SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

by John Miley

Miley's comprehensive systematic theology defining and relating the different branches of theological study including natural, revealed, biblical, dogmatic, historical, practical, and systematic theology within a Methodist framework.

190 Chapters

Table of Contents

1. 001. Introduction.
2. 002. I. Theology.
3. 003. II. Sources of Theology.
4. 004. III. Scientific Basis of Theology.
5. 005. IV. Systemization A Right of Theology.
6. 006. Part I.— Theism
7. 007. Chapter 1: Preliminary Questions.
8. 008. I. The Sense of Theism.
9. 009. II. Origin of the Idea of God.
10. 010. Chapter 2: Proofs Of Theism.
11. 011. I. The Ontological Argument.
12. 012. II. The Cosmological Argument.
13. 013. III. The Teleological Argument.
14. 014. IV. The Anthropological Argument.
15. 015. Chapter 3: Antitheistic Theories.
16. 016. I. Atheism.
17. 017. II. Pantheism.
18. 018. III. Positivism.
19. 019. IV. Naturalistic Evolution.
20. 020. Chapter 4: Antitheistic Agnosticism.
21. 021. I. Denial Of Divine Personality.
22. 022. II. Denial Of Divine Cognoscibility.
23. 023. Part II.— Theology.
24. 024. Chapter 1: God In Being.
25. 025. I. Being And Attribute.
26. 026. II. Spirituality Of Being.
27. 027. Chapter 2: God In Personality.
28. 028. I. Personality.
29. 029. II. The Divine Personality.
30. 030. Chapter 3: God In Attributes.
31. 031. I. Classification Of The Attributes.
32. 032. II. Divine Omniscience.
33. 033. III. Divine Sensibility.
34. 034. IV. Modes Of Divine Moral Sensibility.
35. 035. V. Divine Omnipotence.
36. 036. Chapter 4: Divine Predicables Not Distinctively Attributes.
37. 037. I. Eternity Of God.
38. 038. II. Unity Of God.
39. 039. III. Omnipresence Of God.

40. 040. IV. Immutability Of God.
41. 041. Chapter 5: God In Trinity.
42. 042. I. Questions Of The Trinity.
43. 043. II. Treatment Of The Trinity.
44. 044. Chapter 6: The Son Of God.
45. 045. I. Doctrine Of The Sonship.
46. 046. II. Divinity Of The Son.
47. 047. Chapter 7: The Holy Spirit.
48. 048. I. Personality Of The Spirit.
49. 049. II. Divinity Of The Spirit.
50. 050. Chapter 8: Truth Of The Trinity.
51. 051. I. Proofs Of The Trinity.
52. 052. II. Mystery Of The Trinity.
53. 053. Chapter 9: God In Creation.
54. 054. I. The Question Of Creation.
55. 055. II. Concerning The Creation Of Matter.
56. 056. III. Several Spheres Of Creation.
57. 057. IV. The Mystery Of Creation.
58. 058. V. Mosaic Cosmogony And Science.
59. 059. Chapter 10: God In Providence.
60. 060. I. Leading Questions Of Providence.
61. 061. II. Providence In The Physical Sphere.
62. 062. III. Providence In Animate Nature.
63. 063. IV. Providence In The Realm Of Mind.
64. 064. V. Formulas Of Providential Agency.
65. 065. VI. Truth Of A Supernatural Providence.
66. 066. Part III.— Anthropology.
67. 067. Chapter 1: Preliminary Questions.
68. 068. I. The Origin Of Man.
69. 069. II. Time Of Man’s Origin.
70. 070. III. The Unity Of Man.
71. 071. Chapter 2: Primitive Man.
72. 072. I. Literal Sense Of Mosaic Narrative.
73. 073. II. Primary Questions Of Mosaic Narrative.
74. 074. Chapter 3: Question Of Primitive Holiness.
75. 075. I. Nature Of Holiness In Adam.
76. 076. II. Proofs Of Primitive Holiness.
77. 077. III. Elements Of Primitive Holiness.
78. 078. Chapter 4: The Primitive Probation.
79. 079. I. Probation A Reasonable Economy.
80. 080. II. The Probationary Law.
81. 081. III. Favorable Probationary Trial.

82. 082. Chapter 5: Temptation And Fall Of Man.
83. 083. I. The Primitive Temptation.
84. 084. II. The Fall Of Man.
85. 085. III. Freedom Of Man In Falling.
86. 086. IV. Sinning Of Holy Beings.
87. 087. V. Divine Permission Of The Fall.
88. 088. Chapter 6: Doctrine Of Native Depravity.
89. 089. I. Formula Of Original Sin.
90. 090. II. Doctrinal Sense Of Depravity.
91. 091. Chapter 7: Proofs Of Native Depravity.
92. 092. I. More Direct Scripture Proofs.
93. 093. II. Proofs In The Prevalence Of Sin.
94. 094. III. Further Proofs Of A Fallen State.
95. 095. Chapter 8: Origin Of Depravity.
96. 096. I. Adamic Origin.
97. 097. II. Law Of Adamic Origin.
98. 098. III. Speculative Or Mixed Theories.
99. 099. Chapter 9: Realistic Mode Of Adamic Sin.
100. 100. I. Generic Oneness Of The Race.
101. 101. II. Objections To The Theory.
102. 102. III. A Lower Form Of Realism.
103. 103. IV. Objections To The Lower Realism.
104. 104. Chapter 10: Representative Mode Of Adamic Guilt.
105. 105. I. Legal Oneness Of The Race.
106. 106. II. Alleged Proofs Of The Theory.
107. 107. III. Objections To The Theory.
108. 108. Chapter 11: Genetic Law Of Native Depravity.
109. 109. I. Genesis Of Parental Quality.
110. 110. II. The True Law Of Depravity.
111. 111. Chapter 12: Doctrine Of Native Demerit.
112. 112. I. Alleged Proofs Of The Doctrine.
113. 113. II. Difficulties Of The Doctrine.
114. 114. III. The True Arminian Doctrine.
115. 115. Part IV.—Christology.
116. 116. Chapter 1: The Person Of Christ.
117. 117. I. Construction Of The Doctrine.
118. 118. II. Elements Of The Doctrine.
119. 119. Chapter 2: The Divine Incarnation.
120. 120. I. Doctrine Of The Incarnation.
121. 121. II. The Two Natures In Personal Oneness.
122. 122. Chapter 3: Christ Is Theanthropic.
123. 123. I. Theanthropic In Personality.

124. 124. II. The Interpretation Of Christological Facts.
125. 125. Chapter 4: The Sympathy Of Christ.
126. 126. I. Sympathy Through Common Suffering.
127. 127. II. The Consciousness Of Christ In Suffering.
128. 128. III. Suffering In A Theanthropic Consciousness.
129. 129. Chapter 5: Leading Errors In Christology.
130. 130. I. Earlier Errors.
131. 131. II. Later Errors.
132. 132. Part V.—Soteriology.
133. 134. Preliminaries.
134. 135. Chapter 1: Reality Of Atonement.
135. 136. Chapter 2: Necessity For Atonement.
136. 137. Chapter 3: Schemes Without Atonement.
137. 138. Chapter 4: Theories Of Atonement.
138. 139. Chapter 5: Theory Of Moral Influence.
139. 140. Chapter 6: Theory Of Satisfaction.
140. 141. Chapter 7: Governmental Theory.
141. 142. Chapter 8: Sufficiency Of The Atonement.
142. 143. Chapter 9: Objections To The Atonement.
143. 144. Chapter 10: A Lesson For All Intelligences.
144. 145. Chapter 11: Universality Of The Atonement.
145. 147. Chapter 1: Benefits Of The Atonement.
146. 148. Chapter 2: Doctrinal Issues.
147. 149. Chapter 3: Free Agency.
148. 150. Chapter 4: Freedom Of Choice.
149. 151. Chapter 5: Justification.
150. 152. Chapter 6: Regeneration.
151. 153. Chapter 7: Assurance.
152. 154. Chapter 8: Sanctification.
153. 155. Chapter 9: The Church.
154. 156. Part VI.—Eschatology.
155. 157. Chapter 1: Future Existence.
156. 158. I. The Spirituality Of Mind.
157. 159. II. The Immortality Of Mind.
158. 160. Chapter 2: The Intermediate State.
159. 161. I. Question Of An Intermediate Place.
160. 162. II. A State Of Conscious Existence.
161. 163. III. Not A Probationary State.
162. 164. Chapter 3: The Second Advent.
163. 165. I. Doctrine Of The Advent.
164. 166. II. The Advent In The Light Of Its Concomitants.
165. 167. Chapter 4: The Resurrection.

166. 168. I. Doctrine Of The Resurrection.
167. 169. II. Credibility Of The Resurrection.
168. 170. III. Oneness Of The Resurrection.
169. 171. Chapter 5: The Judgment.
170. 172. I. A Future Judgment.
171. 173. II. A General Judgment.
172. 174. Chapter 6: Future Punishment.
173. 175. I. Rational Proofs.
174. 176. II. Scripture Proofs.
175. 177. III. Eternity Of Punishment.
176. 178. Chapter 7: Future Blessedness.
177. 179. I. Heaven A Place.
178. 180. II. Blessedness Of Heaven.
179. 181. Appendices.
180. 182. I. Inspiration Of The Scriptures.
181. 183. I. Threefold Operation Of The Spirit.
182. 184. II. Erroneous Theories Of Inspiration.
183. 185. III. The Dynamical Theory.
184. 186. II. The Angels.
185. 187. I. Concerning The Angels.
186. 188. II. The Good Angels.
187. 189. III. The Evil Angels.
188. 190. III. Arminian Treatment Of Original Sin.
189. 191. I. The Question In Arminianism.
190. 192. II. The Issue With Calvinism.

Chapter 1

001. Introduction.

Introduction.

Theology holds a chief place in human thinking. In a purely intellectual view no questions have greater interest for scientific and philosophic thought. Besides, our moral and religious sensibilities, the profoundest of our nature, contribute an intensity of interest peculiar to theological study. This does not mean that religious feeling is the norm or ruling principle of theology. This study has its intellectual cast, just as questions of science and philosophy. Any peculiarities of theology relate mostly to the character of its subjects and the sources of its facts. The study of these facts, the processes of induction, and the doctrinal generalizations are in the same intellectual mode which we observe in other spheres of truth. The Scriptures are rich in doctrinal material, but in elementary form; and it is only through a scientific mode of treatment that these elements can be wrought into a theology in any proper sense of the term. “The whole drift of the Scripture of God, what is it but only to teach theology? Theology, what is it but the science of things divine? What science can be attained unto without the help of natural discourse and reason?”[1] [1] Hooker:Ecclesiastical Polity, book iii, sec. 8

Before entering upon the formal treatment of any great subject the way should be prepared, and the subject itself be preparatory set in as clear a light as practicable. This is specially urgent in the case of systematic theology. The Introduction is for this end, and its attainment requires several things. The several forms of theology must be distinguished and defined. We shall thus reach a clearer view of systematic theology. The true sources of theology must be determined and mistaken sources set aside. As the doctrinal value of the Scriptures hinges upon the question of their divine original, the proofs of such an original must be fully recognized.[2] Attention must be given to the grounds of certitude in doctrinal truths and to the consistency of faith with the requisite certitude, that we may secure a scientific construction of theology. Finally, the method of systemization must be considered in order to determine what doctrines should be included in the system and in what order they should be treated.

[2]The doctrine of inspiration will be treated in an appendix to the second volume.

002. I. Theology.

I. Theology.

1. Sense and Use of the Ground-term.—The term theology is formed from the Greek words θε■ς and λ■γος, and means primarily a discourse concerning God, or a doctrine of God. It was in use anterior to Christianity, and in literature entirely apart from the divine revelation. Aristotle wrote of theology as one of the sciences, and as the highest of all, because it treated of the highest of all beings. The Greeks gave the name of theologian—θεολ■γος—severally to such poets as Hesiod and Orpheus, because they sang of the gods and the origin of things, though with only poetic inspiration.

We are more concerned with the use of this term in the expression of Christian thought. In this use the primary sense has been greatly broadened, so that it often means the sum of Christian doctrine. This appears in what may be accepted as its proper definitions. “God is the source and the subject and the end of theology. The stricter and earlier use of the word limited it to the doctrine of the triune God and his attributes. But in modern usage it includes the whole compass of the science of religion, or the relations of all things to God.”[3] “Theology, therefore, is the exhibition of the facts of Scripture in their proper order and relation with the principles or general truths involved in the facts themselves, and which pervade and harmonize the whole.”[4] These definitions reach far toward a definition of systematic theology, and yet do not transcend the meaning of the term theology in its present use. As the ground-term it may consistently be used in so broad a sense. There is still a place for the distinct form of systematic theology.

[3]Pope:Christian Theology, vol. i, p. 3.

[4]Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. i, p. 19.

2. Theology with Differentiating Terms.—Under this head we may state briefly and in a definitive manner, the different forms or distinctions of theology.

Natural theology has its special distinction from revealed theology. This points directly to a distinction of sources. The light of nature is the source of the one, and revelation the source of the other. This distinction means the limitations of the natural compared with the revealed. Many of the deeper truths of Christianity could never be discovered simply in the light of nature. No truths of theology are so clearly given therein as in the Scriptures. Yet the existence of God and our moral responsibility to him, and the duties of obedience and worship, are manifest in the light of nature. We must find in nature the proof of God’s existence before we are prepared for the question of a revelation from him. In view of these facts we may properly retain the formula of natural theology. Revealed theology, simply as such, needs no further statement at this point.

Exegetical theology is a formula in use, particularly in the terminology of theological seminaries. It has no direct exegetical doctrinal meaning, its specific office being simply the interpretation of the Scriptures; but it is properly named here because of the valuable service which biblical exegesis

renders in preparing the material with which the theologian must construct his doctrines. This will be pointed out in another place.

Biblical theology is closely related to exegetical, but advances to a doctrinal position. The Scriptures furnish the material with which it works, and which it casts into doctrinal forms. Biblical theology has nothing to do with the confessions or formulas of faith which appear in the history of doctrines. In dealing with such creeds it departs from its own proper sphere and enters that of dogmatic theology. While limited to the Scriptures it need not cover the whole, and rarely does. Sometimes the Old Testament is the subject,[5] and sometimes the New.[6] Often the chosen part is only a small fraction of the Scriptures.[7] With such limitation the term biblical can properly mean only the form of theology.

[5]Oehler:Theology of the Old Testament.

[6]Schmid:Biblical Theology of the New Testament.

[7]Crooks and Hurst:Theological Encyclopedia and Methodology, pp. 391-293.

Dogmatic theology has its proper distinction from both biblical and systematic, though often used in the same sense as dogmatic the latter. It is not limited to the Scriptures, like the biblical, nor has it by any requirement the comprehensiveness of the systematic. Dogmatic theology deals largely with the same material as historical theology, but in a different mode. Its work is with creeds or symbols of faith, not, however, in a mere presentation of their contents or history of their formation, but rather in a discussion of the doctrines which they embody. It may be in its mode either affirmative or controversial. Mostly, dogmatic theology devotes itself to the creed of a particular school. There is no necessary inclusion of all the doctrinal symbols of such school. Dogmatic theology may be just as free from dogmatism in any philosophic sense of the term, and just as scientific in its principles and method, as systematic theology. Its distinctive character is in its close connection with doctrinal symbols and the permissible limitation of its subjects.

Historical theology is often used in a sense to include ecclesiastical history, but the doctrines of the Church are its specific subject. In its subject, therefore, it is closely related to dogmatic theology, but still has its own distinctive character. This will appear in the statement of its definitive facts. It is the office of historical theology to trace the history of doctrines from their incipiency in individual opinion down to their full development and formation. The truth of a doctrine is no condition of its proper place in this history. Athanasianism and Arianism, Augustinianism and Pelagianism, Protestantism and Romanism, Arminianism and Calvinism, are alike entitled to candid treatment. Such treatment fulfills the office of historical theology. When the historian of doctrines enters into their formal discussion, supporting some and controverting others, he so far departs from his own proper function and enters the sphere of dogmatic theology. In logical order, practical theology follows the systematic; yet for the present we find it convenient to reverse this order. Theology in its strictly doctrinal sense is viewed as completed when we reach practical theology; so that the latter has no proper doctrinal content. Yet it is so related to the practical ends of theology as to be fairly entitled to the use of the ground-term.

Practical theology is concerned with the methods for the effective application of doctrinal truths to their practical ends. “It thus possesses a claim to scientific character. For while all theology aims, in its character as a positive science, to affect the life of human beings, it is yet incomplete without

that department which is most directly engaged in carrying that positive aim into effect. It is, accordingly, with entire justice that practical theology has been termed by Schleiermacher 'the crown of the tree.'"[8] The truth should be specially emphasized, that the practical forces of Christianity, whether for the Christian life or the evangelizing work of the Church, are embodied in the doctrines of Christian theology. This is the requirement for the methods of practical theology whereby these forces may be most effectively applied to the Christian life and the work of the Church.

[8]Crooks and Hurst:Theological Encyclopedia and Methodology, p. 473.

3. Definitive Facts of Systematic Theology.—In stating the other forms of theology the distinctive character of the systematic also appeared; but for clearness of view we require additional statements. The special subjects of systematic theology are the doctrines of Christianity. It is not meant that the doctrines so designated have their only source in the New Testament. All the doctrines of religion which have a ground of truth in either nature or the Old Testament also belong to this form of theology. But as the doctrines from such sources have their recognition and fuller unfolding in the New Testament we may properly designate all as the doctrines of Christianity. The sense of the term doctrine is not hidden. Any principle or law reached and verified through a proper induction is a doctrine, whether in science, philosophy, or theology. Thus there are doctrines of physics, chemistry, geology, ethics, metaphysics. So in theology: certain truths reached and verified through a proper induction are doctrines in the truest sense of the term. We may instance the personality of God, the divine Trinity, the person of Christ, the atonement, justification by faith. Systematic theology deals with such truths, and for completeness it must include the sum of Christian doctrines. The doctrines severally must be constructed in a scientific manner. A system of theology is a combination of doctrines in scientific accord. But the several doctrines are no more at hand in proper form than the system itself. Hence the requirement for the construction of the doctrines severally. This is possible only through a scientific process. Through a careful study of the facts of geology the doctrines of the science are reached and verified, while in turn they illuminate the facts. Through a careful study and profound analysis of the relative facts the great doctrine of gravitation was reached and verified. The multiform facts are thus united and interpreted and set in a light of new interest. So must systematic theology study the elements of doctrinal truth, whether furnished in the book of nature or the book of revelation, and in a scientific mode combine them in doctrines. Very many facts point to a divine Providence, moral responsibility, human sinfulness, atonement in Christ; but only through a like scientific use of the facts can we reach the great doctrines which underlie these formulas. The method is exemplified in the construction of a doctrine of the Trinity by the Council of Nice and a doctrine of the person of Christ by the Council of Chalcedon. Such symbols, however, give merely the forms of doctrinal expression, not the processes of doctrinal construction. Systematic theology is concerned with the whole work of construction. The doctrines, separately constructed, must be combined in a system. Only thus can we reach a systematic theology. The same principle which rules the construction of the doctrines severally must rule their systemization. As all the elements combined in a doctrine must be in scientific accord, so all the doctrines combined in a system must be in like agreement. As discordant elements cannot constitute a doctrine, so discordant doctrines cannot constitute a system. Hence the requirement of consistency in all the doctrines combined in the system must be faithfully observed. As this imperative law of systemization is manifest on its statement, and also

must often appear in future discussions, it here requires no formal illustration. The three facts presented under the present head characterize systematic theology and differentiate it from the other forms previously stated. Its specific subjects are the doctrines and the sum of the doctrines. It must construct the doctrines severally in a scientific form. In this construction there must be a constant view to the ruling principles of the system, else the doctrines may lack the necessary consistency. Finally, the doctrines must be combined in a system under the imperative law of a complete scientific agreement. There is no specific function of interpretation, as in exegetical theology; no restriction to a purely scriptural ground, as in biblical theology, and which may limit its treatment to a mere fraction of the Scriptures; no dealing chiefly with ecclesiastic symbols of faith and without any requirement of a system, as in dogmatic theology; no simply historic office in tracing the development and formation of doctrines and giving their contents, as in historical theology. Systematic theology is broader and deeper. It must include all the doctrines which properly belong to a system, and may freely command all the resources of doctrinal truth.

4. Relation of Systematic to Other Forms of Theology.—The different forms of theology are not severally isolated. Otherwise there could be no proper methodology in the curriculum of theological study. They are so related as readily to take their places in a logical order. There is a close relation of systematic theology to the other forms, particularly in the fact that mostly they furnish the material, and much of it well prepared, for its use in the construction of doctrines. This appears in the case of exegetical theology. The doctrines are grounded in the Scriptures and, to be true, must be true to the sense of the Scriptures. The doctrinal sense lies chiefly in the appropriate texts, what we call the proof-texts. It is the office of exegesis to give this sense. In this view the texts are for doctrine what facts are for science. Hence exegesis fulfills in the former the office of observation and experiment in the latter. The intimate relation between exegetical and systematic theology and the valuable service which the former renders the latter are thus clearly seen. Systematic theology, however, still has its own office to fulfill. As the generalizations of science are a distinct work from the finding of the facts, so the construction of doctrines is a distinct work from the interpretation of texts. Biblical theology is subsidiary to systematic in a manner kindred to the exegetical.

There is also an intimate relation to historical theology. In this view we may include the dogmatic with the historical, as both deal so largely with the same material. The historical two give us the history of doctrinal opinion and the results of doctrinal construction. The doctrines so constructed are not authoritative for systematic theology, but may render valuable service in the prosecution of its own work. This may be the case even when the method is wrong and the results erroneous. It has been so in relation to various sciences. Alchemy prepared the way for chemistry, and with all its vagaries performed a valuable service. Astrology prepared the way for astronomy, and the gathered facts were of great service in the transition from the false theory to the true. The method of Linnaeus in botany is no longer accepted, but the work which he wrought is of value to this day. No wise worker in these spheres of science has overlooked this preparatory work or failed to appropriate its fruits. So may the systematic theologian find help in dogmatic and historical theology. This history discloses many errors in theology, and many errors appear in dogmatic symbols; but the true can be set over against the false and be seen the more clearly in the contrast. Besides, in many instances the truth of doctrine has been reached and well formulated. The history of doctrines may thus help the work of systematic theology.

003. II. Sources of Theology.

II. Sources of Theology. On this question, as on many others, opposing theories have been pushed to extremes beyond the truth in either. When it is said that both nature and revelation are sources of theology there is truth in both views; but when it is said, on the one hand, that nature is the only and entirely sufficient source, and, on the other, that revelation is the only source, neither position is true. These are the opposite extremes of error. The one theory maintains that whatever we need to know of God and his will and of our own duty and destiny may be discovered in the light of nature; the other, that nature makes no revelation of God and duty, and, at most, can only respond to the disclosures of a divine revelation. The former position is naturally assumed by infidels who yet hold the existence of God and the moral and religious constitution of man. It is necessary for them to exalt the light of nature. Christianity early encountered this position of infidelity. Notably was it the position of the leading deists of England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Christian apologists have not been entirely free from the opposite tendency. Some have seemed reluctant to concede any resource of religious truth in the light of nature, lest they might jeopard the strongest ground of defense against the assaults upon the Christian faith. There was very little of this tendency with the great champions of revelation against the English deists. Near the close of this great debate, however, and especially at a later period, the position was assumed which logically excludes all grounds of a natural theology. Such is really the position of Watson.[9] No doubt the philosophy of Locke contributed much to this tendency, though he himself wrote on Christianity with an apologetic aim and fully admitted a light of nature, but controverted its sufficiency.[10] [9] Theological Institutes, vol. i, chaps, iii-viii.

[10]The Reasonableness of Christianity, Works, vol. vii. On the broadest division there are two sources of theology—nature and revelation. They are very far from any equality; in fullness, clearness, and authority fairly comparable only by contrast. Some great truths of Christian theology are peculiar to revelation. Yet the first question of all religion, the existence of God, must be taken first to nature. The best Christian thinkers agree in these two sources. For the present we are merely stating them. The question of secondary sources will follow their more direct treatment.

1. Nature a Source of Theology.—By nature we here mean all things and events other than the divine revelation as distinctively such and which may, in any mode or degree, manifest God or his will or any other truth which is properly theological in its content. Whether such truth is an intuition of the primary reason, or a conclusion of the logical reason, or a product of the moral and religious consciousness, it is a truth through the light of nature. For the present we omit the Christian consciousness as a specific form of the religious consciousness, because it has been placed in such relation to this question as to require a separate consideration. There is a sense in which all knowledge is from God. He is the Author of our faculties and their correlations to objective truths which render knowledge possible. As between nature and revelation there is still the profound difference in the modes of knowledge: in the one case its acquisition in the use of human faculties; in the other its immediate communication by the divine agency. Our intuitions of truth are no exception. In this case the mode of acquisition is as purely human and as really different from its

immediate divine communication as in the acquisition of knowledge in the use of the logical faculties. In the one case the discovery of truth is mediated by the use of our own faculties; in the other it is immediately given by the supernatural agency of God. It is important thus sharply to discriminate these two modes of truth, for only thus can we properly distinguish nature and revelation as sources of theology.

