state, as that the certain consequence is their being *exposed*, and *justly so*, to the *sorrows of this life, to temporal death and eternal ruin*, unless saved by grace. So that we see, God *in fact* deals with them together, or as *one*. If God orders the consequences of Adam's sin, with regard to his posterity's welfare—even in those things which are most important, and which in the highest degree concern their eternal interest—to be the same with the consequences to Adam himself, then he treats Adam and his posterity as *one* in that affair. Hence, however the matter be attended with difficulty, fact obliges us to get over it, either by finding out some solution, or by shutting our mouths and acknowledging the weakness and scantiness of our understandings; as we must in other innumerable cases, where apparent and undeniable *fact*, in God's works of creation and providence, is attended with events and circumstances, the *manner* and *reason* of which are difficult to our understandings.

"On the whole, if any do not like the philosophy, or the meta-physics (as some perhaps may choose to call it) made use of in the foregoing reasonings; yet I cannot doubt, but that a proper consideration of what is apparent and undeniable in fact, with the respect to the dependence of the state and course of things in the universe on the sovereign constitutions of the supreme Author and Lord of all—who 'gives account to none of any of his matters, and whose ways are past finding out'—will be sufficient, with modesty and sobriety, to stop their mouths from making peremptory decisions against the *justice* of God, respecting what is so plainly and fully taught in his holy word, concerning the derivation of depravity and guilt from Adam to his posterity."

In the next place he says :

"By reason of the established *union* between Adam and his posterity, the case is far otherwise between him and them, than it is between distinct parts of individuals of Adam's race betwixt whom is no such constituted *union*: As between children and other ancestors. Concerning whom is apparently to be understood that place, Ezek. xviii, 1-20. where God reproves the Jews for the use they made of that proverb, 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge'; and tells them, that hereafter they shall no more have an occasion to use this proverb; and that if a *son* sees the wickedness of his *father*, and sincerely *disapproves* it and *avoids* it, and he himself is righteous, 'he shall not die for the iniquity of his father; that all souls, both the soul of the father and the son are his, and that therefore the son shall not bear the iniquity of his father, nor the father bear the iniquity of the son; but the soul that sinneth it shall die; that the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked

shall be upon him.' The thing *denied* is communion in the guilt and punishment of the sins of others, that are distinct parts of Adam's race; and expressly in that case, where there is no consent and concurrence, but a sincere disapprobation of the wickedness of ancestors. It is declared that *children* who are *adult* and come to act for themselves, who are righteous, and do not approve of, but sincerely condemn the wickedness of their *fathers*, shall not be punished for their disapproved and avoided iniquities. The occasion of what is here said, as well as the design and plain sense, shows, that nothing is intended in the least degree inconsistent with what has been supposed concerning Adam's posterity sinning and falling into apostacy."

From the following we shall see that President Edwards reasoned very strongly for the salvation of infants under the covenant made with Noah :

"There is good evidence that the benedictions God pronounced on Noah and his posterity, were granted on a new foundation; a dispensation diverse from any grant, promise or revelation which God gave to Adam, antecedently to his fall; even on the foundation of the *covenant of grace established in Jesus Christ*; a dispensation, the design of which is to deliver men from the *curse* that came upon them by *Adam's sin*, and to bring them to *greater* blessing than ever *he* had. These blessings were pronounced on Noah and his seed, on the same foundation whereon afterwards the blessing was pronounced on Abraham and his seed, which included both spiritual and temporal benefits. Noah had his name prophetically given him by his father Lameck, because by him and his seed deliverance should be obtained from the curse which came by Adam's fall. Gen. v. 29. "And he called his name Noah, (i. e. REST) saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work, and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed."

"In what is said here, there is a special respect to the gospel dispensation; as is greatly confirmed by comparing this place with Jer xxxi, 29-31. Under which dispensation the righteousness of God's dealings with mankind would be more fully manifested, in the clear revelation then to be made of the method of God's *judgment*, by which the *final state* of the wicked men is determined; which is not according to the sin of *his own* wicked heart, or sinful nature and practice. The affair of derivation of the natural corruption of mankind in general, and of their consent *to*, and participation *of*, the primitive and common apostacy, is not in the least intermeddled with, by anything meant in the true scope and design of this place in Ezekiel."

"But that Noah's posterity have such blessings given them

through the great Redeemer, who suspends and removes the *curse* which came through Adam's sin, surely is no argument that they originally, as in their natural state, are not under the *curse*. That men have blessings *through grace* is no evidence of their being not justly exposed to the curse *by nature*; but it rather argues the contrary. For if they did not deserve the curse, they would not depend on *grace and redemption* for the removal of it, and for bringing them into a state of favor with God."

Here it is clear that President Edwards exempts infants dying in infancy from Adam's sin, the only cause of condemnation against them, and makes the exemption an argument for the certainty of their guilt under original sin. Only guilty parties stand in need of the benefits of grace, and what benefit of grace could belong to an infant except the deliverance from the curse of Adam's sin, and a renovated nature?

We wish to set forth yet further the clearness of proof that Edwards did believe in the salvation of all dying in infancy:

"There are two things with regard to which men will be tried and openly distinguished by the perfect judgment of God at the last day, according to the twofold *real distinction* subsisting among mankind, viz: (1) The difference of *STATE*, that *primary* and grand distinction whereby all mankind are divided into two sorts, the righteous and the wicked. (2) That *secondary distinction* whereby both sorts differ from others in the *same* general state, in degrees of *additional fruits of righteousness and wickedness*. Now the Judge, in order to manifest both these, will judge men according to their personal *works*. But to inquire at the day of judgment whether Adam sinned or not, or whether men are to be looked upon as one with him and so partakers of his sin, is what in no respect tends to manifest either of these distinctions.

"1. The *first* thing to be manifested will be the *state* that each man is in with respect to the *grand distinction* of the whole world of mankind into *righteous* and *wicked*; or in metaphorical language, *wheat* and *tares*; or, the *children of the kingdom of Christ* and the *children of the wicked one*; the latter, the head of the apostacy; but the former, the head of the restoration and recovery. The Judge, in manifesting this, will prove men's hearts by their *works* in such as have had opportunity to perform any works in the body. The *evil works* of the children of the *wicked one* will be the proper manifestation and evidence or proof of whatever belongs to the general

state of such; and particularly they will prove that they belong to the kingdom of the great deceiver and head of the apostacy, as they will demonstrate the exceeding corruption of their nature and full consent of their hearts to the common apostacy; and also that their hearts never relinquished the apostacy by a cordial adherence to Christ, the great Restorer. The Judge will also make use of the *good works* of the *righteous* to show their interest in the redemption of Christ; as thereby will be manifested the sincerity of their hearts in their acceptance of, and adherence to the Redeemer and his righteousness. And in thus proving the state of men's hearts by their actions, the *circumstances* of those actions must necessarily come into consideration to manifest the true *quality* of their actions as each one's talents, opportunities, advantages, light, motives, etc."

Here he describes God's judgment of men. To this judgment infants would not be summoned since the ground of judgment is works. All turns on the *state* men are in. We made much of Calvin's *state* of infancy. Edwards makes more of it. Infants can only be in an infant *state*. Against this state there is the curse of Adam's sin. Remove this, as Edwards does, by the work of Christ, and there is absolutely nothing against this *state*. He says: "But the proper evidence of the wickedness of men's hearts (the true seat of all wickedness) both as to corruption of nature, and additional pollution *and guilt*, are men's works."

The two causes of condemnation are corrupt nature and bad works. The corrupt nature he removes by the perfect work of Christ, there are no bad works to infants, therefore infants must be saved if they die in infancy, according to Jonathan Edwards. If we agree that Christ removes the curse of Adam's sin from infants, as infants, then these words are proof positive that Edwards believed all infants dying in infancy were saved.