These statements may suffice for the present, for we are not yet studying the theology of nature, but simply defining and discriminating nature as a source of theology. How far this source may be valid and available for a knowledge of God and of our relations to him is for future inquiry. Without any incongruity of method we might here consider the religious ideas everywhere disclosed in human history—ideas of God or of some supernatural Being, whose providence is ever over mankind and whom men should worship and obey; ideas of moral obligation and responsibility, of future existence and retribution. And, further, we might consider the evidence that these ideas are traceable to the light of nature and rationally traceable to no other source. With these facts established, and with the manifest theological content of these ideas, we should have the truth of a theology in the light of nature. But as these questions must arise with the question of theism it is better to defer them.

It is proper here to point out that the Scriptures fully recognize the works of nature and the moral constitution of man as manifestations of God and various forms of religious truth. This is so clearly the case that it may well be thought singular that any who accept their supreme authority, and, particularly, that assume to find in a supernatural revelation the only true original of theological truth, should either overlook this recognition as a fact or its conclusive significance for a natural theology.

Nature in its manifold forms is a manifestation of the perfections, providence, and will of God. “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork” (Psalms 19:1). The orderly forms of the heavens, their magnitude and magnificence, are a manifestation of the wisdom and power of God, a mirror in which his glory shines. The manifestation is unto all people. ‘‘Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth” (Isaiah 40:26). This is God’s appeal to men, that ill the heavens they would behold his power and wisdom and providence. It would be useless to look upon the heavens for any such purpose if they are not a manifestation of these perfections in God. In the view of Paul facts of nature witnessed for God unto men in the darkness of heathenism: “Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness” (Acts 14:17). These facts could be witnesses of God unto men only as manifestations of his being and providence. The great words of Paul uttered on Mars’ Hill are replete with the same ideas (Acts 18:24-28). His words in vindication of the divine judgments upon the wicked heathen are specially noteworthy: “Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse” (Romans 1:19-20). Words could not well be more to the point. The Scriptures assert a common moral responsibility under the light of nature. This fact is the more decisive of the sense of Scripture on the present question, because the responsibility asserted is not such as might arise under atheism or pantheism, but such as

requires the idea of God as a moral ruler. This is clearly seen in the appropriate texts: “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. . . . Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened” (Romans 1:18; Romans 1:21). The application is to the heathen under the light of nature, just as to men under a formally revealed law. This is clear from the whole connection, and particularly from the omitted Romans 1:19-20. It is thus the sense of the apostle that under the light of nature men may so know God and his will as to be morally responsible to him. It is upon this ground that divine retribution is visited upon the Gentiles as upon the Jews, whose lives are in common given to wickedness (Romans 2:1-11). “Gentiles without the law may yet by nature fulfill its moral duties. In this they are a law unto themselves, and show the work of the law written in their hearts. The conscience of such is active in either self-approval or self-condemnation, and equally in the moral judgment of others (Romans 2:14-15). All this means a moral responsibility under the light of nature—such a responsibility as can arise only with the idea of God as moral ruler. Thus in two modes—by an appeal to the works of nature as a manifestation of God and his will and providence, and by the fact of moral responsibility under the law of nature—the Scriptures fully recognize the light of nature as a source of theology. It is yet the sense of the Scriptures that there is a profound moral need of higher forms of religious truth which the light of nature cannot disclose.

2. Revelation the Source of Theology.—We here need a definitive sense of revelation, though not an exact distinction between revelation and inspiration. Religious truth communicated through a supernatural agency of God is a revelation. In this view the supernatural divine agency is the defining fact of revelation, and will fully answer for the present requirement. The mode of this agency in the communication of religious truth, except that it must be supernatural, is indifferent to its definitive function. Whether the communication is by sign, or word, or immediate inspiration, the agency is equally supernatural and the communication equally a divine revelation. This supernatural agency as the defining fact of revelation thoroughly distinguishes it from nature as a source of theology.

It follows that revelation has no necessary biblical limitation. Relative facts neither require such a limitation nor justify its assumption. In all generations sincere and devout souls have been seeking for God and truth. In a profound sense of need and out of the thick darkness they have cried to Heaven for light and help. Who shall say that no such prayer has ever been answered? According to the defining fact of revelation, as above stated, any religious truth divinely given in such answer, though not verified to the recipient as from God, is yet a revelation. And to this source we would trace the higher religious truths reached by heathen minds, rather than to unaided reason and the light of nature, or to tradition. Yet, the highest truths even so readied fall infinitely below the moral and religious needs of mankind, and equally below the truths given in the Scriptures. Besides, they lack the seal of a divine original, and, therefore, the certainty and authority necessary to their truest religious value. While, therefore, we cannot question the divine communication of some religious truth to devout minds, yet in a stricter sense, as in the common theological view, revelation and the Scriptures are one. The Holy Scriptures are one source, and by all pre-eminence the source, of theology. Whether a divine revelation or not, or whatever their source, they contain the highest religious truths ever attained by mankind. Let a comparison be made with

all that poets have sung and philosophers uttered, with all that is contained in the sacred books of other forms of religion, and the theology of the Scriptures will stand only in the clearer light of peerless excellence. If tested by the purest moral and religious intuitions, or by the sharpest inquisition of the logical reason, or by the profoundest sense of religious need, or by the satisfaction which its truths bring to the soul, or by its sublime power in the spiritual life, the theology of the Scriptures rises infinitely above all other theologies of the world. That they are a direct revelation from God, with the seal of a divine original clearly set upon them, gives to their theology a certainty and sufficiency, a grace and value, specially divine.

3. Mistaken Sources.—Under this head we may point out three mistaken sources of theology, severally designated as the confessional, the traditional, and the mystical. A confessional source is omitted by many, but finds a place in the analysis and classification of some.[11] It should be noted that where creeds or confessions of faith are classed as a source of theology they are accounted such only in a secondary sense. This qualified sense, however, goes beyond the truth, or, if kept within the truth, loses all proper meaning of a source of theology. In the treatment of historical theology we stated the value of creeds and confessions to systematic theology. They embody the results of much preparatory work, and furnish much valuable material; but they have no authoritative quality, and therefore cannot be reckoned a source of theology. They are true or false in doctrine just as they are true or false to the Scriptures; and this fact of subordination denies to them all proper place among the sources of theology. Van Oosterzee's own explanatory statement really accords with this view: "The confessional writings of the Church (fons secundarius) cannot possibly be placed on a line with Holy Scripture, but must, on the contrary, be tested by, and if necessary altered according to, this latter. They contain no law for, but are expressions of, the belief which the Christian Church since the earliest times has constantly confessed." Dr. Smith reaches the same view: "Confessions are the voice of the Church, to which Christ promised his Spirit. But neither experience nor confessions can create new doctrines." This limitation denies to confessions any place among the proper sources of theology. It is better not to place among these sources any thing which does not possess the quality of a true source.

[11]Van Oosterzee;Christian Dogmatics, vol. i, pp. 18-21; Smith: Introduction to Christian Theology, p. 61. In Romanism tradition is held to be co-ordinate with the Scriptures in matters of faith and morals. This is the doctrine decreed by the Council of Trent. "The sacred and holy, œcumenical, and general Synod of Trent, . . . following the example of the orthodox fathers, receives and venerates with an equal affection of piety and reverence all the books both of the Old and of the New Testament—seeing that one God is the author of both —as also the sacred traditions, as well those pertaining to faith as to morals, as having been dictated, either by Christ's own word of mouth or by the Holy Ghost, and j)reserved in the Catholic Church by a continuous succession."[12] [12] Schaff:Creeds of Christendom, vol. ii, pp. 79, 80.

Tradition—παρ■δοσις—properly means any instruction delivered from one to another, whether orally or in writing. Within a proper limitation of time and under favorable conditions even oral tradition may be of value. It was so in apostolic times and even later. So Paul exhorted the Christians of Thessalonica to observe the traditions received from him, whether by word or epistle, and to withdraw from any who refused this observance (2 Thessalonians 2:15; 2 Thessalonians 3:6). The earlier fathers appealed to apostolic traditions, and might do so with safety and profit. They were still near the apostles, whose sacredly treasured words might be securely transmitted

through the succession of Christian teachers. But the time-limit of this law was soon passed, and the favoring conditions gave place to perverting influences; so that no ground is conceded to the Romish doctrine of tradition, which makes it co-ordinate with the Scriptures and asserts its perpetuity through the papacy. “In coming to a decision on this question every thing depends upon making the proper distinctions with regard to time. In the first period of Christianity the authority of the apostles was so great that all their doctrines and ordinances were strictly and punctually observed by the churches which they had planted. And the doctrine and discipline which prevailed in these apostolic churches were, at that time, justly considered by others to be purely such as the apostles themselves had taught and established. This was the more common, as the books of the New Testament had not, as yet, come into general use among Christians. Nor was it, in that early period, attended with any special liability to mistake. . . . But in later periods of the Church the circumstances were far different. After the commencement of the third century, when the first teachers of the apostolic churches and their immediate successors had passed away and another race came on, other doctrines and forms were gradually introduced, which differed in many respects from apostolical simplicity. And now these innovators appealed more frequently than had ever been done before to apostolical tradition, in order to give currency to their own opinions and regulations. Many at this time did not hesitate, as we find, to plead apostolical traditions for many things at variance not only with other traditions, but with the very writings of the apostles, which they had in their hands. From this time forward tradition became naturally more and more uncertain and suspicious.”[13] [13] Knapp:Christian Theology, p. 39.

Romanism could not trust these traditions to the ordinary mode of transmission. All trustworthiness would long ago have been lost. As any special rumor, often repeated from one to another, loses its original character and certainty, so the apostolic traditions, if transmitted simply by repetition through all Christian centuries, could no longer be trustworthy or possess any authority in either doctrines or morals. To meet this exigency Romanism assumes for itself an abiding inspiration—such an inspiration as rendered the apostles infallible teachers and perpetuates its own infallibility. Tradition is thus guarded and guaranteed.[14] This abiding inspiration is now held to center in the papacy. “As Peter held the primacy in the circle of apostles, so the pope holds it in the circle of bishops. In the doctrine of the primacy the system of Catholicism reaches its climax. From the Roman chair the apostle is still speaking on whom, according to the will of the Lord, his Church was to be built; here the Church has an infallible testimony of the truth elevated above all doubt; for, as the central organ of inspiration, the pope has unlimited authority and power to ward off all heresy. In so far as he speaks ex cathedra his consciousness is a divine-human consciousness, and he is so far vicarius Christi. As Peter once said to the Redeemer, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life,’ so all Christendom turns in the same way—not to Christ, but to the successor of Peter.”[15] Such extravagances come along with the inspiration which Romanism assumes as the guarantee of its doctrine of tradition.

[14]Martensen:Christian Dogmatics, p. 28.

[15]Ibid. , p. 29. The doctrine is open to destructive criticism. There is no promise of any such inspiration of the ministry that should succeed the apostles. There is no evidence of any such inspiration in the line of the papacy, but conclusive evidence of the contrary. The disproof is in the many errors of Romanism. If endowed with apostolic inspiration it could not lapse into error. This is its own doctrine. Yet its errors are many. There is the apostasy from the Nicene creed into the

Arian heresy. There is the full and hearty acceptance of the Augustinian theology, and then there are very serious departures from it. Whether this system is true or false Romanism must have been in error either in the first case or in the second. The worship of Mary, transubstantiation, the sacrifice of the mass, the priesthood of the ministry, the saving efficacy of the sacraments, purgatory—all these are errors of doctrine and practice in Romanism, and the disproof of its apostolic inspiration.[16] [16] Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. i, pp. 144-149. The doctrine means the incompleteness and obscurity of the Scriptures. If tradition is their necessary complement they must be incomplete and insufficient for the requirements of faith and duty. Such a view degrades them and openly contradicts the divine testimony to their sufficiency. The Scriptures are ‘‘profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17). What need we more? And these are among the last words of Paul. The doctrine of tradition, more than all else, leads to a denial of the Scriptures to the people. The law of this consequence is easily disclosed. If the papacy is endowed with an infallible inspiration in order to determine and interpret the apostolic traditions it must be the sole interpreter of the Scriptures. The one fact follows from the other. There can be no right of private interpretation in the presence of infallibility. The people must have no Judgment as to the sense of the Scriptures. Therefore the people should not have the Scriptures. This simply completes, in a practical way, the denial of the right of private judgment. There must be an absolute subjection of the people to this hierarchy. It is hard to think of any high manliness or real fitness for civil liberty under such ecclesiastical abjectness. The detriment to the spiritual life must be great. Religion can no longer be viewed as a living union with Christ, but must be viewed as an outward conformity to the requirements of the Church, The doctrine of infallibility “must react upon the community in this way, that the subject may now the more easily think to determine his obedience to God by his obedience to the Church, its dogmas, and its morality, and to possess in that way true Christianity. This has happened, if in different forms, in both the Greek and Romish communions.”[17] The dismission of this mistaken source from the position it has so long held would greatly serve the interests of theology and the Christian life.[18] [17] Dorner:Christian Doctrine, vol. i, p. 83.

[18]Goode:Divine Rule of Faith and Practice; Elliott:On Romanism, vol. i, chaps, ii-vi.

We named mysticism as a third mistaken source of theology. It would be more accurate to speak of the source which mysticism assumes than of itself as such a source. Mysticism is the doctrine of an immediate insight into truth. This deeper principle is readily carried into the sphere of religion, which, indeed, is its special sphere. It is a philosophy in which the mind seeks repose from the unrest of skepticism. In the view of Cousin the movement of philosophic thought is through sensationalism and idealism into skepticism.[19] Morell follows him in this view.[20] It was no difficult task for Hume and Berkeley to deduce idealism from sensationalism. Nor was it more difficult for Hume to resolve idealism into skepticism. But there can be no mental rest in skepticism. Another philosophy is an imperative requirement. The next movement is into mysticism. Here truth will stand in the open vision, especially in the sphere of religion. The immediate insight into truth is through some form of divine illumination.

[19]History of Modern Philosophy, vol. i, pp. 343-364.

[20]Modern Philosophy, Introduction, sec. v.

Mysticism appears in different forms, and its definitions vary accordingly. “Whether in the Vedas, in the Platonists, or in the Hegelians, mysticism is nothing more nor less than ascribing objective existence to the subjective creations of our own faculties, to ideas or feelings of the mind; and believing that by watching and contemplating these ideas of its own making it can read in them what takes place in the world without.”[21] This may accurately give the principle of mysticism and all the actual mental facts, but does not give all the assumed facts in its higher religious forms. In these the mind is divinely illuminated and lifted above its natural powers, and truth and God are immediately seen. “Mysticism in philosophy is the belief that God may be known face to face, without any thing intermediate. It is a yielding to the sentiment awakened by the idea of the infinite, and a running up of all knowledge and all duty to the contemplation and love of him.” [22] “Mysticism despairs of the regular processes of science; it believes that we may attain directly, without the aid of the senses, and without the aid of reason, by an immediate intuition, the real and absolute principle of all truth, God.”[23] “Mysticism, whether in religion or philosophy, is that form of error which mistakes for a divine manifestation the operation of a merely human faculty.”[24] [21] Mill:Logic, book v, chap, iii, sec. iv.

[22]Krauth-Fleming:Vocabulary, Mysticism.

[23]Cousin:History of Modern Philosophy, vol. ii, p. 114.

[24]Vaughan:Hours with the Mystics, vol. i, p. 22.

There are elements of truth in mysticism, while its errors are mostly by exaggeration. The sensibilities, particularly the moral and religious, have a value for knowledge not usually accorded them; but when they are exalted above reason and revelation truth is lost in the exaggeration. This is specially true of Christian mysticism. There is a communion of the soul with God, and an activity of religious feeling which is the very life of that communion. There is a divine illumination which lifts the soul into a higher capacity for knowing God and truth; but there is no new revelation. Mysticism has rendered good service in emphasizing the interior spiritual life and the communion of the soul with God in a conscious experience, but has added nothing to the Scriptures in the form of wholesome doctrine. There is no higher privilege of the interior spiritual life than the Scriptures clearly open. Here is the fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ (1 John 1:3), the love and indwelling of the Father and the Son (John 14:21; John 14:23), the work of the Spirit which gives strength to the inner man, the indwelling of Christ by faith, the rooting and grounding of the soul in love, the knowing the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, the being filled with all the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:16-19). No healthful doctrine of the divine communion transcends these privileges. But there is here no promise of a vision of God which shall supersede the Scriptures or bring higher truth to the soul. There are promises of divine inspiration as the mode of higher revelations of truth, but definitely and exclusively to the chosen mediums of such inspiration and revelation. This, however, is a work of the Spirit entirely apart from his offices in the personal Christian life, and, while vital to a divine revelation, means nothing for a state of personal attainment in the Christian life which shall be the source of doctrinal truth.

While we find some good in mysticism we do not find it clear of Evil. It is not questioned that mysticism furnishes examples of a pure and elevated Christian life. We may instance Tauler, Gerson, Boehm, Fenelon, Madame Guyon, Thomas a Kempis. The Friends have furnished many such examples. Still, the deeper principles of mysticism easily run into excesses which are not

clear of evil. With the assumption of a spiritual state above the usefulness of reason and revelation, a state in which the soul is so lost in God as to be wholly subject to his supernatural guidance, religious feeling may readily be kindled to intensity, when the prudence and wisdom which should ever rule the Christian life must sink beneath a rashness and arrogance of spirit which easily run into evil excesses. The tendency is, on the one hand, to a reckless fanaticism; on the other, to a quietism, a state of absorbing contemplation or religious reverie, quite apart from the practical duties of the Christian life. In the extremer forms of mysticism, and forms not unnatural to its deeper principles, it has sometimes run into the impious heresy of antinomianism. Mysticism is in no true sense a source of theology.[25]

[25] Jouffroy;Introduction to Ethics, vol. i, lect. v; Cousin:The True, the Beautiful, and the Good, lect. v; Morell:Modern Philosophy, part ii, chap, vii; Vaughan:Hours with the Mystics.

4. Concerning the Christian Consciousness.—The question is whether the Christian consciousness is in any proper sense a source of theology. Those who assume the affirmative differ widely respecting the measure in which it is such a source. Some claim so little as scarcely to reach the idea of a source of theology, while others make religious feeling the norm and source of the whole system of doctrines. In the moderate view it is held that certain facts of Christian experience witness to the truth of certain correlate tenets of doctrine. For instance, it is claimed that in Christian experience there is the consciousness of a sinful nature which deserves penal retribution, and, therefore, that the doctrine of such a form of native sinfulness is true. Such an argument often appears in the interest of the Augustinian anthropology. But no source of theology is thus reached. Such a form of sinfulness, even if a reality, could not directly become a fact of consciousness. The philosophy of consciousness so decides. There might still be the moral conviction that inherited depravity is of the very nature of sin, but only after the doctrine of such a form of sin is placed in one's creed. In this case the moral conviction would simply be the response of the conscience to the moral judgment embodied in the creed. But a doctrine which must precede a particular form of consciousness as its necessary condition cannot even find its proof, much less its source, in such a consciousness. What is true in this case is equally true in all like cases.

We are more concerned with the stronger view of the religious consciousness as related to theology. This view is of comparatively recent development, and has its chief representation in Schleiermacher. "It is only in the present century, and chiefly through the influence of Schleiermacher, that the Christian consciousness began to be considered a source of dogmatics. He started with his investigation from man's feeling of his unlimited dependence. Dogma is for him the development of the utterances of the pious self-consciousness, as this is found in every Christian, and is still more determined by the opposition between sin and grace. In other words, it is the scientific expression of the pious feeling which the believer, upon close self-examination, perceives in his heart. Thus this consciousness is here the gold-mine from which the dogmas must be dug out, in order to 'found' them afterward, as far as possible, in Holy Scripture. In the individu.al it is the result of the spirit of the community, as this is a revelation of the Spirit of Christ. Of this 'Gemeingeist' Schleiermacher allows, it is true, that it must continually develop and strengthen itself by the words of Scripture, but not that it must find in the latter its infallible correcting rule. For him the highest principle of Christian knowledge is thus something entirely subjective, and the autonomy of his self-consciousness is the basis of his entire system."[26] This

citation' is valuable, not only in its historic aspect, but specially as a statement of the stronger view of the Christian consciousness as a source of theology.

[26]Van Oosterzee:Christian Dogmatics, vol. i, pp. 23, 23.

There is a Christian consciousness. This is not a mere speculation, but a fact of experience. The conditions of this consciousness are obvious. It is clearly impossible without the central truths of Christianity. No soul ever reached it, or ever can reach it, through reason or the light of nature. It is impossible under any other form of religion. In every state of consciousness respecting any objective truth or reality, such truth or reality must be mentally apprehended before there can be any such response of the sensibilities as shall constitute the state of consciousness. This law conditions the active state of the sensibilities; and it is only in their active state that they can have any place in consciousness. In any such state of love, hatred, resentment, hope, fear, sympathy, or reverence the proper object must be present to thought as in perception or in some form of mental representation. This is the invariable and necessary order of the facts: first, the mental apprehension of objective truths or realities; and, second, the response of the sensibilities in active forms of feeling, according to the character of their respective objects as mentally viewed. The religious sensibilities are subject to the same laws.

We may view the religious consciousness as far broader than the Christian. In this view the latter is a specific type of the former. There are, indeed, many specific types, as may readily be seen in the religions of the world. There are variations of the religious consciousness, according to the variations of these religions. We may instance Confucianism, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Mohammedanism, Judaism; each has its own appropriate form of the religious consciousness. The Christian consciousness differs widely from each of the others. There are also differences in the Christian consciousness, as between Romanism and Protestantism, Trinitarianism and Unitarianism, Calvinism and Arminiauism. The question is to account for such differences. The real point is that they cannot be accounted for on any theory which makes religious feeling the source of theology, and, further, that the true account disproves such a source. The theory which makes religious feeling the source of theology places the feeling before the ideas or truths which constitute the theology. In this order of the facts, instead of the doctrines determining the cast of the feeling, the feeling determines the form and content of the doctrines. If this be the case religious feeling must be purely spontaneous to our nature, neither evoked nor modified by any religions ideas or doctrinal views. It is itself the norm and ruling principle of religion. Why then should it so vary in the forms of its development? The theory can make no answer to this question. It allows nothing back of this feeling which can determine these variations. Their explanation must come from the opposite position. The religious consciousness varies in different forms of religion because they differ in the tenets of doctrine. There are different views of God and man, of duty and destiny. These views act upon the feelings and determine the cast of the religious consciousness. A thorough analysis of these religions will find in each a form of consciousness in accord with its doctrines. The doctrinal view of God is specially a determining force in the religious consciousness. So far from this consciousness determining the view of God just the contrary is the truth; the view of God determines the east of the consciousness.[27] The Christian consciousness is peculiar to Christianity and impossible to any other form of religion, because many of its doctrines, particularly in the fullness of their unfolding, are peculiar to itself. Only in this manner can we explain the variations of the Christian consciousness as previously

noted. Romanism and Protestantism, Trinitarianism and Unitarianism, Calvinism and Arminianism, differ in ruling doctrines, doctrines to which the religious feelings respond, and from the influence of which they receive their own cast. This is the law of variations in the Christian consciousness.

[27]Walker:Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation. Miley: “The Idea of God as a Law of Religious Development,”Methodist Quarterly Review, January, 1865. In view of the facts above given the conditions of the Christian consciousness are manifest. There is no possibility of the feelings which constitute this consciousness without the central truths of Christianity. These truths must not only be in the mental apprehension, but must also be accepted in faith. Only thus can they have power in the religious consciousness. “When so apprehended and believed, they have such power because they are thus seen to be truths of profound interest. Now the religious nature responds to them in appropriate forms of feeling. This is the law of the Christian consciousness in the general view, and of its variations in different schools of theology. To assume the religious feelings as first in order, and then to find in them the central truths of theology, is to reverse the logical and necessary order of the facts. Clearly a knowledge of the central truths of Christianity conditions the Christian consciousness and must be first in order. It may still be true, and indeed is true, that we more fully grasp these truths of doctrine through the response of the religious sensibilities, but this simply concerns our capacity for the clearest knowledge, and has nothing to do with the fixed order of the facts in the Christian consciousness. As the Christian consciousness is thus conditioned by the possession of the central truths of Christian theology, it is impossible to deduce these truths from that consciousness. Back of these truths there is no Christian consciousness to begin with. The theory under review tacitly admits this by beginning, back of this specific form of consciousness, simply with religious feeling, the feeling of absolute dependence upon God. But there is no source of Christian theology in such a feeling. It has no content from which may be deduced the doctrine of the Trinity, the Christian doctrine of sin, the atonement in Christ, justification by faith, or regeneration and a new spiritual life through the agency of the Holy Spirit. There is apologetic value in the Christian consciousness, but no source of Christian theology. “To the Christian truth, in accordance with the Gospel believed and confessed by the Church, the Christian consciousness gives a witness, with reason estimated highly. Only when objective truth finds a point of contact in the subjective consciousness docs it become the spiritual property of mankind, and can it be thus properly understood and valued. So far, and so far only, does the Christian consciousness deserve a place among the sources of dogmatics. But since the doctrine of salvation can be derived neither from reason, nor from feeling, nor from conscience, and the internal consciousness only attests and confirms the truth, after having learned it from Scripture, this last must always be valued as the principal source.”[28]

[28] Van Oosterzee:Christian Dogmatics, vol. i. p. 22. We highly commend the treatment of this question by the author just cited.