"And so I say with respect to the imputation of Adam's sin. The thing meant by the word *impute*, may be as plainly and certainly expressed by using other words, as if *that* were expressly used; and more certainly, because the words used instead of it, may amount to an explanation of this word. And this, I think, is the very case here. Though the word *impute* is not used with respect to Adam's sin, yet it is said, *all have sinned*; which, *respecting infants*, can be true only of their sinning by his sin."

In these quotations we have Jonathan Edwards' complete argument on original sin and its effects on the race; and Christ's redemptive work and its effects on the race. It appears clear to us that if Jonathan Edwards had been asked the direct question, "are all infants dying in infancy saved?" he would have answered unhesitatingly, "Yes."

It impresses us that the old writings and the decisions of church courts concerning the certain salvation of all the infant children of believing parents, and especially the clear statement of Calvin, that parents need give themselves concern only to keep the covenant, gives the strongest presumption that the salvation of all dying in infancy was at least held by those from whom we have quoted. This view is strengthened when we remember that Calvin teaches thus regarding the children—all children—of believers who do not die in infancy, but come to man's estate and endure the temptations of a sinful world. Further, that he teaches thus whether these children have been baptised or not. It is still strengthened when we consider that he was not called upon to give any encouragement to those outside the covenant. His positive statement to believers appears to come from having previously settled upon the opinion that all infants dying in infancy were saved. When a mind like John Calvin's teaches believing parents an indifference on the subject of their *dead infants*, it *must* be due to a belief in the salvation of all dying in infancy.

If we have succeeded in creating the presumption that possibly some of the distinctive men who have moulded the world's ideas on Calvinism believed in the salvation of all dying in infancy: and have succeeded in showing that not a single standard of Calvinism positively states that there are reprobate infants, we would like to ask the question—'Why is the Presbyterian church singled out as holding a *decretum horribile*? Calvinism is the only system of theology that can with logical consistency declare the salvation of all dying in infancy. It is taught that James Arminius so believed. A study of his life and times reveals the fact that he got no further than the denial of an *absolute* predes-

tination. Arminius died in 1609. The doctrine of works, in the Arminian system, makes it logically absurd to believe in infant salvation. It is a fact that Arminians believe it, but they believe it in the face of logic, i. e. They do not go to the logical conclusion from their premise. This may be done and not imply untruth in intent but fault in doctrine. We believe that John Wesley's writings will show that he believed in the salvation of all infants; but the following creates a suspicion stronger than anything in John Calvin's writing, to the contrary:

Wesley says :*

" If infants are guilty of original sin, then they are the proper subjects of baptism, seeing in the ordinary way they cannot be saved unless this be washed away by baptism. It has been already proved that this original stain cleaves to every child of man, and that they thereby are children of wrath and liable to eternal damnation. "

Why is it that in New York, where the Episcopal Church is strong, and into which men like Dr. Briggs have gone, it is not singled out when in its standards it is so plainly taught that infants, not baptized, are damned, that the fool who runs may read, is not molested? Its doctrine is stated as follows :

" The Protestant advocates of Baptismal Regeneration, without committing themselves to the Romish theory, of an *opus operatum*, hold that by baptism the guilt of original sin is removed. Every infant is regenerated when baptized. If he dies in infancy the seed is actualized in paradise. If he lives to adult age, its result depends upon the use of it. "

Why is it that a Reformed Episcopal Church, organized to repudiate baptismal regeneration, does not call attention to the fact that the Episcopal Church has not, and does not now believe in the salvation of any but infants baptized in *the Church* ?

What is to be inferred from Dr. Briggs and others leaving the Presbyterian Church for teaching *uncertainly* the eternal destruction of *some* infants, and going into a Church that teaches the *certain* eternal destruction of *all* unbaptized infants, of both believers and unbelievers ? We give as an answer the following from Dr. Horatius Bonar :

* Treatise on Baptism, 1756.

† Blunt's Diet of Theology.

"To attack human catechisms and confessions is fairly within our province ; to attack them on the plea that they are at variance with Scripture, is but the discharge of a plain duty ; but to attack them with arguments which tell equally against the Bible, and which, as used by some, are really meant to do so, is not only to adopt a deceptive line of argument, but it is to give currency to a rationalism, the issue of which can only be the belief of everything or the belief of nothing.

"They are in the right in naming the modish innovations, and opposition to creeds and confessions, *Theologia indifferentifica*. We have an old Scots phrase that sometimes I cannot help applying to them—they love elbow-room. And this is certainly at the bottom of their eagerness against forms of sound words."

Dr. Schaff says, "The term '*elect infants*' in Chapter x:3 of the Confession plainly implies, in the Calvinistic system, non-elect, or reprobate infants."

As to Dr. Schaff's contention, there is less in it than some have supposed. Elect does imply non-elect—a correct use of language demands it, and so does a correct understanding of the Calvinistic system. But when it is understood that the Westminster divines were giving an answer to a world that once believed that infants must be eternally lost because there was no satisfactory answer to the question, "how are they saved?" The answer, "Elect infants dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved," does not imply that there are non-elect infants (*dying in infancy*.) The inference is that non-elect infants do not die in the infant state. In confirmation we quote from William Carter, an Independent, and take the same passage that Dr. Briggs uses to prove that the Westminster divines believed in infant damnation. He says :

"Therefore I say, this is one thing which makes this difference between the children of beleevers and unbelievers, that they are holy, and these common or unclean, because they are under such a word of blessing which these are not; yea though we cannot with certainty affirm of this or that infant of a beleever that it is inherently holy, yet holy as thus separated and differenced, from those who are common by the word of blessing from God, under which they are. As we cannot upon certainty affirm of any particular person in the Church that he is inherently holy, because he may make a lye in his confession, yet of every such person we can say he is in that sense holy, namely, as separated unto God in that re-

lation, and thereby differenced from those who are common or unclean."

From this passage it appears that the supposed silence of the Scriptures on this great subject make this writer at least hesitate to declare more positively his belief that all infants dying were saved. We think this is apparent to any fair mind. Many men of this time expressed themselves in a similar way. The quotation we have given from Dr. William Twisse put in ordinary men's language, of to-day, would be, "when speaking on the decrees of God it is difficult to give a clear answer to the question of infant salvation, but if you wish to know my opinion, here it is: I believe that God damneth none except those who wilfully commit sin, contumaciously continue it, until they come to ripe years." Zwingli declared positively this to be his belief; if he believed it, why not others of his time? Dr. Hodge's statement of which Dr. Prentiss makes so much, is no clearer than Zwingli's. One was made in the 16th and the other in the 19th century.

Calvin developed the doctrine of infant salvation beyond the point many consider scriptural at this day. He laid the basis of the belief in the universal salvation of all dying in infancy. When we find works on the development of the doctrine of infant salvation, since his time, let us be on our guard lest we forget the great transition brought about by Calvin in opposing infant *damnation* with infant *regeneration*.

It would be very difficult to conceive a clearer statement than this:

"Christ does not there [John III, 36] speak of the general guilt in which all the posterity of Adam are involved, but only threatens the despisers of the gospel, who proudly and contumaciously spurn the grace which is offered to them. But this has nothing to do with infants. Every one whom Christ blesses is exempted from the curse of Adam and the wrath of God. Therefore, seeing it is certain that infants are blessed by Him, it follows that they are freed from death."*

*"Institutes." Book IV.

This is the third citation we have made in this article showing the positive assertion of Calvin (a) that original

sin involved the race in eternal death and that the condemnation of those who wilfully despise the Gospel is eternal death. (b) That the curse of Adam and the wrath of God, because of the work of Christ, is no longer a reason for the eternal condemnation of infants. Therefore infants shall not see death. Now what kind of death? The baby that died yesterday in your home or in your friends' home, proves that it is not physical death. The hope that is given from Calvin's writing on the freedom of infants from the "curse of Adam and the wrath of God," proves that they are exempted from eternal death. Show us a statement by Dr. Charles Hodge, or any modern theologian, upon which the doctrine of infant salvation can rest more securely than this. If we are not much mistaken, he who, undertakes to do so, will search in vain.