Chapter 4

004. III. Scientific Basis of Theology.

III. Scientific Basis of Theology.

1. Certitude a Requirement of Science.—“Science is knowledge evident and certain in itself, or by the principles from which it is deduced, or with which it is certainly connected.”[29] Any proper definition of science will carry with it the sense of certitude. This certitude has special respect to the facts in which a science is grounded, or to the principles upon which it is constructed. There is a distinction of sciences, as intimated in the previous sentence. It is the distinction between the experimental, or inductive, and the exact, or deductive, as the mathematical. The latter are constructed upon principles. These principles are axiomatic and, therefore, certain in their own light. If these principles are taken into exact and clear thought, and all the deductions are legitimate, certitude goes with the scientific construction. The facts in which the empirical sciences are grounded are very different from such principles. They are facts to be studied by observation and the tests of experiment. They must be surely and accurately known before they can be wrought into a science. But a mere knowledge of facts, however exact and full, is not in itself a science. There must still be a generalization in some principle or law which interprets the facts, and which they fully verify. Such is the method in this class of sciences. It is no absolute guarantee against mistakes in respect to either the facts or the generalization, but must be observed for any scientific attainment. The history of science records many mistakes, and mistakes still occur; so that some things called science are falsely so called. In such cases the boasted certitude is bald assumption.

[29]Krauth-Fleming:Vocabulary, “Science.”

If theology is to receive a scientific construction, it must possess the requisite grounds of certitude. This does not mean that its grounds must be precisely the same as in the abstract sciences, or in the experimental sciences, but must mean a measure of certitude sufficient for the scientific construction. Without such a ground there can be no attainment of science in theology. “Besides, certainty upon Christian grounds has no wish to withdraw from those universal rules and laws, according to which a legitimate certainty is formed; were it otherwise. Christian theology could be no longer represented as a branch in the series of human sciences.”[30] The several doctrines might be legitimate to the accepted facts or grounds on which they are constructed, and also in such accord with each other as to meet the logical requirements for systemization, but without the requisite certainty in the grounds there could still be no true science of theology.

[30]Dorner:Christian Doctrine, vol. i, p. 59.

2. Unwarranted Limitation to Empirical Facts.—Science is often so defined as to deny to theology all rightful claim to a scientific position. The definition limits science to purely empirical facts, on the assumption that only such facts have the certitude requisite to scientific treatment. “Students of the physical sciences have accustomed themselves of late to limit the word science exclusively to empirical science, and even, in some cases, to the empirical grade of physical science. Thus

Professor Simon Newcomb, in his address before the American Scientific Association in 1878, said: ‘Science concerns itself only with phenomena and the relations which connect them, and does not take account of any question which does not in some way admit of being brought to the test of observation.’ This, he says, is ‘fundamental in the history of modern science.’ Even so considerate and philosophical a writer as Janet says: ‘Doubtless philosophical thought mingles always more or less with science, especially in the sphere of organized being; but science rightly strives to disengage itself more and more from it, and to reduce the problem to relations capable of being determined by experience.’[31] This is a legitimate characteristic and aim of empirical science, but it has no right to appropriate to itself exclusively the name of science and to distinguish itself from philosophy and theology. This abuse of the word is, however, becoming common. The three grades are habitually designated as science, philosophy, and theology, implying that the two latter are not science. There is a mighty power in words, and [31]Final Causes, p. 117. it is an unworthy artifice for the students of physical science to appropriate to their own branch of study the name science, and to themselves the name scientists. They can justify this only by reverting to the complete positivism of Comte and avowing and maintaining that knowledge is limited to the observations made by the senses.”[32] [32] Harris:Philosophical Basis of Theism, pp. 300, 301. The limitation of science to facts of observation or experience must be made upon the assumption that only such facts can be sufficiently known for scientific treatment. But sense-experience is not the limitation of thought, and thought must transcend it in order to any attainment of science. Perception transcends experience. Experience is through sensation; perception through the cognitive activity of thought. Phenomenalism is the utmost attainment of mere empiricism. All science lies beyond this limit. The relations of phenomena necessary to science are not given in sensation. Much less are the laws or principles which underlie and interpret phenomena so given. These principles can be reached only through the activities of rational thought. No scientific classification is possible without the processes of abstraction and generalization. These processes are the office of the discursive or logical faculty, not of the presentative faculty as concerned with empirical facts. The sensationalism which underlies and determines this narrow sense of science is mere phenomenalism, mere positivism, which knows nothing of substance, cause, or law. The legitimate result is an utter skepticism, and an exclusion of all the certitude of truth necessary to science.

Empirical knowledge, or knowledge acquired by observation or experience, is purely individual. This fact has not been properly emphasized, especially in its relation to this narrow limitation of science to facts empirically known. Its consequence is that every scientist is limited to the facts of his own individual observation or testing. No facts can be taken on testimony, however competent the witnesses. Testimony addresses itself to faith, not to a testing experience. This result is determined by the laws of mind, not by the nature of the facts concerned in the testimony. Hence empirical facts are no exception. If presented only on testimony they can be received only in faith. This narrow sense of science, with its fixed empirical limitations, has no place for faith, and must exclude it as openly contradictory to its own principles. Moreover, its admission would be a fatal concession to theology, in which faith has so important a function. Hence we emphasize this fact, that on the truth of any principle which determines the limitation of science to facts of observation or experience all empirical knowledge available for science is strictly individual. As the observation or experience of no one can become the observation or experience of another, so the empirically acquired knowledge of no one can be of any scientific use to another. The scientific work of each

must proceed only with his own empirical acquirement and within its determining limitation.

Now, with these narrow limits let any one attempt the construction of a science—whether of cosmogony, geology, biology, or astronomy, it matters not. Is any one possible under the limitation to empirical facts as actually known in observation or experience? Especially is any one possible with the inevitable limitation to a mere individual observation or experience? Are the facts necessary to the verification of the nebular cosmogony empirically known to any single mind? Are the facts necessary to a science of geology, or to a science of biology, so known? There is no true science of astronomy without the great law of gravitation. This law, however, is no empirical truth, but a rational deduction from certain observed facts. The law of its attractive force expressed in the formula, directly as the mass and inversely as the square of the distance, is reached only in rational thought which transcends experience. Yet astronomy, with all the confidence of scientific certainty, asserts the reign of gravitation, according to this law of its energy, over the physical universe, and therefore over measureless portions which lie infinitely beyond the observed facts from which it is inferred, and equally beyond the possible tests of experience. And what shall be done with mathematics on this empirical limitation of science? Mathematics is not an empirical science. The axiomatic principles on which it builds are open only to the intuition of thought, not to the sight of the eye or the touch of the finger. They are subject to no tests. That parallel lines cannot inclose a space, and that all the radii of a circle are equal, are absolute truths for thought, but truths which can never be empirically verified. What, then, can these empirical limitationists do with mathematics? Perhaps nothing better than to go with Comte and give it a mere phenomenal character. But in doing this they should not forget that the phenomenal is purely for sense-perception, while mathematics is purely for thought, and therefore without any phenomenal quality. The only other alternative is to deny to mathematics any place in the category of the sciences. Either result utterly discredits this narrow empiricism.

Certain positions are thus surely gained. One is that the limitations of science to facts of sense-experience renders science impossible. This limitation assumes that only such facts are sufficiently known or certain for scientific use. But this assumption is inevitably grounded in sensationalism, which logically results in skepticism, and therefore excludes the certitude necessary to science. Hence, as we have seen, thought must transcend all sense-experience and be valid in its own light in order to any scientific attainment. Another is that empirical grounds are wholly unnecessary to the most exact and certain forms of science, as appears above question in the instance of mathematics. It follows that theology must not be denied, and cannot logically be denied, a scientific position simply because it is not grounded in empirical facts in the manner of the physical sciences. Science has no such limitation.[33] [33] Bowne:Philosophy of Theism, p. 102.

3. Grounds of Certitude in Theology. —Here two questions arise: “What are the grounds of theology? And, Do these grounds possess the certitude requisite to a science of theology? However, it is not important to the present treatment to hold the two in entire separation. Nor do we need a full discussion of all the matters concerned in these questions. This would be quite impracticable and out of the order of a proper method. Such a discussion would involve the whole question of theism, which properly forms a distinct part of theology. It would also include the whole question of Christian apologetics, which is no necessary part of systematic theology. The first truth of theology is the existence of God. Without this truth there is no theology in any proper sense of

the term, and therefore no place for a science of theology. As we have previously seen, in the broadened sense of theology many other truths are included than those relating directly to God, but his existence is ever the ground-truth, and these other truths receive their theological cast from their relation to him. The proofs of the existence of God will be considered in the proper place. In the light of reason they are conclusive and give certainty to this ground-truth of theology. In the light of reason, as reason interprets nature and man, the existence of God is a more certain truth than the existence of a physical universe as studied in the light of sensationalism—that favorite philosophy with the empirical scientists who deny to theology the position of a science. More philosophic thinkers have questioned the truth of the latter than the truth of the former. The existence of God is a more certain truth than the great law of gravitation which underlies the science of astronomy. With the existence of God, the harmony of the heavens can be explained without the law of gravitation. Without his existence, neither this harmony nor the manifold adjustments of nature can be explained.

There is a theological anthropology which deals with the religious nature of man and its manifestations in human history. Man is a religious being. He is such by the constitution of his nature. This is rarely questioned by philosophic thinkers. The purpose of infidelity to eliminate religion from human life is a thing of the past. Real thinkers of the present have no such aim nor any thought of its possibility. Naturalistic evolutionists must admit, and do admit, that nothing in the constitution of man is more thoroughly organic than his religious nature. With no other characteristic is human history more thoroughly replete. “An unbiased consideration of its general aspects forces us to conclude that religion, every-where present as a weft running through the warp of human history, expresses some eternal fact.”[34] “No atheistic reasoning can, I hold, dislodge religion from the heart of man.” ‘‘The facts of religious feeling are to me as certain as the facts of physics.”[35] The facts of religious feeling are facts of consciousness, just as any other facts of consciousness in our mental life, and therefore just as certain as any others. But the facts of consciousness are even more certain than the facts of physics or the properties of matter.

[34]Spencer:First Principles, p. 20.

[35]Tyndall:Prefaces to the Belfast Address. The facts of our religious nature, thus clear and certain in the consciousness and ever manifest in human history, must be open to scientific treatment. The certitude requisite to such treatment is above question, and fully conceded. As no facts of our mental life and no facts of physics are either more certain or more distinct and definite than the religious, we must either concede a scientific position to the latter or deny it to the former. This is the imperative requirement of consistency. Hence, any objection to a scientific treatment of the facts of man’s religious nature must be made, not against such treatment itself, but against its theological significance. Empirical scientists announce the purpose and expectation of extending the laws of physical nature over the realms of life and mind.[36] On this assumption all phenomena, vital, mental, religious, just as the material, must proceed according to physical laws and as the effect of mechanical forces. The result must be accepted as the true science of mind, even in its highest rational and religious facts. If this aim is ever achieved the rational and religious facts of mind must yield to an empirical testing, just as the facts of physical nature. They never can be so tested. They are facts for philosophic treatment, and philosophy will never yield them to the physical realm, but ever assert for them a distinct and higher ground in spiritual mind. The failure of empirical science to bring these moral and religious facts into the order of physical phenomena

neither affects their reality nor changes their distinct and definite form as facts of consciousness and historic manifestation. As such facts, they are open to scientific treatment in the light of philosophy, and have a profound significance for theology. In its anthropological sphere theology deals, not with fancies, but with what is most real and definite in the constitution and history of man.

[36]Huxley:Lay Sermons, p. 138; Tyndall:Belfast Address, p. 55. As the Scriptures are the chief source of theology they must be grounded in truth in order to the certitude which a science of theology requires. The issue is not shunned at this point. It is not shunned in the instance of theologians who proceed to the scientific treatment of doctrines without an introductory verification of the Scriptures. In such case they proceed on the warranted ground that already this verification has been frequently and fully achieved. This is a thoroughly legitimate method, and a very common one in many branches of science. One man furnishes facts, or what he reports to be facts, as found in his own observation or testing; another accepts them as such and proceeds to generalize them in some principle or law of science. If there is no error respecting either the facts or the generalization, the result is just as valid as if one person performed the whole work. When one deals with such facts at second hand the only requirement is that they be so accredited as to possess the certitude requisite to their scientific use. This method is equally valid for the theologian. Still, he does not proceed simply upon the testimony of others, however competent, that they have thoroughly examined the evidences in the case and found them conclusive of a divine original of the Scriptures; he examines for himself, and to himself proves their divine verity before proceeding to the scientific treatment of their doctrinal contents. With the omission of this discussion from any actual place in his theology, his method is still far more exact and thorough than in many instances of scientists in secular branches, who hastily accept facts at second hand and proceed without any proper warrant of the certitude requisite to their scientific use. Further information has often brought confusion to the hasty generalizations thus reached. If the Scriptures are a divine revelation it follows, of course, that their doctrinal contents possess all the certitude requisite to a science of theology. However, in view of the facts above given we may pass this whole question with a very summary statement, especially as some points must recur with the treatment of faith in relation to a science of theology. On the ground of theism a divine revelation is possible. The only reason for asserting so manifest a truth is that it possibility of has been disputed. The question maybe appealed to reported facts of Scripture without the assumption of their truth, which, indeed, is not directly concerned in the present issue. This is claimed as manifestly true, that on the ground of theism God’s intercourse with men as related in the Scriptures is certainly possible. He could commune with Moses in all the modes related, and communicate to him all the truth claimed to have been so given. So, by word and dream and vision and inspiration, he could give truth to the prophets and identify it as from himself. They could thus be the medium of divine revelations and the unerring prophets of a far-reaching future. On the same ground the divine incarnation is entirely possible; and the Son so present with men could reveal the Father and communicate the great truths of religion which lie in the gospels. All the reported instances of his intercourse with his disciples and his religious instructions to them are possible. The promised mission of the Spirit as a revealer of religious truth in the minds of its chosen messengers is possible. The same Spirit, in the fulfillment of this mission, could secure through them the proper utterance and record of the truths so revealed. The conclusion is the possibility of a divine revelation.

Sometimes the objection to the possibility of a divine revelation takes a specially subtle form. It proceeds on the assumption that our purely subjective ideas are the full measure of our spiritual cognitions. Hence no communication from without can transcend these subjective limitations. Nothing, therefore, in the form of religious truth can be added by revelation to what we already know. The fallacy of this objection lies in the tacit assumption that our subjective state is without any possible improvement whereby we may grasp higher forms of truth given by instruction. A little testing will expose this fallacy. No such law of subjective limitation renders fruitless instruction in science or art. No such law rules the sphere of ethics or bars all improvement of moral ideas through instruction. The moral and religious instructions of the mother are not rendered powerless by any fixed limitation imposed by the subjective ideas of her child. In instances without number heathen minds have been raised to higher ideas of God and truth through Christian instruction. No such law precludes the possibility of a divine revelation. God is not bound by the limitations of our purely subjective ideas. He can communicate truth which shall marvelously clear these ideas, and, with an ever-growing power of spiritual perception, ever give us more truth and light. On the ground of theism a divine revelation is rationally probable. This proposition looks only to an antecedent probability. Hence it must not be maintained by any rational claim of the Scriptures to a divine original, but find its support in considerations quite apart from such claim. A few may be briefly stated:

God is benevolently concerned for our well-being. As infinitely wise and good, as our Creator and Father, he must care for our moral and spiritual good.

We are the subjects of a moral government of God’s own ordination and administration. The truth of this position is affirmed by the suffrage of mankind, though not always with the conception of its highest theistic ideas. The human soul, with rarest exceptions, asserts its own sense of moral responsibility to a divine Ruler. This common affirmation must be accepted as the expression of a profound reality. On the ground of theism its truth cannot be questioned. The highest moral and religious truth is profoundly important. As our secular interests render an accurate and full knowledge of nature and of the arts and sciences which concern our present well-being very desirable, so that truth which is necessary to our moral and spiritual good must be intensely desirable. This desirableness rises with the infinite measure of the interests which such truth concerns. The highest certainty of religious truth is profoundly desirable. Doubtful truths do not meet the conscious needs of the soul. “We need truth as truth is with God, and as revealing his mind and will. His mind is the only sufficient source of spiritual truth, and it must deeply concern us to know the behests of his will. Hence the desirableness of truth known to have come from God. The heart of humanity craves such truth. The history of mankind reveals this craving.

We can have no such religious truth as the world needs and craves, truth in the highest form and certainty, except as a divine revelation. The case may be appealed to the history of the race, and in view of the profoundest questions of religious interest and concern. Apart from the Scriptures, or on a denial of their divine original, we have no such full and certain knowledge as we need respecting either God or ourselves, or his will and the duties of love and obedience that we should render him, or the means of relief from the burden of sin which all hearts bear, or the graces of the purest, best life. The best minds of the race have deeply felt these wants and avowed the conviction that such truth and light could come to man only as a revelation from heaven. A divine revelation is, therefore, a rational probability. The facts just considered so affirm. On the one hand

have the character of God and his relations to us; the other, our own profound need of religious truth— truth of such fullness and certainty that its only possible mode of attainment is in a divine revelation. It is therefore rationally probable that God shall in some mode above the light of nature or the resources of human reason reveal himself to men. He has placed the sun in the heavens as a light for the natural world; and has he no divine light for the moral world? Must each soul be its own and only prophet? Shall no one sent from God speak to us? Shall the heavenly Father, veiled from the eye of his children, be forever silent to their ear? Shall he never speak to the world so long waiting and listening for his voice? A revelation is possible only through a supernatural agency of God. Any manifestation of religious truth in the works of nature or the moral constitution of man may be called a revelation, but only in a popular sense. In case there is no direct communication of truth from God, but only the discovery of truth by human faculties. If we even assume a divine illumination of human minds, the result would be simply a clearing of their spiritual vision, but no other disclosure of truth than in the works of God. The true idea of a divine revelation carries with it the sense of a direct communication of truth through the agency of God. That agency must be supernatural, whatever the modes in which it works. There are doctrinal contents of Christianity which have no manifestation in nature, and therefore could never be discovered or known as truths, except as attested communications from God. We may instance the doctrine of the Trinity, the doctrine of sin in its more distinctive facts, the divine incarnation, the personality of Christ, the atonement in Christ, Justification by faith, the mission and work of the Holy Spirit. As these central and essential truths of Christianity can be known as truths only as attested communications through a supernatural agency of God, we must accept and maintain such an agency in the original of the Scriptures, wherein we find these truths; for only thus can we secure the certitude requisite to a science of theology which has its chief source in the Scriptures. On the ground of theism such a supernatural agency has no serious perplexity for rational thought; indeed, it is open and clear as compared with any account of material and mental phenomena on the ground of purely mechanical forces. There are greater perplexities in the science of physics than in the theory of a supernatural agency of God in a revelation of religious truths. Who can explain the forces of chemical affinity, or the strength of cohesion as exemplified in the steel cables which support the Brooklyn Bridge? The reciprocal attraction of the earth and the sun across the vast space which separates them seems very simple in idea, but it has no rationale in human thought. The perplexity ever deepens as we extend the reign of this law over the physical universe. There is no seeming possibility of any such mechanical force. This is the real point of perplexity. No such perplexity besets the theory of a supernatural agency of God in a revelation of religious truth. Such an agency is not only free from valid objections, but has the support of weighty reasons. All the facts which render a divine revelation rationally probable render equally probable a supernatural agency as the necessary mode of its communication. A divine revelation must be supernaturally attested. There is here a profound distinction between its primary recipients and the many to whom they publish it. To the former it may be verified as a revelation in the mode of its communication; but this will not answer for the many who receive it on their testimony. Its chosen messengers must be accredited in a manner assuring to the people that they are messengers of truth from God. Miracles are the best, and rationally the most probable, means to this end. Prophecy is just as supernatural, and its fulfillment just as conclusive of a divine commission, but often there must be long waiting before the fulfillment completes this credential. Prophecy has great apologetic value, especially for the generations succeeding the founding of

Christianity, but this necessary delay prevents the prompt and direct attestation furnished by miracles. A revelation may have the support of many forms of evidence, as the Scriptures have, while it is still true that miracles are the most appropriate credential of its messengers. There is no credulity in the ready belief that the religious teacher who works miracles in the name of God is his messenger of truth to men (John 3:2). The reason for this faith was never clearer or surer than now. Just as science establishes the uniformity of the laws of nature, so does a supernatural event absolutely evince the immediate agency of God as its cause. Hence the religious teacher by whom he works miracles must be his messenger of truth to men. On the ground of theism there is no antecedent presumption against miracles, but, rather, a strong presumption in their favor. We have previously pointed out the antecedent rational probability of divine revelation. There is a like probability of miracles as the appropriate and really necessary attestation of such a revelation. Unwise definitions have needlessly furnished occasion for objections to such a mode of attestation. While nothing of the necessary content of a miracle should be omitted from its definition, nothing unnecessary should be included. A miracle does not mean any abrogation or suspension of the laws of nature. Yet such ideas have often been put into its definitions, which have thus furnished the special ground of objection. A miracle is a supernatural event wrought by the immediate agency of God, to accredit some messenger as divinely 3ommissioned or some truth as divinely given. The divine energizing touches the law of nature simply at the point of the miracle, and in a manner to produce it, but no more abrogates or suspends such law, as a law of nature, than the casting a stone into the air annuls the law of gravitation. The raising of Lazarus leaves undisturbed the laws of nature which reign over the vast realms of the living and the dead. The agency of God in a miracle, while thoroughly supernatural, is just as orderly with respect to the laws of nature as the agency of man in the use of any chemical or mechanical force. Hence all such objections are utterly void.[37]

[37] Butler:Analogy, part ii, chap, ii; Mozley:Miracles, lect. i; Bushnell:Nature and the Supernatural, chap, xi; Paley:Evidences of Christianity, “Preparatory Considerations;” Mansell:Aids to Faith, essay i: Christlieb:Modern Doubt and Christian Belief, lect. v; Foster:The Supernatural Book, “Argument from Miracles.” The facts thus maintained have apologetic value, not, however, as direct proofs of a divine revelation, but specially as objections obviating leading objections and clearing the way for the full force of the evidences of such a revelation. We have not the more difficult task of facing any strong presumption against either its possibility or probability. On the ground of theism, a divine revelation is clearly possible and strongly probable, while a supernatural agency of God as the necessary mode of its communication fully shares the probability. Further, there is not only no antecedent presumption against miracles, but as the best means of attesting a divine revelation they are rationally probable. Thus the evidences of such a revelation do not encounter any balancing, or nearly balancing, disproof, so that they really prove nothing, or, at best, leave the question in uncertainty : they come to the proof of what is antecedently probable, and their whole weight is available for this end. The certitude requisite to a science of theology is thus attainable. The Holy Scriptures are a divine revelation of religious truth. On this question Christian apologetics has shunned no issue with infidelity. Against the many forms of attack the defense has been prompt and effective. The victory is with the defenders of the Christian faith. Beyond this defensive service the evidences for the truth and divine original of the Scriptures have been presented in their fullness and logical conclusiveness. The authenticity of the Scriptures is an established truth. The fulfillment of the prophecies and the reality of the miracles infallibly accredit

the sacred writers as messengers of truth from God. The complete harmony of the sacred books, occupying, as they do, so many centuries in their composition, and the peculiar character of their doctrinal, moral, and religious contents unite in the same attestation. The founding and triumphant propagation of Christianity as open facts of history, together with its marvelous power in the moral and religious life of mankind, for any rational account absolutely require the divine mission of the Christ. The unique character of our Lord as portrayed in the New Testament is itself conclusive of the divine origin of Christianity. Only with a pattern from the holy mount of God could the human mind rise to the conception of such a character. In all the creative thought of the world there is no approach toward such a conception. The simple artists of the New Testament who wrought this portrait must have had the divine original before them.[38]

[38] On the truth of Christianity, with the truth of the Scriptures—Paley:The Evidences of Christianity; Mair:Studies in Christian Evidences; Wilson:Evidences of Christianity; Fisher:Supernatural Origin of Christianity; Keith:Demonstration of the Truth of Christianity; Bishop Thomson:Evidences of Revelation; Hopkins:Evidences of Christianity; Rawlinson:Historical Evidences of the Truth of the Scripture Records; Chalmers:Evidences of Christianity; Rogers:Superhuman Origin of the Bible; Alexander:Evidences of Christianity; Christlieb:Modem Doubt and Christian Belief;Aids to Faith—Relies to “Essays and Reviews;”Bishop McIlvaine:Evidences of Christianity; Faith and Free Thought, Lectures; Bishop Foster:The Supernatural Book.

Argument from the character of Christ—Ullman: The Sinlessness of Jesus; Barnes: The Evidences of Christianity, lect. viii; Bayne: The Testimony of Christ to Christianity; Young: The Christ of History; Hopkins: Evidences of Christianity, lect. viii; Mozley: Lectures and Other Theological Papers, pp. 116-135 ; Fisher: Supernatural Origin of Christianity, essay xii ; Schaff: The Person of Christ; Bushnell:Nature and the Supernatural, chap, x; Hardwicke: Christ and Other Masters; Lacordaire: Jesus Christ; Luthardt: Fundamental Truths of Christianity, lect. x; Rowe: Lect. ii, Bampton Lectures, 1877.

Christ openly submitted the truth of his doctrine to the test of experience, not the same in form or mode as that on testimony on which empirical science builds, but an experience just as real and that just as really grasps the truth. “My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself” (John 7:16-17). The same principle is given in these words: “He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself” (1 John 5:10). These texts mean that through experience we may come to know the doctrine of Christ as the very truth of God, and to know Christ as the Messiah and Saviour. There is another mode of experience through which we reach the truth of Christianity. “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Romans 8:16; Galatians 4:6). Here is the consciousness of a gracious sonship, a consciousness wrought by the Holy Spirit. This is its distinction of mode, but it is none the less a fact of consciousness, and, therefore, a veritable fact of experience. In this experience we grasp the central facts of Christianity, and the truth of Christianity itself. The certitude requisite to a science of theology is thus reached. The result is not affected by any peculiarity of the experience, as compared with that which underlies the physical sciences. The method is the same in both, and as valid in the former as in the latter. Some truths we grasp by intuition. “There are other truths that come to verification

in consciousness by a process, or by practical experiment; such are more commonly called truths of experience—that is, we prove them by applying experimental tests and by realizing promised results. Such are truths of the following and similar kind. Christ promises to realize in us certain experiences if we will comply with certain conditions. It is the common law of experimental science. When we find at the end of an experiment a result, we demonstrate in experience a truth. Henceforth we know it to be a truth, because we have made it matter of experience, not because of any external testimony to it. Such is precisely the test which Christ proposes; if we do certain things we shall come to certain knowledges; if we come to him we shall find rest ; if we do his will we shall know of the doctrine; if we believe we shall be saved; old things will pass away, and all things will become new; we will become new creatures; a new life will come to us, and will evidence itself in our consciousness, and in the total change of our whole character, external and internal; for sorrow we shall have joy; for a sense of guilt we will receive a sense of pardon ; for a love of sin we will have given to us a hungering and thirsting after righteousness; from feeling that we are aliens and strangers we shall come to know that we are the children of God—the Abba, Father, will be put upon our tongues and in our hearts."[39] [39] Bishop Foster:The Supernatural Book, p. 318. The Christian centuries furnish innumerable instances of such experience. They are found among the most diverse and among the most gifted and cultured, as among the uncultured and lowly. They are competent witnesses to the reality of this experience. They know the facts of the experience as revealed in their own consciousness, and their testimony has often been given at a cost which allows no question of their integrity. The certainty of Christian truth is thus reached through experience. Further, there is here a unity of experience which verifies the truth and divinity of Christianity. This experience is one through all the Christian centuries and in all the diversities of condition. There must, therefore, be reality and divinity in the Christianity out of which it springs. The physical sciences would be impossible without a uniformity of experience. There must be a unity of experience. The objective facts must be the same for all. There could be no such unity without the reality of the objective facts of experience. This principle is just as valid in Christianity as in the physical sciences. If these sciences deal with realities, so does Christian theology deal with realities. The truth of Christianity is thus realized in Christian experience, and in the most thorough manner. "The nerve of the matter does not lie here—that both exist side by side, the outward and objective testimony and the personal and subjective spirit; it lies here—that both the genuinely objective and the subjective are brought into one, and thus into a bond of unity, by virtue of which our certainty knows itself to be grounded in objective Christian truth that makes itself evident and authoritative to the spirit."[40] We thus have the certitude requisite to a science of theology.

[40]Dorner:Christian Doctrine, vol. i, p. 154.

4. Consistency of Faith with Scientific Certitude.—Theology is denied a scientific position on the assumption that it deals with matters of faith, not with matters of fact. This assumption goes beyond the truth. We have just seen that the vital facts of theology are grasped in experience as really as the facts of empirical science. Yet we admit an important office of faith in theology. It is in the mode of faith that we apprehend various truths of theology. If a scientific position is therefore denied to theology it must be on the assumption that such faith rests on mere authority, and is wholly without rational ground. Again, the assumption is false to the facts. The evidences which verify the Scriptures as a divine revelation constitute a rational ground of faith. That gratuitous

assumption wholly ignores the Christian apologetics which sets forth this ground.

Faith is not a blind acceptance of any alleged fact or principle, but its acceptance on rational ground. Such ground lies in the sufficient evidence of its truth. All faith ground of that is properly such has respect to evidence as its rational warrant. It follows that faith in its proper sense is a thoroughly rational state or act of the mind. There is no exception. Faith sometimes takes the form of trust. In a profound sense of need the soul trusts in God for his gracious help. The rational ground of this trust lies in the evidences of his goodness. The case is not other even when in seasons of deepest trial there is no outer light upon the ways of God. The evidences of his wisdom and love still furnish a thoroughly rational ground of trust. It was so with Abraham in the offering up of his son (Hebrews 11:17-19); with Job when seemingly God was against him (Job 13:15); with Paul, who in the deepest trials still knew whom he believed, and in whom therefore he still rested with an unwavering trust (2 Timothy 1:12). There are mysteries of doctrine in theology. We may instance the Trinity and the person of Christ. We have no power to comprehend these doctrines; and yet we accept them in faith. It will readily be asked. How can such a faith be rational? Science is as really concerned in this question as theology. There are many mysteries of nature within the assumed attainments of science.[41] That every atom of matter attracts every other atom of the universe, even to the remotest world, is as profound a mystery for rational thought as either the Trinity or the person of Christ. But the question utterly mistakes the nature and grounds of faith. In no case is the rational comprehension of any alleged fact or principle the ground of faith in its truth. Such ground lies wholly in the evidence of its truth. “When the evidence is adequate the faith is rational. Nor is the mystery of a doctrine in any sense opposed to the rationality of faith in its truth when the evidence is adequate. Such is our faith in the doctrines of the Trinity and the person of Christ. These doctrines are in the Scriptures; and the Scriptures bear the seal of a divine original. They are a revelation of truth from God. The proof is conclusive. God’s revelation of truth is truth itself, and the most certain truth. The principle is valid for all the doctrinal contents of the Scriptures. Thus when we reach the true grounds of faith we still find the certitude requisite to a science of theology.

[41]Bowne : Philosophy of Theism, pp. 17, 18 The empirical sciences cannot exclude the principle of faith. Such exclusion would reduce them to the narrowest possible limits, if not render them wholly impossible. We previously pointed out that all empirical knowledge of facts is purely personal. No one can share the experiences of another. Hence the scientist, in whatever sphere of nature, must either limit himself to facts of his own observation or appropriate the observations of others. In the former case the attainable facts are insufficient for the construction of any science. This exigency constrains the use of reported observations. This use is very common in the treatment of the sciences. It appears in astronomy, in geology, in archaeology, in chemistry, in botany, in physiology, in natural history, in any and all of the sciences. The only ground of certainty in the facts so used is the testimony of such as report them. But testimony furnishes no empirical knowledge; it furnishes the ground of faith, and of faith only. Thus it is that the empirical sciences largely build on faith, and must so build. Theology has the same right, and is equally sure of its facts. We have philosophies of history, which, if properly such, must contain all that a science of history could mean. No man can be personally cognizant of facts sufficient in number for such a philosophy or science. Faith in facts as given on testimony must underlie all such work.[42] If this mode is valid for science it must be valid for theology.

[42]Tatham:Chart and Scale of Truth, vol. i, pp. 204-208.

There is another fact which concerns this question. It is not only true that one's experience is purely personal to himself, but equally true that his experience is purely of individual things. In all the realm of nature no one has, or can have, empirical knowledge of any thing beyond the few facts of his own observation or testing. Families, species, genera, as known in science or logic, are no empirical cognitions, but creations of thought which must transcend experience. Yet they are necessary ideas of science. By a proper testing one finds the qualities of a specimen of metal or mineral, or of a particular plant or animal, and proceeds to a scientific classification of all like instances as possessing the same qualities. However, the principle on which he proceeds is just the reverse of the Aristotelian, that what is true of the class is true of each individual; it is that what is true of one or a few is true of all like instances. But how does he know that the many untested cases are so like the tested few as to meet the requirements of a scientific classification? It will not suffice that in appearance they are the same. The appearance is merely superficial, and may fail to give the interior facts. The qualities of the few tested cases were not given in the appearance, but found by a deep and thorough searching. There is no such testing or empirical knowledge, except in a very few instances of the great multitude assumed to be covered by the science. Thus it is that in every sphere of nature science is made to cover a vast aggregate of individuals which were never properly tested. How can empirical science justify itself in such cases? Only on the assumption of some principle that guarantees the uniformity of nature, or that determines the intrinsic identity of things superficially alike. Such science could not else proceed beyond the few facts empirically known, and therefore would be an impossibility. We are not here concerned to dispute the legitimacy of this method of science; but we may with propriety point out and emphasize its wide departure from that narrow empiricism on the ground of which the claim of theology to a scientific position is denied. The ground of this denial is thus entirely surrendered. Science itself has too much to do with matters of faith to dispute the scientific claim of theology because it has to do with such matters. There is no inconsistency of faith with scientific certitude.[43] [43] Herbert:Modern Realism, pp. 357-367.

5. The Function of Reason in Theology.—The errors of rationalism must not discredit the offices of our rational intelligence in questions of religion and theology. A system of Christian doctrines is no more possible without rational thought than the construction of any science within the realm of nature. There is in the two cases the same intellectual requirement in dealing with the material out of which the science is wrought. The idea of religion as a faith and practice is the idea of a person rationally endowed and acting in the deepest form of his rational agency. It is true that a religious life impossible without the activity of the moral and religious sensibilities—just as there cannot be for us either society, or friendship, or country, or home, or a world of beauty without the appropriate feeling. But mere feeling will not answer for any of these profoundly interesting states. There must be the activity of thought as the condition and illumination of such feeling. So it is in religion: God and duty must come into thought before the heart can respond in the proper religious feeling, or the life be given to him in true obedience and worship. The religious sensibilities are natively as strong under the lowest forms of idolatry as under the highest forms of Christian theism, and should yield as lofty a service, if religion were purely a matter of feeling. The religious life and worship take their vastly higher forms under Christian theism through higher mental conceptions of God and duty. There is thus manifest a profound office of our rational intelligence in

religion.

There is not a question of either natural or revealed religion that is not open to rational consideration. Even the truths Scripture which transcend our power of comprehension must in some measure be apprehended in their doctrinal contents in order to their acceptance in a proper faith.

If we should even assume that the existence of God is an intuitive truth, or an immediate datum of the moral and religious consciousness, we must still admit that the question is open to the treatment of the logical reason. We have seen that the Scriptures fully recognize in the works of nature the proofs of the divine existence. These proofs address themselves to our logical reason, and can serve their purpose only as apprehended in our rational intelligence. When so apprehended and accepted as rationally conclusive, theism is a rational faith. Such has ever been the position of the most eminent Christian theists. They have appealed the question of the divine existence to the rational proofs furnished in the realm of nature and in the constitution and consciousness of man. Thus they have found the sure ground of their own faith and successfully repelled the assaults of atheism. The many treatises in the maintenance of theism fully recognize the profound function of our logical reason in this ground-truth of religion. The idea of a divine revelation is the idea of a capacity in us for its reception. A divine revelation is, in the nature of it, a divine communication of truth, and especially of moral and religious truth. There can be no communication of such truth where there is no capacity for its apprehension and reception. Without such capacity the terms of such a revelation would be meaningless. There can be no such capacity without our rational intelligence. We admit the value of our moral and religious sensibilities in our spiritual cognitions; not, however, as in themselves cognitive, but as subsidiary to the cognitive power of our rational faculties. Many of the facts and truths of revelation, as given in the Scriptures, are cognizable only in our logical reason. Hence the idea of a divine revelation assumes an important office of our reason in theology. Are the Scriptures a revelation of truth from God? An affirmative answer must rest on rational grounds of evidence. This means that the whole question of evidence is open to rational treatment. The divine origin of the Scriptures is a question of fact. Such an origin can be rationally accepted in faith only on the ground of verifying evidence. All such evidence addresses itself to the logical reason. In experience we may reach an immediate knowledge of certain verities of religion; but all such experience is purely personal, and if it is to possess any apologetic value beyond this personal limitation, or in the mind of others, it must be treated as logical evidence of the truths alleged to be so found. Even the subjects of this experience may severally take it up into the rational intelligence and treat it as logical proof of the truths assumed to be immediately reached in experience. Beyond such experience the whole question of a divine revelation in the Scriptures is a question of rational proofs. By rational proofs we mean such facts of evidence as satisfy our logical reason. A question of fact is a question of fact, in whatever sphere it may arise. In this view the question of a divine original of the Scriptures is not different from other questions of fact within the realms of history and science. The proofs may lie in peculiar or widely different facts, but they are not other for rational thought or the logical reason. Christ openly appealed to the proofs of his Messiahship, and demanded faith on the ground of their evidence. The apostles furnished the credentials of their divine commission as the teachers of religious truth. The Scriptures demand no faith except on the ground of evidence rationally sufficient. The Church has ever recognized this function of reason respecting the divine

origin of the Scriptures. Every Christian apologist, from the earliest to the latest. has appealed this question to our rational intelligence, on the assumption of proofs appropriate and sufficient as the ground of a rational faith in its truth. Such is the office of reason respecting the truth of a divine revelation. Our position may seem to concede the logical legitimacy of the “higher criticism,” with its destructive tendencies. If the Scriptures ground their claim to a divine original in rational proofs, have not all seemingly opposing facts a right to rational consideration as bearing upon that great question? Yes; and if such facts should ever be found decisively stronger than the proofs the divine origin of the Scriptures could no longer be held in a rational faith. The rights of logic must be conceded ; and Christian apologetics has too long appealed this question to our logical reason now to forbid a consideration of seemingly adverse facts in a manner logically legitimate to its own principles and method. This is conceded in the manner of meeting the issues of the “higher criticism.” Here are such questions as the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, the unitary authorship of Isaiah, the genuineness and prophetic character of the Book of Daniel—questions which deeply concern the evidences of the divine original of the Scriptures. How are the destructionists met on these and similar issues? Not by denying their logical right to raise such questions, but by controverting the facts which they allege and disproving the conclusions which they reach. In these matters logic suffers many wrongs at their hand. Nor can any legitimacy of the questions raised free much of the “higher criticism” from the charge of an obtrusive and destructive rationalism.

What are the contents of the Scriptures? What are the facts which they record, with their meaning? What are their ethical and doctrinal teachings? All these questions are open to the investigation of the logical reason—just as the contents of other books. It is not meant that the spiritual mood of the student is indifferent to these questions. It may be such as to blind the mental eye, or such as to give it clearness of vision. Such is the case on many questions of the present life. What in one’s view is proper and right in another’s is wrong and base. What to one is lofty patriotism is to another the outrage of rebellion or lawless and vindictive war. What one views as saintly heroism another views as cunning hypocrisy or a wild fanaticism. So much have our subjective states to do with our judgments. But we are responsible for these states, and therefore for the judgments which they so much influence. A proper adjustment of our mental state to any subject in which the sensibilities are concerned is necessary to the clearer and truer view of it. Such state, however, is not the organ of knowledge, but a preparation for the truer judgment. Sobriety is proper for all questions. Devoutness is the only proper mood for the study of the questions of religion, and therefore for the study of the contents of the Scriptures. Such a mental mood is our duty in the study of the Scriptures, not that it is in itself cognizant of their contents, nor that it determines the judgment, but simply that it clears the vision of our reason and so prepares it for the discovery of the truth. With such a mental mood it is the function of our reason to ascertain the religious and doctrinal contents of the Scriptures. A high function of the logical reason in systematic theology can hardly be questioned. A system of theology is a scientific construction of doctrines. The method is determined by the laws of logic. These laws rule all scientific work. Any violation of their order is a departure from the scientific method. They are the same for theology as for the sciences in the realm of nature. The method of every science is a rational method. Science is a construction in rational thought. A system of theology is such a science. The construction of such a system is the function of reason in theology. A glance at the errors of rationalism will clearly show that there is not an item of such error in the doctrine of reason above maintained. “We speak of errors of

rationalism with respect to its distinctions of form rather than in view of fundamental distinctions. While varying in the matters specially emphasized, it is one in determining principle. Human reason is above all necessity and authority of a divine revelation: this is rationalism. The English deism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was thoroughly rationalistic in its around. It denied all necessity for a supernatural revelation and exalted reason to a position of entire sufficiency for all the moral and religious needs of man. Whatever he needs to know respecting God and duty and a future destiny may be discovered in the light of nature. The law of nature is the cardinal idea. In consequence of this fact this form of rationalism was often called naturalism; and, further, it was so called in distinction from the supernaturalism which underlies the Scriptures as a divine revelation. The rationalistic principles, as above stated, are the principles of the notable book of Lord Herbert which initiated this great deistic movement.[44] There is no concession that only obscure views of morality and religion arc attainable by the light of reason. The position is rather that on these great questions reason is quite equal, or even superior, to the Scriptures. Many followed Herbert in the maintenance of like views: Blount,[45] Toland,[46] Collins,[47] Tyndall[48] and others whose names are here omitted. The titles of their works clearly evince their rationalistic ground. Some of them mean an assumption to account for the Scriptures and for Christianity on purely natural grounds. The law of nature and the sufficiency of the law of nature are the ruling ideas. There is a law of nature in the sense of a light of nature on the questions of morality and religion. Nor was this idea at all original with these deists. It is in the Scriptures, in the earlier Christian literature, and so continued through the Christian centuries. About the time of Herbert, and without reference to the deistic movement which he initiated, eminent Christian writers maintained this law. We may instance Grotius[49] and Hooker.[50] These eminent authors, however, were profoundly loyal to the Scriptures as a revelation of truth from God, and the only sufficient source of truth on the great questions of morality and religion. Thus the rationalistic errors of this deism were wholly avoided. It is in this manner that the functions of reason in questions of religion, which we previously set forth, are entirely free from these errors.

[44]De Veritate, prout Distinguitur a Revelatione.

[45]Oracles of Reason.

[46]Christianity Not a Mystery.

[47]Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion.

[48]Christianity as Old as the Creation.

[49]Rights of Peace and War.

[50]Ecclesiastical Polity, book i.

Christian apologists were promptly on hand for the defense of the Scriptures as an actual and necessary revelation of truth from God, and so continued on hand through this long contention. It was a hundred-years' war. These champions of Christianity are far too numerous for individual mention. We may instance a few with their works: Cumberland,[51] Parker,[52] Wilkins,[53] Locke,[54] Lardner,[55] More,[56] Cudworth,[57] Howe,[58] Butler.[59] Varying phases of the persistent deism called for variations in the defensive and aggressive work of the Christian apologists. These variations in some measure appear in the titles of their works. While some

maintained a high doctrine of reason in questions of religion, others, especially some of the later apologists, assumed a ground far too low; but all agreed, and those of the higher doctrine as really as those of the lower, in the necessity and value of the Scriptures as a revelation of truth from God. All were thus wholly free from the errors of rationalism.[60] [51] De Legibus Naturae Disquisitio Philosophica.

[52]Demonstration of the Law of Nature and of the Christian Religion.

[53]The Principles and Duties of Natural Religion.

[54]Reasonableness of Christianity.

[55]Vindication of the Miracles of Our Lord.

[56]Dialogues; Mystery of Godliness.

[57]Intellectual System.

[58]Living Temple, part i.

[59]Analogy.

[60]Gillett:The Moral System, Introduction. The German rationalism is less definite and uniform than that of the English deism, but not less real. The same supremacy of reason is maintained. An inspiration of the Scriptures is often admitted, and also that it gives to the Scriptures value for religion. But it is not such an inspiration as answers to the truth of the doctrine; nor such as can give authority to the Scriptures in matters of faith and practice. As some minds are specially gifted in the sphere of philosophy, or statesmanship, or mechanics, or art, so some minds are specially gifted in the sphere of religion. But this is from an original endowment, not from any immediate divine inspiration. There is no true inspiration, and therefore no divine authority of the Scriptures. Their contents are subject to the determining test of human reason. Whatever will not answer to this test must be rejected. What remains cannot be conceded any divine authority, but must take its place in the plane of human reason. Any value it may possess for religion must arise, not from a divine original, but from the approval of our reason. The profoundest truths of Christianity must be open to philosophic treatment and determination. Reason must comprehend the divine Trinity and the personality of the Christ, if these doctrines are to be accepted as truths of religion. The consequence must be either their outright rejection or their utter perversion through a false interpretation. This unqualified subjection of the Scriptures, with all their doctrinal contents, to the determination of human reason is the essence of the German rationalism on the questions of religion. These statements are fully justified by the best definitions of rationalism, such as may be found in the works of Wegscheider, Standlin, Halm, Rose, Bretschneider, McCaul, Saintes, and Lecky. These definitions are given at length in the excellent work of Bishop Hurst.[61] The substance is in this brief definition: “Rationalism, in religion, as opposed to supernaturalism, means the adoption of reason as our sufficient and only guide, exclusive of tradition and revelation.”[62] [61] History of Rationalism, Introduction.

[62]Krauth-Fleming:Vocabulary.

Such rationalism leads on to the perversion or elimination of all the vital truths of Christian theology, not because they are in any proper sense opposed to human reason, but because they have their only source and sufficient ground in the Scriptures. If truths at all, they are divinely revealed truths. The ground of their truth lies in the evidences which verify the Scriptures as a divine revelation. To accept them simply on such ground is contrary to the ruling principles of rationalism. Their rejection is the legitimate consequence. That such consequence followed the prevalence of rationalism in Germany is simply the truth of history.[63] The inspiration of the Scriptures, the Adamic fall and corruption of the race, the redemption and salvation in the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, justification by faith, spiritual regeneration, a new life in the Holy Spirit—these vital truths could not remain under the dominance of rationalism. Their rejection is simply the consequence of their inconsistency with the determining principles of rationalism, and not that they are in any true sense opposed to our rational intelligence. There is nothing unreasonable in the doctrine of a divine revelation of truths of religion above our own power of discovery; nothing unreasonable in the vital truths so given in the Scriptures. Even the truths which surpass our power of comprehension do not contradict our reason. That any revealed truth should contradict our reason would itself contradict all the ruling ideas of a divine revelation. There are rights of reason in questions of religion which such a revelation may not violate, and which, indeed, would thereby render itself impossible. “We must have rational grounds for the acceptance of a supernatural revelation. It must verify its right to teach authoritatively. Reason must be competent to judge, if not of the content, at least of the credentials, of revelation. But an authority proving by reason its right to teach irrationally is an impossible conception.”[64] But truths of Scripture which, as the divine Trinity and the personality of the Christ, transcend our power of comprehension arc not on that account in any contradiction to our reason, nor in any proper sense irrational. The infinity of space is not an irrational idea. Indeed, it is a necessary truth of our reason; and yet it is quite as incomprehensible as either the divine Trinity or the personality of the Christ. But t:ie determining principles of rationalism, which hold the subjection of all questions of religion to a philosophic rationale, must reject these great and vital truths of Christianity.

[63]Hurst:History of Rationalism, chap. viii.

[64]Caird:Philosophy of Religion, pp. 69, 70. The high function of reason in questions of religion and theology, as previously maintained, is entirely free from all these errors of rationalism. It is thoroughly loyal to the Scriptures as a supernatural revelation of truth from God, and submissive to their authority in questions of faith and practice. It heartily accepts the vital truths of Christianity on the ground of their divine original. This is no blind submission of our reason to mere authority. The word of God contains within itself the highest reason of its truth. Nothing is accepted with higher reason of its truth than that which God has spoken. The Scriptures ground their claim upon our acceptance in the sufficient proofs that they are the word of God. In this they duly respect our rational intelligence. Evangelical theology ever renews this tribute. It is useless to object that the authority conceded to the Scriptures in questions of religion would require the belief of things most irrational, or even contradictory to our reason, if divinely revealed. The objection is ruled out as utterly irrelevant and groundless. Such a divine revelation is unthinkable.[65]

[65] Rose:The State of Protestantism in Germany; McCaul:Thoughts on Rationalism; Saintes:Histoire du Rationalisme; Lecky:History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe; Mansel:Limits of Religious Thought; Hurs:History of Rationalism;

Fisher:Faith and Rationalism; Hagenbacli:German Rationalism in its Rise, Progress,and Decline.