There is a hybrid-type of Calvinism attractive to some young men of the South. They seem to be under such a spell as was the Queen of Sheba when she went from the South to hear of the wisdom of Solomon. Our observations lead us to place these men in two classes, (a) men who are strong in mind and feel the need of wider learning; (b) men with no strength of mind and feel the need of something that will shock the world into hearing them. The first class are among our best and strongest preachers. The testimony here given from one of their number indicates the impression made. "Had Prof. ——— *ad nauseam* before I was through the seminary. I could see his ear-marks in every article on the foot-note that reflected on the founders of the type of theology we received on this vital point." The second class either do not return or are dissatisfied when they do, and afterwards partake themselves to some other denomination, or give up the ministry, or else make some complete change from Calvinism. It is beyond controversy that whatever they may finally settle upon, their hatred of Calvinism is established.

The doctrine of the Sadducees on the resurrection was probably due to the teachings of some professors that there could not be rewards and punishments in another world.

Danger is more apt to come from the disciples of an unsound man, whom his pupils do not thoroughly understand, than the unsound man himself. The disciples of some modern theologians have misrepresented them more than their opponents. The utter worthlessness of the disciple has brought contempt upon his somewhat worthy instructor.

We believe God's way of bringing Calvinism to the consideration of the world is by abuse. When we consider he shows given in the pulpit, the superficial men who have paraded in the public press and the substitutes for the Gospel, in the last twenty years, we are reminded of the reply made by a rather hardened sinner, who, when converted, was approached by some rather gushy ladies with "of course you will join the ——— church," to which he replied, "No, I'll join the Presbyterian Church; it takes a strong harness for an old horse."

Men will ridicule and abuse Calvinism when they "have little faith in the supernatural in the very degree that they have lost faith in God; but in days when men are possessed by faith in an all-sufficient Reason that knows all and never can be deceived, in an all-sufficient Will that guides all and never can be defeated or surprised, then the theology that holds them will be the theology that makes God most real to the intellect and most authoritative to the conscience."

Calvin has been maligned for the death of Servetus, and Calvinism has been abused before popular audiences, on this account more than any other.

That this matter may appear in a different light from that in which the late Bob Ingersoll left it, we quote from Henry B. Stebbing :

" But I must ask of all the opponents of Calvin, whether, when they find Servetus perpetually pouring out his blasphemies, they would become responsible for these deviltries before God? or whether they would not rather join with Calvin and his age in taking up the stone against him? I take it up. "

Let us take a few sentences from Servetus, that we may know the manner of man we are told, by some, was a saint;

" If the Word had become flesh, as woman, then they would have called the Word itself the Son of God, and the woman herself the daughter of man. Hence the Son of God would have been of two sexes. If the angels, in like manner, were to take asses' bodies, you must allow that then they would be asses, and they would die in their asses-skins ; they would be four-footed animals, and would have long ears. So too you must allow, that were you right, God himself might be an ass ; the Holy Spirit a mule ; and that He would die as the mule died. O the wondrously altered animal. "

This article goes to the world for what it is worth. We believe the hostility to Calvinism is due, in large part, to the study of the vituperations of such writers as Pighius, Castalio, Servetus, and others like them, rather than a searching for the true interpretation of the great Calvin's writings.

JNO. W. STAGG.

The Editor of the Quarterly was sick while this article was being put to press. The proof reading devolved upon me. I wish to call attention to some mistakes which I regard as serious—other errors I leave for the reader to correct.

Further, in tenth line from bottom of page 12, should be, farther, traducionist, in fourteenth line from bottom of page 23 should be traducianist, tempere, in next to last line of Latin quotations on page 25 should be temere, alei on page 30 should be Dei. Following *the Church*, on page 48 the sentence should end, or, at least, those who have been baptized.

J. W. S.