Chapter 5

005. IV. Systemization A Right of Theology.

IV. Systemization A Right of Theology.

Whatever is open to scientific treatment may rightfully, and with the warrant of reason, be so treated. There is no exception. On this common ground geology, physiology, and entomology rightfully take their place with astronomy, psychology, and anthropology in the list of the sciences. The denial of such right to theology would bar the entrance of science into the sphere which infinitely transcends every other in the richness of its material and the value of its truths.

1. Theology Open to Scientific Treatment.—In treating the scientific basis of theology we found in the facts all the certitude requisite to the construction of a science. The point here is that, beyond the requisite certitude, these facts are open to scientific construction. Out of the facts respecting God, as manifest in nature and revealed in Scripture, we may construct a doctrine of God. So out of the facts of Scripture we may construct a doctrine of the Trinity, and a doctrine of the person of Christ. Thus we may proceed, as theologians have often exemplified, with all the great truths of Christian theology respecting sin, atonement, justification, regeneration, and the rest. Then doctrine agrees with doctrine. The doctrines of sin, justification, and regeneration are in full scientific accord. The Christology of the Scriptures is necessary to their soteriology. The doctrine of soteriology through the atonement in Christ and the agency of the Holy Spirit requires the doctrine of the Trinity. Doctrines so related clearly admit of systemization.

2. Objections to the Systemization.—In view of the many divergences from a thoroughly evangelical theology, objections to systematic theology, and indeed to all doctrinal theology, should cause no surprise. Evangelical Christianity centers in the vital doctrines of Christian theology. Hence any departure from evangelical Christianity means opposition to its vital doctrines. Even some in evangelical association largely discount, or even decry, all doctrinal theology. This cannot be other than detrimental to the vital interests of Christianity.

One objection may be put in this form: Religion is a life, not a doctrine. This objection emphasizes the subjective form of religion. True religion is a right state of feeling and a practice springing out of such feeling. Religion is of the heart, not of the head. If the heart is right the religion is right, whatever be the doctrine. The meaning of the objection is that the cardinal doctrines of the Gospel may hinder a right state of religious feeling, but cannot be helpful to such a state. This view must be in favor with all forms of theological rationalism, and the more as the departure is the farther from a true evangelical ground. The truth in this case is that religion is both a life and a doctrine. Religion has its subjective form in an active state of the moral and religious sensibilities. We cannot else be religious. But doctrines have a necessary part in their conditioning relation to such a state of feeling. The truth of this statement is the truth of a vital connection of doctrines with the religious life. The contrary view is philosophically shallow and false to the facts of Christian history. A religious movement, with power to lift up souls into a true spiritual life, must have its inception and progress in a clear and earnest presentation of the vital doctrines of religion. The order of facts in every such movement in the history of Christianity has been, first a reformation of doctrine,

and then through the truer doctrine a higher and better moral and spiritual life. Let the Lutheran reformation and the Wesleyan movement be instanced in illustration. Such has ever been, and must forever be, the chronological order of these facts, because it is the logical order. When souls move up from a sinful life or a dead formalism into a true spiritual life they must have the necessary reasons and motives for such action. The religious feelings must be quickened into practical activity. This is the necessity for doctrinal truth. Religious feelings without definite practical truths to which they respond can have little beneficial result in the moral and spiritual life, because the necessary reasons and motives for such a life are not present to the mind. When such reasons and motives are presented they must be embodied in the vital doctrines of the Gospel. Why should we repent of sin? Why believe in Christ for salvation? Why be born of the Spirit? Why be consecrated to God in a life of holy obedience and love? The true answers to these profound questions of the religious life must give the essential doctrines of Christian theology. If we should repent of sin, God must be our moral Ruler, and we his subjects, with responsible moral freedom. If we should believe in Christ for salvation, he must be the divine Son of God, incarnate in our nature, and his blood an atonement for our sins. If we must be born of the Spirit, we are a fallen race, with native depravity, and the Spirit a divine personal agent in the work of our salvation. If we should be consecrated to God in a life of holy obedience and love, it must be for reasons of duty and motives of spiritual well-being which are complete only in the distinctive doctrines of Christianity. These doctrines are not mere intellectual principles or dry abstractions, but living truths which embody all the practical forces of Christianity. The spiritual life takes a higher form under evangelical Christianity than is possible under any other form, whether ritualistic or rationalistic, because therein the great doctrines of the Gospel are apprehended in a living faith and act with their transcendent practical force upon all that enters into this life. It is surely true that any theory which discounts the value of doctrines in the Christian life is philosophically shallow.[66] [66] Caird:Philosophy of Religion, pp. 165-175.

It is objected to the systemization of theology that it is valueless. In the logical order of the facts the formation of the doctrines severally must precede their construction in a system. Hence it is objected that the systemization can add nothing of value to these doctrines. It might here suffice to answer that if nothing is thus added neither is any thing abstracted; so that these doctrines suffer no detriment by their systemization. Hence the objection can have no special pertinence as against the systemization of theology, and really means opposition to all doctrinal theology. If, however, we have the doctrines, and must have the doctrines if we would have the life of Christianity, there can be no valid objection against their systemization. That systemization adds nothing of value is just the contrary of the truth. This question, however, has a more appropriate place.

One more objection we may notice. Doctrinal theology, and especially systematic theology, engenders bigotry. Neither by necessity nor even by any natural tendency is a system of theology which embodies the cardinal truths of Christianity the source of bigotry. When these doctrines are embraced in a living faith there must be a profound sense of their importance, and they may be, and should be, held with tenacity and maintained with earnestness. This is but a proper and dutiful contention for the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 1:3).Such contention, however, is not bigotry. It is no blind zeal for things indifferent or of little moment, but a living attachment to the vital truths of Christianity for the weightiest reasons. In the forms of rationalism from which our Lord is

almost entirely dismissed little Christian truth remains which any one should hold tenaciously or for which he should contend earnestly; but there is a bigotry of negation, and the self-styled liberalist is often most illiberal. As it respects bigotry or the spirit of a true magnanimity, evangelical theology has no concession to make to a vaunting liberalism.

3. Reasons for the Systemization.—There are many reasons. A few may be briefly stated. A scientific treatment or systemization of theology is a mental requirement. As by a mental tendency we are impelled to a study of the qualities of things, so by a tendency equally strong we are led to a study of their relations. This is inevitable in all profounder study. These relations are as real and interesting for thought as the things in their several individualities. The most thorough study of the facts of geology, natural history, astronomy, psychology, or ethics can neither satisfy nor limit the researches of thought. A law of the mind compels a comparison and classification of these facts in the order of their relations, and a generalization in the laws which unite and interpret them. There is the same mental requirement in the study of theology. The results justify the systemization. The beneficial results in science and philosophy are manifest. It is only through the inception of scientific thought, in however crude a form, that things begin to pass out of their isolated individualities into classes. In the extent of this result the knowledge of one is the knowledge of many. As classifications are broadened and grounded in deeper principles knowledge advances. The more comprehensive the generalizations the fuller is the knowledge. This is the only method of advancement from the merest rudiments of knowledge up to the highest attainments of science and philosophy. Theology must not be denied this method through which other spheres of study have profited so much. It has the same right as others. It is only through a scientific treatment of doctrines that the highest attainments in theology are possible. The scientific method is thus of value in theology, just as in other spheres of knowledge. The great doctrines of religion are most intimately related and must be in scientific accord. Their scientific agreement can be found only as they are brought into systematic relations. Each doctrine is the clearer as it is seen in the light of its harmony with other doctrines. With such relations of these doctrines, it is only through their systemization that we can reach the highest knowledge of theological truth.

V. Method of Systemization.

There is nothing in theology determinative of a oneness of method in the systemization of its doctrines. Hence variations of method naturally arise from different casts of mind. Some regard one truth as the more central and determining, while in the view of others, not less scientific or exact, some other truth should hold the ruling place. Such truth, whatever it may be, determines the method of systemization.

1. Various Methods in Use.—We have no occasion for even the naming of all these methods, much less for their review. Seven are given in the following very compact statement: “(a) The analytic method of Calixtus begins with the assumed end of all things, blessedness, and then passes to the means by which it is secured, (b) The trinitarian method of Leydecker and Martensen regards Christian doctrine as a manifestation successively of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, (c) The federal method of Cocceius, Witsius, and Boston treats theology under the two covenants, (d) The anthropological method of Chalmers and Rothe. The former begins with the disease of man andpasses to the remedy; the latter divides his dogmatic into the consciousness of sin and the consciousness of redemption, (e) The Christological method of Hase, Thomasius, and

Andrew Fuller treats of God, man, and sin as presuppositions of the person and work of Christ. Mention may also be made of (f) The historical method, followed by Ursinus, and adopted in Jonathan Edwards's History of Redemption ; and (g) The allegorical method of Dannhauer, in which man is described as a wanderer, life as a road, the Holy Spirit as a light, the Church as a candlestick, God as the end, and heaven as the home."[67] Only representative names are given with these several methods. Other names might be added and other methods given. Some would vary the above analysis and classification. While Edwards treats redemption in the order of its biblical history, his theological method is clearly Christological. That of Dannhauer is just as clearly anthropological.

[67]Strong:Systematic Theology, p. 27. The aim of such methods is a unity of systematic theology which is really unattainable. There is no one principle, as mostly these methods assume, in which all the doctrines unite—no one doctrine out of which all the others may be developed. This may readily be shown. In one theory blessedness is the assumed end of all things. How can we roach this view? Only through the idea of God. Hence this idea is first in order, and the deeper truth. Further, neither the doctrine of sin nor the doctrine of redemption can be deduced from the notion of blessedness as the end of existence. The anthropological method is quite as fruitless. There is no attainment of a Christian doctrine of sin without a Christian doctrine of God. Hence the latter cannot be deduced from the former. Nor can the Christian doctrine of atonement be deduced simply from the fact of sin. No deeper unity is reached through the Christological method. To the names above given with this method we may add that of Henry B. Smith as one of the latest to adopt it. With this Christological center his leading divisions are: 1. The antecedents of redemption; 2. The Redeemer and his work; 3. The consequents of redemption.[68] Antecedents and consequents are very different terms, and mean very different relations to Christ: the former, a relation simply in the order of time, the latter a relation in the order of effects, or at least in the order of logic. With this wide difference between the two classes of truths in their relation to Christ, the unity of systematic theology thus attempted is surely not attained. In the subdivisions the fruitlessness of the method, as it respects this unity, is manifest. There is nothing peculiar to this method, but all proceeds in the usual natural or logical order of the doctrinal topics. There is a profound sense in which the doctrine of Christ is the central truth of Christian theology ; but it is still true that other doctrines, such as the doctrine of God and the doctrine of the Trinity, must precede this doctrine, because we cannot else reach a true doctrine of the person and work of Christ. Hence the system of doctrines cannot be developed from a purely Christological source. This is really admitted by Nitzsch, though his own method is substantially the Christological: "It cannot, therefore, be doubted that the idea of a Redeemer, or the dogma of Christ, is the primary, fundamental, and inclusive dogma of Christian doctrine, as such; only the series of Christian dogmas cannot be developed in one and the same direction from the doctrine of the Redeemer; for the mere progressive development of the dogma of Christ looks back, in all its elements, upon other truths which, indeed, though not independent of Christ, of his being and state, still, at the same time, are acknowledged as suppositions of his personal being and work by means of a regressive development."[69] We have thus glanced at some of these methods to show their insufficiency for the deeper unity of systematic theology at which they aim. What is thus true of some is true of all.

[68]Introduction to Christian Theology, p. 225.

[69]System of Christian Doctrine, p. 124.

2. True Method in the Logical Order.—The method of treatment should conform to the nature of the subject. The deductive method is applicable to mathematics, but not to chemistry or psychology. Nor is it applicable to Christian theology, and for the reason already pointed out—that there is no one principle or doctrine from which the others may be deduced. In theology the work of systemization is constructive, and must proceed in a synthetic mode. In a true systemization each doctrine must be scientifically constructed, and the several doctrines must be brought into complete scientific accordance. No higher unity of systematic theology is attainable. The synthetic method will fully answer for this attainment. By the logical order of doctrines we here mean the order in which they arise for thought, and for the most intelligible treatment. In this view the logical order is little different from the natural order. Each truth, except the first, must take its place in such relation to preceding truths as shall set it in the clearest light. God is the ground-truth in religion, and therefore the first in order. Every other truth, if it would be the more clearly seen, must be viewed in the light of this first truth. For a like reason anthropology must precede Christology, and Christology must precede soteriology. This is what we here mean by the logical order.

3. Subjects as Given in the Logical Order.—Only a very summary statement is here required.

Theism: The existence of a personal God, Creator, Preserver, and Euler of all things.

Theology: The attributes of God; the Trinity; creation and providence—in the fuller light of revelation.

Anthropology: The origin of man; his primitive state and apostasy; the consequent state of the race.

Christology: The incarnation of the Son; the person of the Christ.

Soteriology: The atonement in Christ; the salvation in Christ.

Ecclesiology: The Church; the ministry; the sacraments; means of grace.

Eschatology: The intermediate state; the second advent; the resurrection; the judgment; the final destinies.

Apologetics is not of the nature of a Christian doctrine, and may properly be omitted from the system, as it often is. Any sufficient reason for its inclusion might properly require a treatment of all questions of canonicity, textual integrity, higher criticism, genuineness, and authenticity which in anywise concern the truth of a divine original of the Scriptures. Apologetics would thus become a disproportionate magnitude in a system of doctrines.

Neither is ethics, especially theoretical or philosophical ethics, of the nature of a Christian doctrine. It is true that the grounds and motives of Christian duty lie in Christian doctrine. The requirements of such duty should not be omitted, nor can they, in any proper treatment of soteriology. But it is not a requirement of systematic theology that ethics should form a distinct part.[70]

[70] On the method of systematic theology—Nitzsch:System of Christian Doctrine, Introduction, iv; Crooks and Hurst:Theological Encyclopedia and Methodology, pp. 420-424; Shedd:Dogmatic Theology, vol. i, chap, i; Dorner:System of Christian Doctrine, vol. i, pp. 168-184; Van

Oosterzee:Christian Dogmatics, Introduction; Rabiger:Theological Encyclopedia, vol. ii, Third Division.

006. Part I.— Theism

Part I.— Theism

007. Chapter 1: Preliminary Questions.

Chapter 1 Preliminary Questions.

008. I. The Sense of Theism.

I. The Sense of Theism.

1. Doctrinal Content of the Term.—Theism means the existence of a personal God, Creator, Preserver, and Euler of all things. Deism equally means the personality of God and also his creative work, but denies his providence in the sense of theism. These terms were formerly used in much the same sense, but since early in the last century deism has mostly been used in a sense opposed to the Scriptures as a divine revelation, and to a divine providence. Such is now its distinction from theism. Pantheism differs from theism in the denial of the divine personality. With this denial, pantheism can mean no proper work of creation or providence. The philosophic agnosticism which posits the Infinite as the ground of finite existences, but denies its personality, is in this denial quite at one with pantheism. The distinction of theism from these several opposing terms sets its own meaning in the clearer light. Creation and providence are here presented simply in their relation to the doctrinal content of theism. The methods of the divine agency therein require separate treatment. Nor could this treatment proceed with advantage simply in the light of reason; it requires the fuller light of revelation.

2. Historic View of the Idea of God.—Religion is as wide-spread as the human family and pervades the history of the race. But religion carries with it some form of the idea of God or of some order of supernatural existence. There is no place for religion without this idea. This is so thoroughly true that the attempts to found a religion without the notion of some being above us have no claim to recognition in a history of religion. But while religion so widely prevails it presents great varieties of form, especially in the idea of God, or of what takes the supreme place in the religious consciousness. Such differences appear in what are called the ethnic, religions, the religions of different races. Of these James Freeman Clarke enumerates ten.[71] Some make the number greater, others less. However, the exact number does not concern our present point. In the instances of Confucianism, Brahmanism, and Buddhism there are wide variations in the conception of God, and equally so in the other ethnic religions. As we look into details these variations are still more manifest. In view of the objects worshiped, the rites and ceremonies of the worship, the sentiments uttered in prayer and praise, we must recognize very wide differences of theistic conception. The case is not really other, because so many of these ideas are void of any adequate truth of theism. They are still ideas of what is divine to the worshiper and have their place in the religious consciousness. We can hardly think that in the low forms of idolatry there is nothing more present to religious thought and feeling than the idol. “Even the stock or stone, the rudest fetich before which the savage bows, is, at least to him, something more than a stock or stone; and the feeling of fear or awe or abject dependence with which he regards it is the reflex of a dim, confused conception of an invisible and spiritual power, of which the material object has become representative.”[72] [71] Ten Great Religions.

[72]Caird:The Philosophy of Religion, p. 177. See also, Flint:Antitheistic Theories, p. 521; Miller:Origin of Religion, p. 101.

3. Account of Perverted Forms of the Idea.—These perverted forms arise, in part, from speculations which disregard the imperative laws of rational thinking, and, in part—mostly, indeed—from vicious repugnances to the true idea. When God is conceived under the form of pantheism, or as the Absolute in a sense which precludes all predication and specially denies to him all personal attributes, the idea is the result of such speculation as we have just now characterized, or a creation of the imagination. In either form the idea is just as impotent for any rationale of the cosmos as the baldest materialism. Neither has any warrant in rational thought. When God is conceived under the forms of idolatry the conception is from a reaction of the soul against the original idea. The reaction is from a repugnance of the sensibilities to the true idea, not from any discernment of rational thought. This is the account which Paul gives of the source and prevalence of idolatry (Romans 1:21-25; Romans 1:28). His account applies broadly to the heathen world. “When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.” Thus closing their eyes to the light of nature in which God was manifest, they “changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.” It was because “they did not like to retain God in their knowledge.”

4. Definitive Idea of God.—A definition of God that shall be true to the truth of his being and character is a difficult attainment. This must be apparent whether we study definitions as given, or the subject of definition. God is for human thought an incomprehensible Being, existing in absolute soleness, apart from all the categories of genus and species. Hence the difficulty of definition. The true idea cannot be generalized in any abstract or single principle. As the Absolute or Unconditioned, God is simply differentiated from the dependent or related; as the Infinite, from the finite. The essential truths of a definition are not given in any of these terms. As the Unknowable, the agnostic formula is purely negative and without definitive content. Absolute will cannot give the content of a true idea of God. In order to the true idea, will must be joined with intellect and sensibility in the constitution of personality. Some of the divine titles have the form of a definition, but are not such in fact. God is often named the Almighty[73] but this expresses simply his omnipotence, which is only one of his perfections. Another title is Jehovah (Exodus 6:3),which signifies the eternal, immutable being of God; but while the meaning is profound the plenitude of his being is not expressed. “God is love” (1 John 4:16). There is profound truth here also; but the words express only what is viewed as supreme in God.

[73]Particularly in the book of Job. The citation of a few definitions may be useful. “The first ground of all being; the divine spirit which, unmoved itself, moves all; absolute, efficient principle; absolute notion; absolute end.” -Aristotle. This definition conforms somewhat to the author’s four forms of cause. It contains more truth of a definition than some given by professedly Christian philosophers. “The moral order of the universe, actually operative in life.” —Fichte. Lotze clearly points out the deficiencies of this definition.[74] It gives us an abstract world-order without the divine Orderer. “The absolute Spirit; the pure, essential Being that makes himself object to himself; absolute holiness; absolute power, wisdom, goodness, justice.”—Hegel. “A Being who, by his understanding and will, is the Cause (and by consequence the Author) of nature; a Being who has all rights and no duties; the supreme perfection in substance; the all-obligating Being; Author of a universe under moral law; the moral Author of the world; an Intelligence infinite in every respect.”—Kant. “God is derived incontestably from good and means the Good itself in the perfect

sense, the absolute Good, the primal Good, on which all other good depends—as it were, the Fountain of good. Hence God has been styled the Being of beings (ens entium), the supreme Being (ens summnm), the most perfect Being (ens perfectissimum s. realissimum).”—Krug. “The absolute, universal Substance; the real Cause of all and every existence; the alone, actual, and unconditioned Being, not only Cause of all being, but itself all being, of which every special existence is only a modification.”—Spinoza. This is a pantheistic definition. “The ens a se, Spirit independent, in which is embraced the sufficient reason of the existence of things contingent—that is, the universe.”—Wolf. These citations are found in the useful work of Krauth-Fleming.[75] Some of them contain much truth, particularly Hegel’s and Kant’s. The serious deficiency is in the omission of any formal assertion of the divine personality as the central reality of a true definition. On the other hand, too much account is made of the divine agency in creation and providence. This agency is very properly included in a definition of theism, particularly in its distinction from deism and pantheism, but is not necessary to a definition of God himself.

[74]Microcosmus, vol. ii, pp. 673, 674.

[75]Vocabulary of the Philosophical Sciences, pp. 683, 684.

We may add a few other definitions. “God is the infinite and personal Being of the good, by and for whom the finite hath existence and consciousness ; and it is precisely this threefold definition—God is spirit, is love, is Lord—this infinite personal Good, which answers to the most simple truths of Christianity.”[76] Martensen gives the elements of a definition substantially the same.[77] “God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.”[78] Dr. Hodge thinks this probably the best definition ever penned by man.

[76]Nitzsch:Christian Doctrine, p. 141.

[77]Christian Dogmatics, p. 73.

[78]Westminster Confession, Shorter Catechism.

Personality is the deepest truth in the conception of God and should not be omitted from the definition. With this should be combined the perfection of his personal attributes. All the necessary truths of a definition would thus be secured. Hence we define thus: God is an eternal personal Being, of absolute knowledge, power, and goodness.[79]

[79] We give a few references, in some of which, however, we find elaborate characterizations of God, rather than compact definitions. Watson:Theological Institutes, vol. i, pp. 263-269; Knapp:Christian Theology, pp. 85, 86; Cocker:Theistic Conception of the World, pp. 27-37; Martineau:Essays, Philosophical and Theological, vol. ii, pp. 187-189; Christlieb:Modern Doubt and Christian Belief, pp. 219-225; Shedd:Dogmatic Theology, vol. i, pp. 151-194; Lotze;Microcosmus, vol. ii, pp. 659-688.

009. II. Origin of the Idea of God.

II. Origin of the Idea of God.

1. Possible Sources of the Idea.—We here mean, not any mere notion of God without respect to its truth, or as it might exist in the thought of an atheist, but the idea as a conviction of the divine existence. How may the mind come into the possession of this idea?

There are faculties of mind which determine the modes of our ideas. Some we obtain through sense-perception. Sense-experience underlies all such perception. We cannot in this mode reach the idea of God. Many of our ideas are obtained through the logical reason. They are warranted inferences from verified facts or deductions from self-evident principles. Through the same faculty we receive many ideas, with a conviction of their truth, on the ground of human testimony. There are also intuitive truths, immediate cognitions of the primary reason. The conviction of truth in these ideas comes with their intuitive cognition. Through what mode may the idea of God be obtained? Not through sense-perception, as previously stated. Beyond this it is not necessarily limited to any one mental mode: not to the intuitive faculty, because it may be a product of the logical reason or a communication of revelation—to the logical reason; nor to this mode, because it may be an immediate truth of the primary reason.

If the existence of God is an immediate cognition of the reason, will it admit the support and affirmation of logical proof? We have assumed that it will. Yet we fully recognize the profound distinction in the several modes of our ideas. The logical and intuitive faculties have their respective functions, and neither can fulfill those of the other. Further, intuitive truths are regarded as self-evident, and as above logical proof. Yet many theists, learned in psychology and skilled in logic, while holding the existence of God to be an intuitive truth, none the less maintain this truth by logical proofs. We may mistake the intuitive content of a primary truth and assume that to be intuitive which is not really so. Many a child learns that two and three are five before the intuitive faculty begins its activity, particularly in this sphere. The knowledge so acquired is not intuitive .Yet that two and three are five is an intuitive truth. But wherein? Not in the simple knowledge which a child acquires, but in the necessity of this truth which the reason affirms, in the cognition that it is, and must be, a truth in all worlds and for all minds. That things equal to the same thing, or weights equal to the same weight, are equal to one another is an axiomatic truth; but it is its necessary truth that is an intuitive cognition, while a practical knowledge of the simple fact of equality may be acquired in an experimental mode. The point made is that some truths, while intuitional in some of their content, may yet be acquired in an experimental or logical mode. So, while the existence of God may be an immediate datum of the moral and religious consciousness, it may also be a legitimate subject for logical proofs. It is a truth in the affirmation of which the intuitive reason and the logical reason combine. Hence in holding the existence of God to be an immediate cognition of the mind we are not dismissing it from the sphere of logical proofs.

2. An Intuition of the Moral Reason.—The idea of God as a sense or conviction of his existence is a product of the intuitive faculty. There is an intuitive faculty of the mind—the faculty of immediate

insight into truth. Thorough analysis as surely finds such a faculty as it finds the other well-known faculties—such as the presentative, the representative, and the logical. To surrender these distinctions of faculty is to abandon psychology. To hold the others on the ground of such distinctions is to admit an intuitive faculty. It is just as distinct and definite in its function as the others, and just as different from them as they are from each other. There is nothing surer in psychology than the intuitive faculty. Of all mental philosophies the intuitional is the surest of its ground. The truths immediately grasped by the primary reason or the intuitive faculty are such as the axioms of geometry, space, time, being, causation, moral duty, and responsibility. The reality of an intuitive faculty means neither its independence of the mental state nor its equality in all minds. It may run through a vast scale of strength, just as the other faculties as they exist in different minds. It is conditioned by the mental development, and may be greatly influenced by the state of the sensibilities. Some of our intuitions, such as time and space, and the axioms of geometry, are purely from the intellect, and, therefore, quite free from such influence; but it is very different in the case of moral duty and responsibility, not less intuitional in their character. There may be a repugnance of the sensibilities so intense as to blind the mind to the reality of these truths. Even the more purely intellectual intuitions, such as causation itself, may be formally denied, simply because of their contrariety to the accepted system of philosophy, as in the instance of Hume and Mill. There is no place for the primary reason in the sensationalism which they espoused, and hence their denial of its reality. Such are the possible repressions or denials of the intuitive faculty, simply because it is a mental faculty and in such close relation with the others. Like the others, it must have proper opportunity for the fulfillment of its own functions. The trained mind has a much clearer insight into axiomatic truths than the rustic mind. The aesthetic intuitions of the cultured and refined greatly excel those of the crude mind whose life is little above the animal plane. The moral and religious intuitions of Paul infinitely transcended those of the self-debased and brutalized Nero. So much is the intuitive faculty subject to the mental state. It is none the less a reality in the constitution of the mind, with its own functions in our mental economy.

It is not only true that the intuitive faculty may thus be affected by our mental state, but also true that our moral intuitions are conditioned by the presence and activity of the appropriate moral feeling. Pure intellect may have immediate insight into axiomatic truths, but not into truths within the testhetic and moral spheres. Here the appropriate sensibility is the necessary condition. This does not mean that any of our sensibilities have in themselves cognitive power, but that they are necessary to some forms of cognition. “It would be absurd to say that the moral affections have anyplace in a question of natural history, or chemistry, or mechanics, or any department of science; because the moral affections have nothing to do with the faculties or perceptions which are concerned with that subject-matter; but in questions relating to religion the moral affections have a great deal to do with the actual perception and discernment by which we see and measure the facts which influence our decision.”[80] In like manner Hopkins distinguishes between pure reason and the moral reason, meaning by the former the faculty of immediate insight into truths which concern the intellect only, and by the latter the faculty of immediate insight into moral truths, particularly the ground of moral obligation. This insight he holds to be conditioned on a sensibility.[81] It is not meant that the moral reason is any less intuitive or rational than the pure reason, but only that, as related to a different class of truths, the moral sensibilities are necessary to its insight. That the sensibilities which condition such insight must be in a proper state or tone in

order to furnish the proper condition is clear to rational thought. That they may be, and often are, out of such state or tone is a fact above question. Hence neither errors of moral judgment nor even the denial, at times, of moral duty and responsibility makes any thing against the reality of a faculty of moral intuition. These facts will be of service in our further discussion.

[80]Mozley:Lectures and Other Theological Papers, p. 8.

[81]The Law of Love, p. 40. The idea of God is an intuition of the moral reason. We previously pointed out the only difference between pure reason and moral reason—that the latter is conditioned upon the appropriate sensibilities. There must be an activity of the moral or religious sensibilities, not as in themselves cognitive, but as necessary to the capacity of the mind for this intuition. The idea of God has the determining criteria of an intuition in its universality and necessity. Of course both are denied, but without the warrant of either facts or reason. In disproof of its universality instances of atheism are alleged. We have no dialectic interest in disputing the fact of real instances of speculative atheism, though not a few atheists deny it. If there really are such, they can easily be accounted for on the ground of facts previously explained. We have seen that sensationalism is possible as a philosophy, though it leads to a denial of all intuitional truths, causation itself, and the axiomatic truths of mathematics. We have seen that ‘through a perversity of the feelings the mind may be so blinded as not to see the most certain moral truths, or so prejudiced as openly to deny them. We have further seen that, while the moral and religious sensibilities are necessary to the intuition of moral and religious truth, they may be in a state of aversion or antagonism which refuses the proper condition for such intuition. It was shown that these facts do not in the least affect the reality of our intuitions. So neither the possibility nor the actuality of instances of speculative atheism can in the least discredit the truth that the idea of God is an intuition of the moral reason. When atheism puts itself forward as the contradiction of this truth it must be reminded that on the same principle it must deny all intuitive truths, for all have suffered a like contradiction. Indeed, atheism must deny all. No philosophy which renders atheism possible can admit the reality of our rational and moral intuitions. Theism is entirely satisfied with the issue at this point. It is grounded in the intuitional philosophy, while atheism is grounded in sensationalism, which must deny all intuitions of the reason. The truth is with theism. The criteria of an intuition are denied to the idea of God on the assumption that there are heathen tribes without this idea. Whether there are such instances is a question of fact. Whether their actuality would disprove the intuitive character of this idea is a question of logic. The absence of this idea from minds in the lower grades of heathenism could not dis-prIo.ve its intuitional character.[82] The reality of intuitional ideas does not mean their existence in infant minds, or even in the incipiency of youthful intelligence. In such states there is not yet the mental development necessary to the cognition of intuitive truths. This might be the case with the lowest heathen respecting the idea of God. That such minds know nothing of axiomatic truths, or of the principle of causation, or know not that five and five must be ten for all minds comprehending the terms, means nothing against the intuitional character of such truths.[83] So if such heathen should be found without any religious sentiment or any idea of God it would simply mean a lack of sufficient mental and moral development for the origin of such sentiment or idea.

[82]Morell;Philosophy of Religion, p. 294.

[83]McCosh:Intuitions of the Mind, pp. 48, 49.

Respecting the question of fact, the proof is against the existence of any such heathen. The profoundest students of man's deeper nature are reaching the one conclusion, that he is constitutionally religious. If this is the fact, as surely it is, only the strongest historic proof could verify the existence of any tribe wholly without a religion. There is no such proof. The many reports of such tribes have been discredited. Some of these reports may have been colored by prejudice. This would be quite natural, to minds in anywise skeptical or antitheistic. Not all prejudice is with theistic minds. That some have been without qualification for a proper judgment, or hasty in their conclusion, seems clear. It is not the adventurer, or sight-seer, or explorer, or even the student of some science of nature that has the proper qualification. There might be rare exceptions in the last instance. There is wanting the necessary knowledge of mind, the clear insight into the deeper nature of man. There is no other question on which the savage mind is so reserved or so difficult of access. "Many savages shrink from questions on religious topics, partly, it may be, from some superstitious fear, partly, it may be, from their helplessness in putting their own unfinished thoughts and sentiments into definite language."[84] This view is verified by facts. Muller gives an instance in which some good Benedictine missionaries labored three years among native Australians without discovering any adoration of a deity, whether true or false. Yet they afterward discovered that these "natives believed in an omnipotent Being, who created the world. Suppose they had left their station before having made this discovery, who would have dared to contradict their statements?" With such a case before us we see how easy it is for men without the proper qualification, with a sojourn of only a few days, with no other intercourse than through an interpreter, to bring away false reports of atheistic tribes.

[84]Muller:Origin and Growth of Religion, p. 91. See Flint:Antitheistic Theories, p. 356; and Quatrefages:The Human Species, p. 474.

Sir John Lubbock formally discusses this question, maintaining the position that among savages there are not a few atheistic tribes—people without any religion or any idea of a deity.[85] He surveys a very wide field and cites many authors. Professor Flint places him at the head of writers on that side of the question: "Sir John Lubbock is, so far as I am aware, entitled to the credit of having bestowed most care on the argument. He has certainly written with more knowledge and in a more scientific spirit than Buchner, Pouchet, O. Schmidt, or Moritz Wagner. He has brought together a much larger number of apparent facts than any one else on the same side has done."[86] It is with this author that Professor Flint joins issue, and follows him, "paragraph by paragraph."[87] It is made clear that in some instances Lubbock mistook the full meaning of some of the authors whom he cited; that other authors were themselves in error. Many authorities are cited which disprove their statements. The review is thorough and the refutation complete. Other profound students of this question reach the conclusion That the idea of God or of some supernatural being or beings is universal. "Little by little the light has appeared, and the result has been that Australians, Melanesians, Bosjesmans, Hottentots, Kaffirs, and Bechuanas have, in their turn, been withdrawn from the list of atheist nations and recognized as religious."[88] It should be noted that the peoples here named are among the lowest of the race. "Obliged, in my course of instruction, to review all human races, I have sought atheism in the lowest as well as in the highest. I have nowhere met with it, except in individuals, or in more or less limited schools, such as those which existed in Europe in the last century, or which may still be seen in the present day." [89]In connection with these citations there is a thorough discussion of this question, and one

thoroughly conclusive of the author's position. "We may safely say that, in spite of all researches, no human beings have been found anywhere who do not possess something which to them is religion; or, to put it in the most general form, a belief in something beyond what they can see with their eyes."[90] We thus have the authority of two most thorough students of this question, and to whose judgment must be conceded the utmost impartiality. In support of his own position, Muller cites Professor Tiele: "The statement that there are nations or tribes which possess no religion rests either on inaccurate observations or on a confusion of ideas. No tribe or nation has yet been met with destitute of belief in any higher beings, and travelers who asserted their existence have been afterwards refuted by facts. It is legitimate, therefore, to call religion, in its most general sense, a universal phenomenon of humanity."[91] [85] Prehistoric Times, chap. xv.

[86]Antitheistic Theories, p. 259.

[87]Ibid., lect. xii.

[88]Quatrefages:The Human Species, p. 4:75.

[89]Ibid., p. 482.

[90]Muller:Origin of Religion, p. 76 [91]Outlines of the History of Religion, p. 6. Tiele also is a high, authority on this question.

Religion even in its lowest form means the idea of some supernatural being or beings. No fetich devotee can invest a divinity in a brook or tree or stone without the previous idea of its existence. The same is true up through all grades of idolatry. There are higher ideas of divinity than the idol would suggest. Idolatry is born of religious degeneration; its lowest forms, of successive degenerations. It would please evolutionists to find in fetichism a primitive religion, but the facts of religious history forbid it. These facts point to a primitive monotheism. The doctrine of St. Paul is primitive fully vindicated, that idolatry is born of religious degeneration from a knowledge of the true God. The most ancient ethnic religions, however idolatrous in their later history, were originally monotheistic. Such was the Egyptian. Renouf, after maintaining this view, proceeds thus: "There are many very eminent scholars who, with full knowledge of all that can be said to the contrary, maintain that the Egyptian religion is essentially monotheistic, and that the multiplicity of gods is only due to the personification of 'the attributes, characters, and offices of the supreme God.' No scholar is better entitled to be heard on this subject than the late M. Emmanuel Rouge, whose matured judgment is as follows: 'No one has called in question the fundamental meaning of the principal passages by the help of which we are able to establish what ancient Egypt has taught concerning God, the world, and man. I said God, not the gods. The first characteristic of the religion is the Unity [of God] most energetically expressed: God, One, Sole and Only; no others with Him. He is the Only Being—living in truth. Thou art One, and millions of beings proceed from thee. He has made every thing, and he alone has not been made. The clearest, the simplest, the most precise conception.'"[92] James Legge, professor of the Chinese language and literature in the University of Oxford, maintains the monotheism of the primitive religion of the Chinese.[93] Monotheism is found in the religion of the very ancient Aryans, the genetic source of the Hindus and Persian, Greek and Roman, Teuton and Celt. In the name Heaven-Father, under which that ancient people knew and worshiped God, Muller finds a bud which bloomed into perfection in the Lord's Prayer. "Thousands of years have passed since the Aryan nations separated to travel to the

north and south, the west and the east; they have each formed their languages, . . . but when they search for a name for what is most exalted and yet most dear to every one of us, when they wish to express both awe and love, the infinite and the finite, they can but do what their old fathers did when, gazing up to the eternal sky, and feeling the presence of a Being as far as far, and as near as near can be; they can but combine the self-same words and utter once more the primeval Aryan prayer, Heaven-Father, in that form which will endure forever, 'Our Father which art in heaven.'"[94] A few references may be given.[95] [92] Renouf:The Religion of Ancient Egypt, pp. 92, 93.

[93]The Religions of China, pp. 8-11.

[94]Muller:Science of Religion, p. 72.

[95]Maurice:Religions of the World, lects. ii-iv; Wordsworth:The One Religion, pp. 33-36 ; Rawlinson:Religions of the Ancient World, pp. 29-31. The idea of a divine existence is a necessary intuition of the mind. By a necessary intuition we mean one that springs immediately from the constitution of the mind, and that, under the proper conditions, must so spring. As there is thus a necessary intuition of axiomatic, aesthetic, and moral truths, so is there a necessary intuition of a divine existence. Instances of speculative atheism cannot disprove this fact. Nor could the discovery of atheistic tribes of heathen disprove it. We previously explained the consistency of such facts with the universality of the idea of God; and in the same manner their consistency with its necessity is fully explained. That explanation need not here be repeated. The universality of the idea of God means its necessity, or that, under the proper conditions, it is spontaneous to the moral and religious constitution of the mind. There is no other sufficient account of its universality. The account has often been attempted on the ground of tradition. This has been a favorite method with some Christian apologists who maintain the necessity of a divine revelation against that form of infidelity which holds the sufficiency of the light of nature for all the moral and religious needs of man.[96] As tradition is presented simply as the mode of perpetuating the idea of God, this method of accounting for its universality must assume a primitive revelation of the idea. Of course no antitheistic theory could admit such an original. Christian theists do not question the fact of such a primitive revelation, but may with reason dispute the sufficiency of tradition for its perpetuation through all generations. It is true that some traditions, even without any element of profound permanent interest, have lived through all the centuries of human history, as, for instance, some incidents of the fall of man and the Noachian flood; but it cannot hence be inferred that the idea of God could be thus perpetuated. There is a wide difference in the two cases. The difference lies in this, that the idea of God has ever encountered a strong antagonism in the human sensibilities. We have seen that on this ground St. Paul accounts for the religious degeneration from the knowledge and worship of the true God into idolatry, and that the history of religion confirms this account. Mere tradition could not have perpetuated the primitive revelation against such a force. Were not the idea of God native to the human mind this antagonism of the sensibilities, strengthened and intensified by vicious habits, would long ago have led most races to its utter abandonment. It is this innateness of the idea that has perpetuated it in human thought and feeling.[97]

[96] We may instance Ellis:Knowledge of Divine Things from Revelation, Not from Reason or Nature; Leland:Necessity of Revelation; Watson:Theological Institutes, part i, chaps, iii-vi.

[97]Flint: Theism, pp. 33, 338; Cocker:Christianity and Greek Philosophy, pp. 86-96.

Some would account for the universality of this idea through the manifestation of God in the works of nature. In this view there is doubtless reference to the well-known words of Paul (Romans 1:19-20). There is a further teaching of Paul on this question (Romans 2:14-15). The two passages are not in any contrariety, but clearly mean different modes of the idea of God and duty. The law written in the heart means an intuition of God and duty in the moral reason. This is so different from the manifestation of God in the outward works of nature that it cannot take the same place with that manifestation in the service of those who in that mode would account for the universal idea of a God. With this distinction between the moral reason and the works of nature as a manifestation of God, these works address themselves to the logical reason, and the conclusion of his existence can be reached only through a logical process. But the idea of God does not wait for our reasoning processes. It springs into life before the logical faculty gets to work, especially upon so high a theme. Exemplifications are without number. The heathen world is full of them. If the logical process is disclaimed the theory is surrendered, and beholding the works of nature becomes the mere occasion of the idea of God, while the idea itself is native to the moral and religious constitution of the mind. It remains true that the universality of the idea means its necessity. The idea therefore answers to the essential criteria of an intuition in its universality and necessity.

Neither a primitive revelation, nor the logical reason, nor both together could account for the persistence and universality of the idea of a God without a moral and religious nature in man to which the idea is native. “A revelation takes for granted that he to whom it is made has some knowledge of God, though it may enlarge and purify that knowledge.”[98] The voice of God must first be uttered within the soul. “But this voice of the divine ego does not first come to the consciousness of the individual ego, from without, rather does every external revelation presuppose already this inner one ; there must echo out from within man something kindred to the outer revelation, in order to its being recognized and accepted as divine.” [99]We are not here contradicting a previous position, that the idea of God might have its origin in either revelation or the logical reason. With the truth of that position, from which we do not depart, it would still be true that only with the intuitive source of the idea could it hold possession of the soul with such persistence and universality. It is true that in the history of the race we mostly find the theistic conception far below the truth of theism; but we have given the reasons for this fact without finding in them any contradiction to its intuitional character. When we consider how early this idea rises in the mind; how persistently it holds its place through all conditions of the race; how it cleaves to humanity through all perversions and repugnances, we must think it an intuition of the moral reason.[100] [98] H. B. Smith:Faith and Philosophy, p. 18.

[99]Wuttke:Christian Ethics, vol. ii, p. 103.

[100]Mansel:Limits of Religious Thought, p. 115; Muller:Science of Religion, p. 12; Raymond:Systematic Theology, vol. i, pp. 247-262; Fisher;Supernatural Origin of Christianity, pp. 563-575; Temple:Religion and Science, lect. ii; Van Oosterzee:Christian Dogmatics, vol. i, p. 339; Calderwood;Philosophy of the Infinite, p. 46.

3. Objective Truth of the Idea.—Our intuitions must give us objective truth. This may be denied, but only with the implication of agnosticism or utter skepticism. No mental faculty can be more

trustworthy than the intuitive. If our intuitions are not truths, no results of our mental processes can be trusted. Our perceptions can have no warrant of truthfulness. Perception itself is as purely a mental work as any act of intuition. The sense-experiences which precede and condition our perceptions can be no guarantee against errors of result. If the mind cannot be trusted in its intuitions, why should it be trusted in the interpretation of the sense-experiences which mediate its perceptions? Mistakes have been made in all spheres where results are reached through a mental process, while no intuition has ever been found in error. Whatever material experience may furnish the scientist, and however necessary or useful it may be, yet the construction of a science is itself a purely mental work. All logical processes are purely mental. Mistakes are made in both experience and logic, yet we trust our faculties in both. Much more should we trust our intuitions. The more closely our mental processes are related to intuitive principles the more certainly are the results true. Hence, to deny the truthfulness of our intuitions is to discredit all our mental faculties, with agnosticism or utter skepticism as the result.

If theism must be exchanged for atheism, all rational intelligence must be added to the sacrifice. Atheism can demand nothing less. If our faculties are wholly untrustworthy, or if all mental facts belong to the order of material causalities, as atheism must assume, mind as a rational agency can have no place or part in the system. It is in this view that some Christian philosophers hold theism to be the necessary and only sufficient ground of rational intelligence. “We analyze the several processes of knowledge into their underlying assumptions, and we find that the assumption which underlies them all is a self-existent intelligence, who not only can be known by man, but must be known by man in order that man may know any thing besides.” [101]“The processes of reflective thought essentially imply that the universe is grounded in and is the manifestation of reason. They thus rest on the assumption that a personal God exists.”[102] “We conclude, then, from the total argument, that if the trustworthiness of reason is to he maintained it can be only on a theistic basis; and since this trustworthiness is the presupposition of all science and philosophy, we must say that God, as free and intelligent, is the postulate of both science and philosophy. If these are possible, it can be only on a theistic basis.”[103] If knowledge is possible there must be a rational order of things in correlation with rational mind. On the ground of atheism there can be no such order, and no such mind. Science and philosophy are no longer possible, rational intelligence no longer a characteristic of mind. Yet, after all grounds of knowledge are denied, atheism proceeds to give us a rational account of the cosmos from the initial movement in the primordial fire-mist up to the culmination in man. Down with reason in order to a riddance of God; up with reason to an independence of any rational ground of the universe. This is the demand. “Poor atheism . . . first puts out its eyes by its primal unfaith in the truth of our nature and of the system of things, and then proceeds to make a great many flourishes about ‘reason,’ ‘science,’ ‘progress,’ and the like, in melancholy ignorance of the fact that it has made all these impossible. If consistent thinking were still possible one could not help feeling affronted by a theory which violates the conditions of all thinking and theorizing. It is an outlaw by its own act, yet insolently demands the protection of the laws it seeks to overthrow. Supposing logical thought possible, there seems to be no escape from regarding atheism as a pathological compound of ignorance and insolence. On the one hand, there is a complete ignorance of all the implications of valid knowing, and on the other a ludicrous identification of itself with science.”[104] [101] Porter:The Human Intellect, p. 662.

[102]Harris:Philosophical Basis of Theism, p. 81.

[103]Bowne:Philosophy of Theism, pp. 116, 117.

[104]Ibid., p. 265.

If atheism is true, then man is out of harmony with truth, and is by his own mental constitution determined to error. The error to which he is thus determined is no trivial idea, but one that has wrought more deeply and thoroughly into human thought and feeling than any other. Such is the idea of God. Singular it is that the forces of material nature should ever originate such an idea, and singular that they should make man the victim of such a delusion and in such discord with reality, while at the same time evolving the harmonies of the universe. Man is not so formed. His mental faculties are trustworthy, and he is capable of knowledge. The intuitions of his reason are absolute truths. The intuition of God in the moral reason of the race is the truth of his existence.

010. Chapter 2: Proofs Of Theism.

Chapter 2 Proofs Of Theism.

Arguments in proof of theism are of two kinds: the ontological or a priori, and the a posteriori. Of the former kind there is really only one argument, though it is constructed in different forms. Its principle or ground is a conception of God which is assumed to conclude his existence. The a posteriori arguments are variously named and classed. We shall treat them under the terms cosmological, teleological, and anthropological, and in the order as thus named. These arguments are inductive in logical form, and proceed from phenomena to ground, from particulars to principle or few, from effects to cause. The cosmological is grounded in the principle of causation, and proceeds with the dependence of the cosmos as the requirement of a personal cause. The teleological takes the position of final cause, and proceeds with the evidences of rational purpose in the adjustments of the cosmos. The anthropological, partly cosmological and partly teleological in method, proceeds with facts in the constitution and history of man which evince and require, not only intelligence and will, but also a moral nature in the Author of his existence. These arguments are simple in form, and were in use in this discussion long before the Christian era. They are open to almost limitless elaboration, but may be presented in brief form. This shall be the manner of our own treatment.

011. I. The Ontological Argument.

I. The Ontological Argument.

1. Logical Ground of the Argument.—This argument is grounded in some primary conception of God, or in some a priori truths, which are assumed to embody the proof of his existence. These primary conceptions vary in different constructions of the argument; but the variations need not here be stated, as they must appear in the progress of the discussion. We have no occasion to notice the slighter shades of variation. It will suffice that we present the argument in a few leading forms of its construction.

2. Different Constructions of the Argument.—The original of this argument is conceded to Anselm. His own construction of it is substantially in this form: We have the idea of the most perfect Being, a Being than whom a greater or more perfect cannot be conceived. T his idea includes, and must include, actual existence, because actual existence is of the necessary content of the idea of the most perfect. An ideal being, however perfect in conception, cannot answer to the idea of the most perfect. Hence we must admit the actual existence, for only with this content can we have the idea of the most perfect Being. This most perfect Being is God. Therefore God must exist.[105]

[105] Anselm:Proslogion, translated, with Gaunilon's criticism and Anselm's reply, in Bibliotheca Sacra, July and October, 1851. Of course this argument could not pass unquestioned. Gannilon, a monk of Marmoutier, was promptly forward with a logical criticism.[106] Many have followed him. One point of criticism is obvious. We readily form the idea of purely imaginary beings. Hence actual existence cannot be deduced from any such idea. Anselm replied, and his reply has often been repeated, that the objection is valid with respect to imperfect or finite beings, because in their case actual existence is not of the necessary content of the idea, but that it is groundless as against the idea of the most perfect Being, because in this case actual existence is of the necessary content of the idea. This idea is not an intuitive conception. Proper analysis discloses the process of its construction. There is put into it whatever is regarded as necessary to constitute it the conception of the most perfect Being. For this reason the actual existence of the Being conceived must be put into the content of the idea. It is easy to add necessary existence to the actual existence of such a Being. But the possession of an idea merely through such a process of logical construction cannot conclude the truth of the divine existence.[107] [106] Liber pro Insipienti.

[107]Ueberweg:History of Philosophy, vol. i, pp. 378, 383-386. The argument as constructed by Des Cartes is thus summarily stated I "I find in me the notion of God, which I cannot have formed by my own power, since it involves a higher degree of reality than belongs to me. It must have for its Author God himself, who stamped it upon my mind, just as the architect impresses his stamp on his work. God's existence follows also from the very idea of God, since the essence of God involves existence—eternal and necessary existence."[108] The last sentence, so far as it constitutes a distinct argument, drops into the Anselmic form, and hence requires no separate consideration. To the argument, as put in the former part of the citation, it is objected—just as

against the Anselmic—that we have ideas of purely imaginary beings, and hence that objective reality is no implication or consequence of our mental conception. The objection is admitted so far as it relates to ideas of finite existences, and for the reason that the mind itself can originate such ideas; but it is declared groundless respecting the idea of God, for the origin of which he only is sufficient cause.

[108]Ibid., vol. ii, pp. 41, 43.

It can hardly escape notice that this argument is inductive rather than ontological, and really the same in its principles and method as the cosmological argument. Nor is it conclusive. The assumption that the idea of God cannot originate in the human mind is neither self-evident nor provable. The conclusion of God's existence as its only sufficient cause can have no more certainty than that primary assumption.[109] [109] Saisset:Modern Pantheism, vol. i, pp. 27-64.

Dr. Samuel Clarke attempted a demonstration of the existence of God mostly on a priori principles, and so far constructed an ontological argument.[110] A brief statement of his leading principles will suffice: 1. Something has existed from eternity. As something now is, something always was; for, otherwise, present things must have been produced from nothing, which is absolutely impossible. 2. There has existed from eternity some one unchangeable and independent Being; for, otherwise, there must have been an eternal succession of changeable and dependent beings, which is contradictory and absurd. 3. The unchangeable and independent eternal Being must be self-existent, or exist necessarily. This necessity must be absolute, as originally in the nature of the thing itself, and not simply from the demand of thought. From these principles further deductions are made respecting the perfections of the one eternal Being. The further attempt to prove the necessary existence of an eternal and infinite Being from the nature of space and time does not add to the strength of the argument. It may readily be granted that infinite space and infinite duration are necessities of thought and realities in fact; but they are not such realities as require a ground in essential or infinite being. They are neither attributes nor modes of such being, and would in themselves be the very same were there no essential being, or no mind to conceive them.

[110]Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God, in the Boyle Lectures, vol. ii.

Kant's construction of this argument is not unlike that of Clarke. Necessary existence is the only ground of possible existence; there fore some being must necessarily exist. The necessary Being is single; is simple; is immutable and eternal; is the supreme reality; is a Spirit; is God.[111] These several points are briefly but vigorously maintained.

[111]Grounds of Proof for the Existence of God: Richardson's translation.

We have presented only a few of the many forms in which this argument has been constructed. The chief aim has been to give a little insight, into its principles and method. Its prominence in theistic discussion is such that it could not with propriety be omitted. Estimates of its value as a proof of theism greatly differ. With some, now the very few, it is the strongest proof, while with others it is logically valueless. Among recent authors, Dr. Shedd occupies in its treatment two thirds of the pages given to the proofs of theism, while Bishop Foster dismisses it with little more notice than to remark that he never caught the argument.[112] [112] For full historic information respecting this argument: Flint:Theism, lect. ix, with notes.

012. II. The Cosmological Argument.

II. The Cosmological Argument. This argument requires the truth of three things: the principle of causation; the dependence of the cosmos: the inadequacy of the forces of nature to its formation. Only with the truth of each can the argument furnish any proof of theism. With the truth of each the proof is conclusive.

1. Validity of the Law of Causation.—It is the doctrine or law of causation that every phenomenon or event must have a cause. Mere antecedence, however uniform, will not answer for the idea of cause. There must be a causal efficience in the antecedence; an antecedence with which the phenomenon or event must result, and without which it cannot result. Such is the idea of causation in which the cosmological argument is grounded. Certain postulates of the principle will be subsequently stated in order to set it in the clearest light. The principle of causation is a truth of the reason; a self-evident truth; a truth which one may speculatively deny, but the contrary of which he cannot rationally think. The principle is practically true for all men; true in mechanics, in chemistry, in the laws of geology, in the science of astronomy, in the conservation of energy. As a self-evident or necessary truth, it needs no proof; it needs only to be set in the clear light.

“Now, that our belief in efficient causation is necessary can be made plain. Let any one suppose an absolute void, where nothing exists. He, in this case, not only cannot think of any thing beginning to be, but he knows that no existence could come into being. He affirms this—every man in the right use of reason affirms it with the same necessity with which he affirms the impossibility that a thing should be, and not be, contemporaneously. The opposite, in both cases, is not only untrue, but inconceivable—contradictory to reason. Such is the foundation of the principle, ex nihilo nihil fit. But if a phenomenon is wholly disconnected from its antecedents, if there be no shadow of a causal nexus between it and them, we may think them away, and then we have left to us a perfectly isolated event, with nothing before it. In other words, it is just as impossible to think of a phenomenon which stands in no causal connection with any thing before it as it is to think of an event, or even of a universe, in the act of springing into being out of nothing. Futile is the attempt to empty the mind of the principle of efficient causation; and were it successful, its triumph would involve the overthrow of all assured knowledge, because it would be secured at the cost of discrediting our native and necessary convictions.”[113] The special point of value in this citation is in setting the idea of an event in the clear light of absolute isolation from cause. No man who is true to rational thought can think the possibility of such an event. That he cannot is because the idea of efficient causation is a necessary idea. No axiom of geometry asserts for itself a profounder necessity of thought.

[113]Fisher:Supernatural Origin of Christianity, pp. 543, 544.

Hume vainly attempted to explain the idea of causation as arising from the observation of invariable sequence in the processes of nature.[114] This would give its genesis in experience, and deprive it of all intuitive character. The interpretation contradicts the original necessity. If the idea had no deeper origin, thinkers could easily free their minds from the conviction of its

necessary truth. This they cannot do. Nor has invariability of succession any thing to do with the origin of the idea. Back of all observation of the uniformity of events, and on occasion of any individual fact, there is present to thought the necessary principle that every event must have a cause. Uniformity of succession may condition the knowledge of a particular cause, but cannot condition the idea of efficient cause. This arises immediately and necessarily on the observation of the most isolated event. “The discovery of the connection of determinate causes and determinate effects is merely contingent and individual—merely the datum of experience; but the principle that every event should have its causes is necessary and universal, and is imposed on us as a condition of our human intelligence itself.”[115] [114] Inquiry Concerning the Human Understanding, sec. vii;A Treatise of Human Nature, book i, sec. xiv.

[115]Hamilton:Metaphysics, p. 534.

Brown professedly finds a deeper origin of the idea of cause than that given by Hume, but equally eliminates from his doctrine all necessity of the idea.[116] Beyond any observed uniformity of succession, there is the broader idea that under the same conditions the past has been, and the future will be, as the present. But so long as the principle of causation is omitted nothing of real value is added to the doctrine of Hume. Nor is there, apart from the omitted principle of causation, any ground for this hypothetic extension of the idea of invariable sequence.[117] [116] Inquiry into the Relation of Cause and Effect.

[117]Mill’s doctrine substantially that of Hume and Brown:Logic, book iii, chaps, xxi, xxii. The idea of cause is not completed without the element of adequacy. The notion of efficiency must rise into the notion of sufficiency. Any deficiency of cause would leave the whole surplus of result as utterly unaccounted for as if there were no cause. Hence the necessity of thought for efficient causation equally requires an adequate cause—a cause which shall account for the entire effect. This principle has important implications. Could the eternity of matter and the eternal activity of its forces be proved beyond question, and could the nebular cosmogony, as it respects the formation of material orbs, be equally proved, these facts would fall infinitely short of a sufficient account in causation for life in its manifold forms, or for mind with its large rational and moral endowments. The idea of causation is complete only with the idea of an original cause. Mostly, the term ultimate is here used for the expression of the idea, but we prefer the term original. There is no cause which satisfies the idea of causation in a concatenation of causes, or in a series of natural events. However long the series, each event is as much an effect as a cause. However long the chain, the first link is as really an effect as any intermediate or even the last link, and equally requires a cause. But a beginning can have no cause under a law of mediate causation. There is still the necessity for an original, self-efficient cause; a cause having forward relation to effects, but no backward relation to cause. The cause which satisfies our necessary idea must stand back of all events in the chain of mediate causes, and in absolute independence of them. “When we speak of a cause then, and of the idea of a cause which we have in our minds, the question to be decided is. Does this idea demand finality, or is it satisfied by an infinite chain and series of causes? We assert, then, that this idea demands finality; and adopting the maxim, ‘Causa causae, causa causati,’ we say that if a cause goes back to a further cause, then the first of these two causes is not a true and real cause, and does not satisfy the idea of a cause in our minds; and so on through ever so long a chain, until we come to a cause which has no further cause to which it goes back. That is our interpretation of the idea of cause, and we say that any other interpretation of the idea

is a false one, and sets up a counterfeit cause instead of a real and true one. Let us examine what we do in our minds, in conceiving the idea of cause. First we go back for a cause; the natural want and ■ρεξις is a retrogressive motion of the mind. But just as the first part of the idea of cause is motion, so the last is a rest; and both of these are equally necessary to the idea of cause. And unless both of these are fulfilled in the ultimate position of our minds, we have not the proper idea of causation represented in our minds; but a law of thought is violated, that law which we obey in submitting to the relation of cause at all."[118] [118] Mozley:Faith and Free Thought, p. 20.

Eternity of being is an inevitable implication of the principle of causation. If being is a reality, being must have been eternal. Nothing can be no cause. Hence an antecedent nothingness would mean the origin of being and of the universe from nothing. This is impossible in fact, and impossible in thought. Being must have been eternal. "The idea of causation applied to this universe, then, as has been said, takes us up to an Eternal, Original, Self-existing Being. For 'how much thought soever,' says Clarke, 'it may require to demonstrate the other attributes of such a Being, . . . yet as to its existence, that there is somewhat eternal, infinite, and self-existing, which must be the cause and original of all other things—this is one of the first and most natural conclusions that any man who thinks at all can form in his mind. . . . All things cannot possibly have arisen out of nothing, nor can they have depended on one another in an endless succession. . . . We are certain therefore of the being of a Supreme Independent Cause; . . . that there is something in the universe, actually existing without, the supposition of whose not-existing plainly implies a contradiction. 'Kant agrees with Clarke up to this point in the argument. He coincides with him in the necessity of an ultimate or a First Cause, as distinguished from an infinite chain of causes. 'The reason,' he says, 'is forced to seek somewhere its resting point in the regressus of the conditional. . . . If something, whatever it may be, exists, it must then be admitted that something exists necessarily. For the contingent exists only under the condition of another thing, as its cause, up to a cause which exists not contingently, and, precisely on this account, without condition, necessarily. This is the argument whereon reason founds its progression to the original Being. . . . I can never complete the regression to the conditions of the existing, without admitting a necessary being. . . . This argument, though certainly it is transcendental, since it rests upon the internal insufficiency of the contingent, is still so simple and natural that it is adapted to the commonest intelligence.'"[119] [119] Mozley:Faith and Free Thought, pp. 39-31.

These are the necessary ideas of causation: efficiency, adequacy, originality; and these ideas require for the satisfaction of thought an eternal being as the ground of dependent existences.[120]

[120] Porter:The Human Intellect, pp. 569-592; Hamilton:Metaphysics, lects. xxxix, xl; McCosh:Intuitions of the Mind, pp. 238-244; Cousin:History of Modern Philosophy, lect. xix; Bishop Foster:Theism, pp. 167-250; Diman:The Theistic Argument, lect. iii; Mozley:Faith and Free Thought, pp. 3-48; Randies:First Principles of Faith, part ii; Calderwood:Philosophy of the Infinite, chap. vii.

2. Dependence of the Cosmos.—At an earlier day contingency was mostly used instead of dependence for the expression of the same idea. Leibnitz proceeded a contingentia mundi to the proof of the divine existence. We use the word dependence as now preferable. The question of dependence is mainly the question of a temporal origin of the cosmos. Whatever begins or

becomes is dependent upon a sufficient cause for its existence. This truth is determined by the principle of causation. Science verifies the dependence of the cosmos. A summary statement of facts will show this.

We begin with man. The human race is of recent origin. The proof is in geology and paleontology. Remains of man and traces of his agency are found only in a very recent geological period; and the principles of the science determine the impossibility of an earlier existence.

We proceed with the lower forms of life, animal and vegetable. Science traces their history, classifies their orders, and marks their succession in the times of their appearance. Through these successions science reaches a beginning of life, and back of it an azoic state, and a condition of the world in which the existence of life was impossible. The nebular cosmogony, the latest and, scientifically, most approved theory, finds a beginning of worlds. When we speak of the nebular cosmogony as, scientifically, the most approved theory, we mean simply as an order of world-formations. Many would see in it the method of the divine working instead of the working of purely natural forces. The theory starts with the assumption of a vastly diffused fire-mist as the primordial condition of the matter out of which the solar system and the universe were formed. By the radiation of heat and the force of gravitation this mass was subject to a process of condensation. To this is added a rotary motion as upon an axis. The rapidity of this motion caused many diremptions—one, of a mass sufficient for the solar system. This mass was subject to the same laws as the original whole, and in process of time dropped off a fragment which formed itself into the remotest planet; and thus successively all the planets were formed. In this same order the universe was formed. This is the theory. It is simple in idea, however difficult of any rationale on purely natural grounds. If the theory be true, all matter once existed in a worldless state; so that there must have been a beginning, not only of all living orders and of life itself, but a beginning of worlds and systems of worlds.

We reach a beginning in another mode. Cosmical facts arise in an order of succession. This is a truth of science. It is in the facts which conclude the time-origin of the succession in cosmos; in cosmogony; in geology; in evolution. All cosmical theories which assume to build the cosmos through primordial forces of nature must admit an order of succession in cosmical facts. This succession postulates a beginning. It gives us successive measures of time, not in equal but in veritable periods of limited duration. These, however numerous and extended, can never compass eternity. The cosmical past must be finite in time. There was a beginning of all things. In all beginning there is dependence. A beginning is an event which must have a cause. All that begins or becomes is thus dependent. This includes all that constitutes the cosmos from the lowest forms of physical order up to man; for the dependence upon causation lies not only in an original beginning, but equally in all new beginnings and in all higher becomings.

3. Inadequacy of Natural Forces to its Formation.—We must not under this head anticipate what belongs to the scope of the teleological and anthropological arguments, though all argument would be in proper order here. The inadequacy of the forces of nature to the formation of the cosmos appears the clearer and stronger in the light of these arguments. It is also true that they lift us to higher theistic conceptions than the cosmological argument. Still the distinction of these arguments is proper, and in the result profitable. But when this distinction is made it should not afterward be overlooked; nor should the cosmological be the subject of adverse criticism because

it does not attain to all the revelation of God that is possible only to the three arguments. “It is only when we have completed and perfected the idea, and when we return to it with the results of further inquiry, that the idea of a first cause becomes clothed with religious significance. Yet, incomplete and unsatisfactory as is the mere abstract conception of a first cause, it is still an essential part of that complex and comprehensive reasoning on which, as we have seen, the argument for the divine existence rests; and it is a point of no small importance thus to ascertain, at the outset of our inquiry, that recent science, instead of dismissing the hypothesis, has supplied us with a striking evidence of the impossibility of excluding it from rational thought.”[121] [121] Diman:The Theistic Argument, p. 97.

Mill, in his criticism of the “argument for a first cause,”[122] really admits the principle of causation, though the admission is contradictory to the determining principles of his philosophy. What, then, is the cause in which Mill finds the origin of the cosmos? Not in any thing or being back of the cosmos or above it, but in matter and force as permanent elements in the cosmos, and as eternal existences. “There is in nature a permanent element, and also a changeable: the changes are always the effects of previous changes; the permanent existences, so far as we know, are not effects at all.” “There is in every object another and a permanent element, namely, the specific elementary substance or substances of which it consists and their inherent properties. These are not known to us as beginning to exist: within the range of human knowledge they had no beginning, consequently no cause; though they themselves are causes or con-causes of every thing that takes place.” “Whenever a physical phenomenon is traced to its cause, that cause when analyzed is found to be a certain quantum of Force, combined with certain collocations. And the last great generalization of science, the Conservation of Force, teaches us that the variety in the effects depends partly upon the amount of the force, and partly upon the diversity of the collocations. The force itself is essentially one and the same; and there exists of it in nature a fixed quantity, which (if the theory be true) is never increased or diminished. Here then we find, even in the changes of material nature, a permanent element; to all appearance the very one of which we were in quest. This it is, apparently, to which, if to any thing, we must assign the character of First Cause, the cause of the material universe.”[123] [122] Three Essays on Religion, pp. 143-154.

[123]Three Essays, etc., pp. 142-145. In this manner, fairly given in the citations from Mill, he attempts the refutation of the cosmological argument for the existence of God. It is regarded as a most skillful attempt. If he has found in matter and physical force a sufficient cause of the cosmos, then our proposition, that the forces of nature are inadequate to the formation of the cosmos, is not true, and this necessary link fails us; and with it the whole argument fails. It should here be observed that, if the cause of the cosmos which Mill offers is the true and sufficient one, it must answer for the cosmos not only in its purely physical plane, but also for all its wonderful adjustments, for all its forms of life, and for man himself with his marvelous endowments of mind. In a word, it must answer for all the requirements of the teleological and anthropological arguments as well as for the cosmological. Mill himself recognizes this implication, and makes some little attempt to meet its requirements, but with no confident tone or strength of logic. But we must not yet anticipate the teleological and anthropological arguments, though with them will come the most thorough refutation of Mill.

If any one should think that in all this contention Mill proceeds upon purely scientific grounds, and with rigid limitation to scientific facts, he would greatly err, and consequently accord to his

reasoning a conclusiveness to which it has no rightful claim. Mill as really deals in metaphysics as ever did Plato or Anselm, Leibnitz or Kant. The eternity of matter and physical force, the conservation of energy, the eternal sameness of force in quantity and kind are no scientific facts empirically verified, but metaphysical notions, or deductions from assumed facts. For instance, if it be assumed that matter and force are the original of the universe as an orderly system, their eternity must be assumed, because they could not arise from nothing. This is precisely the method in which theism reaches the existence of an eternal being as the cause of the cosmos. When Mill admits the principle of causation he is in a region of thought as purely metaphysical as the theist when building upon that principle his argument for the divine existence. Hence we are right in denying to the argument of Mill that kind of certainty which scientific verities impart. The theory is open to an analytic testing. How is the world constructed by the operation of physical force? Through a process of change. There is a long succession of changes. The cause of each change is itself a previous change. “The changes are always the effects of previous changes.” This must be the process, if the theory is true. There is no spontaneity in physical causation; and every change must have its cause in a previous change. But trouble thus arises for the metaphysics of the theory. Such changes constitute a series; and for such a series there must be a first change. But the theory asserts, and consistently, that every change in the series is the effect of a previous change. There can be no first under such a law; and the theory falls helplessly into the unthinkable and self-contradictory infinite series. The principle of causation, and physical changes as the whole of causality, will not co-operate in the same theory, and the attempt to work them together must end in a destructive collision.

There are further testings. The theory is that matter and force are the first cause, and the original of the cosmos. Matter is concerned in the theory simply as the ground of force and the material with which it builds. Respecting this force there may be two suppositions: one, that it was eternally active; the other, that after an eternal quiescence it began its own activity. Against the former supposition there is this determining fact: the cosmical work of this force is wholly within the limits of time. As previously shown, the cosmos is of temporal origin; and therefore the building it could be only a work of time. The eternal activity of such a force and its formation of the cosmos only in time are inconsistent ideas. If we admit the eternity of force as a potentiality of matter, still it must have been quiescent in all the eternity anteceding its cosmical work.

It may be assumed that this force was eternally active, but operative as cosmical cause only in time. Assumption has large liberty, and in this instance needs the largest. The eternal activity of such a force and its production of cosmical results only in time are contradictory ideas. The new results could have no account in causation. A long preparatory process before any appearance of cosmical results may readily be conceded, but the notion of an eternal preparatory process is excluded as self-contradictory. If this force was eternally active without any cosmical production, it must have been eternally without tendency toward such production. How then could it move out upon a different line and begin its cosmical work? This would be a new departure which could have no account in physical causation. There remains to the theory the old notion of a fortuitous concursus of chaotic elements into cosmical forms.

Again, it may be assumed that the present universe is only one of an indefinite or infinite series. An indefinite series is such only for thought, and, however extended, is finite in fact, and still leaves us with an eternity anteceding the building of the first universe, which could have no

beginning in physical force. An infinite series of universes is a contradiction—unthinkable and impossible. Hence, if cosmical causation is in physical force, that force must have begun its own activity. There is no spontaneity in physical force. This is too sure a truth, and too familiar, to meet with any contradiction. It is the truth of the inertia of matter. All activity of in physical force is absolutely conditioned on the proper conjunction or collocation of material elements. Mill recognizes this principle in the part which he assigns to collocation as a determining law of the action of force. When such a force is within the proper collocations it must act; when out of them it cannot act. We have seen that physical force, even if an eternal potentiality of matter, must have been eternally out of the collocations necessary to any cosmical work. How then could it ever get into such collocations? This getting in means some action. But the conditions necessary to the action are wanting. A cosmical beginning in such a force is impossible—as absolutely impossible as the springing of the universe out of nothing. And the attempt to find in matter and force the first cause and the original of the cosmos is an utter failure,

4. Theistic Conclusion.—The principle of causation remains true. Every event must have a sufficient cause. The universe is of temporal origin and its existence must have an adequate cause. There is no such cause in matter and physical force. The sufficient cause must have power in spontaneity; must be capable of self-energizing; must have an omnipotent will. These facts do not in themselves give us the plenitude of the divine attributes as necessary to the sufficient cause of the cosmos, but they do point clearly and strongly to the personality of this cause. Even the physical cosmos points to a rational intelligence as well as to a power of will in its cause. The principle of causation requires for the existence of the universe a personal God. Such a causation does not imply the quiescence of God anterior to his cosmical work. With an eternal activity in himself, it means simply a beginning of that form of agency by which he created the universe. There must have been such a beginning, whether the universe had its origin in the personal agency of God or in the forces of nature operating in the mode of evolution. The theistic conclusion is very sure, though not a demonstration. It cannot be strictly such, because with the axiomatic principle of causation we combine the dependence of the cosmos and the inadequacy of natural forces to its formation. These are not axiomatic truths, but truths which address themselves to the logical reason. Yet the theistic conclusion is in its certainty little short of a demonstration.

013. III. The Teleological Argument.

III. The Teleological Argument.

1. The Doctrine of Final Cause.—Teleology is composed of the words τ■λος and λ■γος, and means the doctrine of ends, or of rational purpose.[124] In the theistic argument it is the doctrine of rational purpose or design in the construction of the cosmos, as exemplified in the foresight and choice of ends and the use of appropriate means for their attainment. There are many exemplifications of the idea in human mechanisms. The microscope and the telescope have each a chosen end, while each is wisely adapted to its attainment. The purpose is the clearer observation of things but dimly seen, or the discovery of things which the unaided eye cannot reach. The idea of divine finality is of frequent occurrence in the Scriptures. Here is an instance: “He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?” (Psalms 44:9).

[124]Krauth-Fleming:Vocabulary, p. 510.

“The special manifestation of the divine knowledge is in the purpose of the ear and the eye, and the adaptation of each to its chosen end. This argument does not depart from the principle of causation, but builds upon It in the special sphere of rational ends. As the dependent cosmos requires an eternal being possessing spontaneity and omnipotence of will as the only adequate cause, so the many instances of adaptation to ends in the construction of the cosmos require the agency of a divine intelligence as the only sufficient cause.

2. Rational Ends in Human Agency.—This is so certain a truth that it is in little need of either illustration or verification. The history of the race is full of its products and proofs. The crude implements of the paleolithic and neolithic ages were the chosen means for the attainment of chosen ends. The rudest hut provided as a shelter from the rains of summer and the inclemency of winter is the production of human purpose. In a higher civilization, the building and furnishing of houses, the implements of agriculture, the tools and machinery used in manufacture, the products of the manufacture, the construction and form of the ship, the rudder for steering, the sails hung from the yards to catch the winds for propulsion, the telegraph, telephone, and locomotive all mean the attainment of rational ends.

We are conscious of such an agency, and easily trace the mental process. Conceiving an end, electing its attainment, and using appropriate means for the attainment—these are the facts in the process, and the facts of final cause. Each one is sure of such a mental process in others; and his certainty has a deeper ground than mere empiricism—a ground in reason itself. For such agency we require personal mind, and on the principle that every event must have an adequate cause.

3. Rational Ends in the Cosmos.—In the construction of the cosmos there is an orderly and pervasive plan, correlations of part to part, adaptations of means to ends which evince and require a divine intelligence as the only sufficient cause. There are two aspects of nature concerned in this argument. One appears in the orderly processes of nature; the other, in the special adaptations of

means to ends. In this distinction some find two arguments, while others find one argument in two spheres.[125] The distinction of arguments does not seem important, but the distinction of spheres is clearly useful. This distinction is often made without any formal notification.

[125]Diman:The Theistic Argument, pp. 105, 106; Flint:Theism, p. 133; Janet:Final Causes, p. 12.

An orderly constitution of nature is as necessary to a knowledge or science of nature as the rational intelligence of mind. “If, then, knowledge be possible, we must declare that the world-ground proceeds according to thought-laws and principles, that it has established all things in rational relations, and balanced their interaction in quantitative and qualitative proportion, and measured this proportion by number. ‘God geometrizes,’ says Plato. ‘Number is the essence of reality,’ says Pythagoras. And to this agree all the conclusions of scientific thought. The heavens are crystallized mathematics. All the laws of force are numerical. The interchange of energy and chemical combination are equally so. Crystals are solid geometry. Many organic products show similar mathematical laws. Indeed, the claim is often made that science never reaches its final form until it becomes mathematical. But simple existence in space does not imply motion in mathematical relations, or existence in mathematical forms. Space is only the formless ground of form, and is quite compatible with the irregular and amorphous. It is equally compatible with the absence of numerical law. The truly mathematical is the work of the spirit. Hence the wonder that mathematical principles should be so pervasive, that so many forms and processes in the system represent definite mathematical conceptions, and that they should be so accurately weighed and measured by number.

“If the cosmos were a resting existence, we might possibly content ourselves by saying that things exist in such relations once for all, and that there is no going behind this fact. But the cosmos is no such rigid monotony of being; it is, rather, a process according to intelligible rules; and in this process the rational order is perpetually maintained or restored. The weighing and measuring continually goes on. In each chemical change just so much of one element is combined with just so much of another. In each change of place the intensities of attraction and repulsion are instantaneously adjusted to correspond. Apart from any question of design, the simple fact of qualitative and quantitative adjustment of all things, according to fixed law, is a fact of the utmost significance. The world-ground works at a multitude of points, or in a multitude of things, throughout the system, and works in each with exact reference to its activities in all the rest. The displacement of an atom by a hair’s-breadth demands a corresponding re-adjustment in every other within the grip of gravitation. But all are in constant movement, and hence re-adjustment is continuous and instantaneous. The single law of gravitation contains a problem of such dizzy vastness that our minds faint in the attempt to grasp it; but when the other laws of force are added the complexity defies all understanding. In addition we might refer to the building processes in organic forms, whereby countless structures are constantly produced or maintained, and always with regard to the typical form in question. But there is no need to dwell upon this point.

“Here, then, is a problem, and we have only the two principles of intelligence and non-intelligence, of self-directing reason and blind necessity, for its solution. The former is adequate, and is not far-fetched and violent. It assimilates the facts to our own experience, and offers the only ground of order of which that experience furnishes any suggestion. If we adopt this view all the facts become luminous and consequent. “If we take the other view, then we have to assume a power which produces the intelligible and rational, without being itself intelligent and rational. It works in

all things, and in each with exact reference to all, yet without knowing any thing of itself or of the rules it follows, or of the order it founds, or of the myriad products compact of seeming purpose which it incessantly produces and maintains. If we ask why it does this, we must answer. Because it must. If we ask how we know that it must, the answer must be. By hypothesis. But this reduces to saying that things are as they are because they must be. That is, the problem is abandoned altogether. The facts are referred to an opaque hypothetical necessity, and this turns out, upon inquiry, to be the problem itself in another form. There is no proper explanation except in theism."[126] This citation possesses great logical force, and in our brief discussion will answer for the argument from the orderly system of nature.

[126]Bowne:Philosophy of Theism, pp. 66-69. The adaptations of means to ends, of organs to functions, in organic orders are so many, so definite, and so manifest that there is little need of elaborative illustration. The ground has often been occupied, and the facts presented with the clearness of scientific statement and the force of eloquent expression. No optical instrument equals the eye in the complexity and combination of parts. The organs for the functions of hearing, respiration, nutrition, locomotion, infinitely transcend all human mechanisms. The organ of the human voice in like measure excels all artificial instruments of sound. The venous system with the heart is a wonderful provision for the circulation of the blood. Are the functions of such organs the purposed ends of their formation, or the unpurposed effects of their existence? The grossest materialism can neither question their seemingly skillful construction, nor their peculiar fitness for the functions which they fulfill. But materialism denies any and all finality in their formation. Eyes were not made for seeing, nor ears for hearing, nor feet for walking, nor hands for any of the mechanical and artistic ends which they serve. We have eyes, and so we see; ears, and so we hear; feet, and so we walk; hands, and so we use them in the service of many ends. But in no instance is there any foresight or purpose of the function in the formation of the organ. What is thus held of the organs specified is affirmed of all organs in the realm of living orders. Here is the point of issue between theism and materialism or any science or philosophy which denies a purposive divine agency in the adaptation of organs to their respective functions. A divine finality must not here be assumed either because of the seemingly skillful construction of organs or because of their peculiar fitness for the functions which they fulfill. It is a question for inductive treatment; and we need a statement of the grounds upon which the induction should proceed. We cite the following statement: "When a complex combination of heterogeneous phenomena is found to agree with the possibility of a future act, which was not contained beforehand in any of these phenomena in particular, this agreement can only be comprehended by the human mind by a kind of pre-existence, in an ideal form, of the future act itself, which transforms it from a result into an end—that is to say, into a final cause."[127] The principles here given may be set in a clearer light by the use of illustrations. The hull of a ship, masts, sails, anchors, rudder, compass, chart, have no necessary connection, and in relation to their physical causalities are heterogeneous phenomena. The future use of a ship is not contained in any one of them, but is possible through their combination. This combination in the fully equipped ship has no interpretation in our rational intelligence except in the previous existence of its use in human thought and purpose. The use of the ship, therefore, is not the mere result of its existence, but the final cause of its construction. We give illustrations from the same author.

[127]Janet:Final Causes, p. 85.

“The external physical world and the internal laboratory of the living; being are separated from each other by impenetrable veils, and yet they are united to each other by an incredible pre-established harmony. On the outside there is a physical agent called light; within, there is fabricated an optical machine adapted to the light: outside, there is an agent called sound; inside, an acoustic machine adapted to sound: outside, vegetables and animals; inside, stills and alembics adapted to the assimilation of these substances: outside, a medium, solid, liquid, or gaseous; inside, a thousand means of locomotion, adapted to the air, the earth, or the water. Thus, on the one hand, there are the final phenomena called sight, hearing, nutrition, flying, walking, swimming, etc.; on the other, the eyes, the ears, the stomach, the wings, the fins, the motive members of every sort. We see clearly in these examples the two terms of the relation—on the one hand, a system; on the other, the final phenomenon in which it ends. Were there only system and combination, as in crystals, still, as we have seen, there must have been a special cause to explain that system and that combination. But there is more here; there is the agreement of a system with a phenomenon which will only be produced long after and in new conditions,—consequently a correspondence which cannot be fortuitous, and which would necessarily be so if we do not admit that the final and future phenomenon is precisely the bond of the system and the circumstance which, in whatever manner, has predetermined the combination.

“Imagine a blind workman, hidden in a cellar, and destitute of all intelligence, who, merely yielding to the simple need of moving his limbs and his hands, should be found to have forged, without knowing it, a key adapted to the most complicated lock which can possibly be imagined. This is what nature does in the fabrication of the living being.

“Nowhere is this pre-established harmony, to which we have just drawn attention, displayed in a more astonishing manner than between the eve and the light. ‘In the construction of this organ,’ says Trendelenburg, ‘we must either admit that light has triumphed over matter and has fashioned it, or else it is the matter itself which has become the master of the light. This is at least what should result from the law of efficient causes, but neither the one nor the other of these two hypotheses takes place in reality. No ray of light falls within the secret depths of the maternal womb, where the eye is formed. Still less could inert matter, which is nothing without the energy of light, be capable of comprehending it. Yet the light and the eye are made the one for the other, and in the miracle of the eye resides the latent consciousness of the light. The moving cause, with its necessary development, is here employed for a higher service. The end commands the whole, and watches over the execution of the parts; and it is with the aid of the end that the eye becomes the light of the body.”[128] [128] Janet:Final Causes, pp. 42, 43.

Any denial of final cause in human agency would justly be thought irrational, or even insane. On what ground, then, shall we deny final cause in the adaptations of nature? Certainly not on the ground that organic structures are any less skillfully wrought, or with less fitness for their ends. “If it be supposed that the adaptations of external nature are less striking than the purposive actions of men, and give, therefore, less convincing indications of design, let the following remarkable passage from Mr. Darwin’s work on the Fertilization of Orchids furnish the reply: ‘The more I study nature, the more I become impressed with ever-increasing force with the conclusion, that the contrivances and beautiful adaptations slowly acquired through each part occasionally varying in a slight degree but in many ways, with the preservation or natural selection of those variations which are beneficial to the organism under the complex and ever-varying conditions of life, transcend in

an incomparable degree the contrivances and adaptations which the most fertile imagination of the most imaginative man could suggest with unlimited time at his disposal."[129] Darwin elaborately illustrates these adaptations, and thus justifies their assignment to a place infinitely transcending all adaptations of human invention. That he accounts them to purely natural causes, and thus theoretically denies them all finality, does not in the least affect the sense of the passage in its application to the present question. There is still the indisputable fact, and to which Darwin is witness, that the adaptations of nature, of organs to functions in the orders of life, infinitely transcend all the adaptations of human mechanisms. If there is finality or purposive intelligence in the latter, how much more in the former.

[129]Herbert:Modem Realism, pp. 315, 216.

It may be objected that, while mind is open to observation in human mechanisms, it is not open or observable in the organisms of nature. There is really no ground for such an objection. Beyond the consciousness of one's own agency, the evidences of finality in divine and human agency stand in the same relation to our intelligence. We have no direct insight into the working of other minds. If one were present with the maker of a microscope through the whole process of its construction, nothing would be open to his observation but the physical phenomena of the work. The whole evidence of design would be given in the constructive character of the microscope and its adaptation to the end for which it was made. In the realm of life we have the same kind of evidence, and vastly higher in degree, of a purposive divine intelligence in the construction of organs and their wonderful adaptation to the important functions which they fulfill. Whatever light one's own consciousness of a designing agency may shed upon the works of others, so as to make the clearer a designing agency therein, must equally shine upon the works of nature as the manifestation of a purposive divine intelligence. The objection damagingly recoils. The denial of a designing intelligence in the organic works of nature because it is not open to observation requires the denial of such Intelligence in ll human works except one's own.

4. Objections to Finality in Organic Nature.—It is objected that there are in organic structures instances of malformation, of monstrosity even, which are inconsistent with a purposive divine agency. The objection can have no validity except against a false view of that agency, and therefore is groundless as against the true view. The doctrine of divine finality does not exclude secondary causes. The forces of nature are still realities, and operative in all the processes of organic formation. Hence, that these forces in their manifold interactions should, in rare instances, so modify their normal working as to produce abnormal or even monstrous formations is no disproof of a purposive divine agency. Modern science, however materialistic its ground, holds firmly the uniformity of nature—even such a uniformity as can allow no place for a divine agency. This uniformity is held for the organic realm of nature just as for the inorganic. Hence such science can give no better account of these abnormities than we have given—indeed, must give the very same account. Doubtless there are formative forces which determine the several orders of organic nature; but aberrancies of development are still possible. "Limitations and malformations may occur, for each living thing is not only subject to the law of its kind, but is under the dominion of other forces indifferent to the end and purpose of the organic individual."[130] "As to the difficulty caused by deviations of the germ, it would only be decisive against finality if the organism were presented as an absolute whole, without any relation to the rest of the universe—as an empire within an empire, the imperium in imperio of Spinoza. Only in this case could it be denied that the

actions and reactions of the medium have brought about deviations in the whole. The organism is only a relative whole. What proves it is that it is not self-sufficient, and that it is necessarily bound to an external medium; consequently the modifications of this medium cannot but act upon it; and if they can act in the course of growth, there is no reason why they should not likewise act when it is still in the state of germ. There result, then, primordial deviations, while the alterations taking place later are only secondary; and if monstrosities continue to develop as well as normal beings, it is because the laws of organized matter continue their action when turned aside from their end, as a stone thrown, and meeting an obstacle, changes its direction and yet pursues its course in virtue of its acquired velocity."[131] [130] Muller:Christian Doctrine of Sin, vol. ii, p. 57.

[131]Janet;Final Causes, p. 131. A further objection is made on the ground of useless and rudimentary organs. Seemingly, there are organs of the former class; certainly there are of the latter. Nor are they entirely without perplexity for the doctrine of finality. Any adequate discussion of the question would lead us far beyond our prescribed limits.[132] [132] We refer to McCosh:Typical Forms, pp. 420-439; and especially to Janet:Final Causes, pp. 223-347.

Respecting useless organs: "The first are few in number in the present state of science. Almost all known organs have their proper functions; only a few oppose this law. The chief of these organs in the higher animals is the spleen. It seems, in effect, that this organ does not play a very important part in the animal economy, for numerous experiments prove that it can be extirpated without seriously endangering the life of the animal. We must not, however, conclude from this that the spleen has no functions ; and physiologists do not draw this conclusion from it, for they are seeking them, and are not without hope of finding them. An organ may be of service without being absolutely necessary to life. Every thing leads to the belief that the spleen is only a secondary organ; but the existence of subordinate, auxiliary, or subsidiary organs involves nothing contrary to the doctrine of finality."[133] The case is thus put in view of the chief organ whose special function or definite part in the economy of animal life is not apparent.

[133]Janet:Final Causes, p. 325.

Respecting the rudimentary: "There are only two known explanations of the rudimentary organs: either the theory of the unity of type of Geoffroy Saint Hilaire, or the theory of the atrophy of the organs by default of habit of Lamarck and Darwin. But neither of these two explanations contradicts the theory of finality. We have seen, in fact, that there are two sorts of finality—that of use and that of plan. It is by no means implied in the theory that the second should necessarily be sacrificed or even subordinated to the first. The type remaining the same, one can understand that nature, whether by amplifying it, by inverting it, or by changing its proportions, variously adapts it according to different circumstances, and that the organs, in these circumstances rendered useless, are now only a souvenir of the primitive plan—not certainly that nature expressly creates useless organs, as an architect makes false windows from love of symmetry, but, the type being given, and being modified according to predetermined laws, it is not wonderful that some vestiges of it remain intractable to finality.

"As regards the second explanation, it can equally be reconciled with our doctrine; for if the organs have ceased to serve, and have thereby been reduced to a minimum, which is now only the remains of a previous state, it does not follow that they cannot have been of use at a former time, and nothing conforms more to the theory of finality than the gradual disappearance of useless

complications."[134] [134] Janet:Final Causes, pp. 239, 230.

We have thought it well to present these questions mostly in the treatment of a theist who is familiar with the facts concerned, and both candid and capable in their logical treatment. The defense of a divine finality in the organic realm is satisfactory.

Another objection takes the form of an inference from the working of instinct. Animal instinct is viewed as a blind impulse, without prevision or plan, and yet as working to ends. The inference is, that the adaptations of organs to functions in organic nature neither evince nor require the agency of a divine mind. This inference is the objection to the doctrine of divine finality. In meeting this objection we are not concerned to dispute either the characterization of instinct as a blind impulse, or that it works to ends. Instances of the latter are numerous and familiar. One, however, must go to the naturalists for the fuller information. The inference here opposed to the doctrine of final cause is just the opposite of an a fortiori inference. An animal is a far higher order of existence than mere matter. Animal instinct is a far higher quality or force than any quality or force of mere matter. That animal instinct works to ends is no ground of inference that material forces, once potential in the primordial fire-mist, could found the orderly system of the universe, construct the organic world with all its wonderful adaptations to ends, and create the realm of mind with its marvelous powers and achievements. Indeed, animal instinct, instead of warranting any inference adverse to the doctrine of finality, demands finality as the only rational account of the many offices which it so wonderfully fulfills in the economy of animal life. The denial of rational intelligence in animal mechanisms is a corrected or second judgment. It is at once manifest that mere material forces could no more perform such work than they could wield the pencil of Raphael or the chisel of Angelo. The immediate judgment accounts such work to intelligence in the worker. This a second judgment corrects; not, however, in view of the work wrought, but simply in view of the animal worker as incapable of such intelligence. This fact requires, for any validity of the inference adverse to a law of teleology in the constitution of nature, the discovery that no being capable of such agency is operative therein. But this is the very question in issue. The necessary discovery has not been made; nor can it be made. Hence the inference drawn from the working of animal instinct against the doctrine of final cause in the cosmos is utterly groundless.

Animal mechanisms have an artificial form, not a growth form; and therein they have a special likeness to human mechanisms. Hence, if these works of instinct may warrant an inference adverse to finality, first of all they should so warrant in the case of human mechanisms to which they bear such special likeness. Can this be done? Never, as every sane mind knows. No more can they disprove a purposive intelligence in the constitution of organic nature. The teleological argument remains in its validity and cogency. The orderly system of nature, the manifold adaptations of means to cuds in the organic system, infinitely surpassing all the contrivances of human ingenuity, show the purposive agency of a divine mind. This is the only ground for any rationale of the cosmos. Short of a divine mind we have, at most, only matter and physical force, without any pretension of intelligence in either. No new characterization of matter can change these facts. Assuming for matter a second face, as some scientists do, is not endowing it with intelligence. This is not pretended, not even allowed. With its two faces it remains as blank of thought as the old one-faced matter of Democritus. Blind force must transform a chaotic nebula into the wonderful cosmos. Nor can it be allowed any pause with the formation of the orderly heavens and the wonderful organic world. Man, with all that may be called the mind of man, must

have the same original. Then all his mechanisms, all his creations in the realms of science and philosophy and art, must be accounted to the same blind force. All purposive agency in man must be denied. If any one should here be stumbled by his own consciousness of such an agency, let him account this consciousness a delusion, and gladly, because such an agency is really out of harmony with the continuity of physical force, which, at any and all cost, must hold its way in the phenomena of mind, just as in the phenomena of matter. But the truth of a purposive agency in man will hold its place against all adverse theories of science. And so long as a human finality is admitted in the sphere of civilization the denial of a divine finality in the realm of nature must be irrational. The truth of such a finality is the truth of the divine existence.[135]

[135] For illustrations of finality in the cosmos—Paley:Natural Theology; Flint:Theism, lects. v, vi; Argyll:The Reign of Law; Chadbourne:Natural Theology; Tulloch:Theism; McCosh:Typical Forms; Janet:Final Causes.

014. IV. The Anthropological Argument.

IV. The Anthropological Argument. This argument is sometimes called the psychological, and often the moral argument. As it may properly deal with other matters than the distinctively psychological and moral nature and history of man, anthropological, as broader in its application, is preferable to either. This argument differs from the cosmological and teleological more in its sphere than in its logical principles. In proceeding with the nature and endowments of mind the proof of the divine existence, the principle is the same as in the cosmological argument. Then in proceeding with the adaptations of mental endowment to our manifold relations, the principle is the same as in the teleological argument. Further, there are facts of man's moral nature which clearly reveal a moral nature in the author of his being.

1. Special Facts of Organic Constitution.—In his organic nature man belongs to the sphere of the teleological argument. But there are some special facts of his constitution which furnish special illustrations and proofs of divine finality, and may therefore properly be included in the present argument. In complexity and completeness of structure and symmetry of form the human body stands at the head of organic existences, so far as known to us. The harmony of these facts with his higher mental nature is the reflection of a rational intelligence in the author of his being. His erect form becomes his higher plane of life and fits him for the many offices which minister to his well-being. The hand is admirably fitted for its manifold uses. It is true that many useful and ornamental things are now made by machinery; but back of the machinery is the hand, without which it could not have been made. So that back of all the material products of our civilization is this same wonderful hand. Sometimes the skeleton of this hand and that of an ape are sketched side by side, and in the interest of evolution it is suggested that the seeming difference is but slight. The idea is that, if the primordial fire-mist could through a succession of differentiations and integrations construct the ape's hand, then by a little further advance on the same line it could produce the slightly varying human hand. But the Duke of Argyll has well observed that to get the real difference between the two we must compare the work of one with that of the other. In this view the difference is almost infinite. It might be said that the superior brain of man accounts for this difference; but this would not give the real truth. With only an ape's hand only the rudiments of civilization could ever have been attained. The brainwork of the great inventors could have had but little outcome without the skill of the hand. What could the mental genius of Raphael and Angelo ever have achieved without the cunning hand to set in reality their ideal creations? The voice goes most fittingly with the human mind. Such a voice could have no special function even in the highest animal orders. The intelligence is wanting for the special uses of which it is capable. That a parrot may articulate a few words or a bullfinch pipe a few notes of a tune is in no contradiction to this statement. For man this voice has many uses, and uses of the highest value. It is the ready means of intelligent intercourse in human society. It serves for the intelligent and intelligible expression of all the inner life of thought and feeling and purpose, and from the simplest utterances up to the highest forms of eloquence and song. The organ which makes possible this voice in all its high uses is as wonderful as the voice itself.

It is impossible to account for the perfect harmony of these facts without a ruling mind. These notable facts, the erect posture, the cunning hand, and the voice, with the organ which makes it possible, how else could they come separately and into such happy harmony with the mental grade of man? In the absence of such a mind the only resource is in matter and force, and a process of differentiations and integrations, and the influence of the environment. But down in this plane every force is blind, utterly blind. Here there can be no purposive agency. Then fortuity or necessity is all that remains. Fortuity is too absurd for any respectful consideration. To allege such a necessity is to assume for matter and physical force qualities utterly alien to their nature. A ruling mind is the only rational account of the special facts we have found in the organic constitution of man.

2. Rational Mind a Spiritual Essence.—Phenomena must have a ground in essential being. Outright nihilism is outright hallucination. All qualities, properties, attributes, all process change, motion, force, must have a ground in being. Idealism may question or even deny the reality of a material world, but on such denial must posit something essentially real as the ground of the sensations which seemingly arise from the presence and influence of such a world. In the definition of matter as the permanent possibility of sensations Mill really admits the necessity of some substantial ground of such sensations. The agnosticism which posits the infinite or absolute as the ground of finite existences, and then pushes it away beyond all reach of human knowledge, must still hold the essential reality of such ground. We have no immediate insight into being, but our reason affirms its reality as the necessary ground of phenomena. “We could just as reasonably deny the fact of a phenomenal world as to deny to it an underlying reality of being. Whatever else we may question or deny, unless utterly lost in the hallucinations of nihilism, we must concede reality of existence to the conscious subject of sensations and percipient of phenomena. Extension, form, inertia, divisibility, thought, sensibility, spontaneity must have a ground in being. Being and its predicates, whether of properties, agency, or phenomena, must be in scientific accordance. The same principle may be put in this form: Being and its predicates cannot be in contradictory opposition. There may be such opposition simply in one’s affirmation, but cannot be in the reality of things. This is not a truth empirically discovered, but is a clear and certain truth of the reason. The mind to which it is not clear and certain is incapable of any processes of thought properly scientific. It follows from the same principle that all predicates of the same subject must admit of scientific consistency, and must exclude all contradictory opposition. If two predicates of the same thing are in such opposition, then what is affirmed in the one is really denied in the other. To say of the same thing that it is at the same time both cubical and spherical in figure is to violate the law of contradiction as completely as to say that a thing is and is not at the same time. To predicate inertia and spontaneity of the same subject is to affirm of it contradictory properties, which must refuse all scientific consistency. These principles are intimately related to the question concerning the nature of the ground of mental facts.

We have what we may call physical facts or phenomena, and also what we may call mental facts or phenomena. The most groveling materialism can hardly deny a very marked difference between the two classes. In those related to matter we have the properties of extension, figure, inertia, divisibility, chemical affinity. In those relating to mind we have thought, reason, sensibility, consciousness, spontaneity. The two classes have nothing in common, and must refuse all combination in either physical or mental science. If any one denies or doubts this, let him attempt

the combination. Will thought combine with extension, reason with figure, sensibility with divisibility, consciousness with chemical affinity, spontaneity with inertia in any scientific construction? No material elements or animal orders differ so widely as do the facts of mind from the facts of matter. Material elements and animal orders do not differ so much. Optics and acoustics are different sciences, and must be because of the difference of phenomena. Chemistry and zoology are different sciences, and must be for the same reason. So the facts of mind cannot be scientifically combined with the facts of matter, not even in the utmost generalization of science. Their difference is not a mere unlikeness, but a face-to-face opposition. For this reason the two classes cannot become predicates of the same subject. They are in contradictory opposition, and therefore what one class would affirm of the subject the other would deny. Mental facts cannot be the predicates of matter because they are contradictory to its nature as revealed in its physical properties. Spiritual mind must be the ground of mental facts.

It is beginning to be conceded that matter as traditionally known cannot be the ground of mental facts. Respecting naturalistic evolution: “For what are the core and essence of this hypothesis? Strip it naked, and you stand face to face with the notion that not alone the more ignoble forms of animalcular or animal life, not alone the noble forms of the horse and lion, not alone the exquisite and wonderful mechanism of the human body, but that the mind itself—emotion, intellect, will, and all their phenomena—were once latent in a fiery cloud. Surely the mere statement of such a notion is more than a refutation.” “These evolution notions are absurd, monstrous, and fit only for the intellectual gibbet, in relation to the ideas concerning matter which were drilled into us when young.” [136]It follows that either naturalistic evolution must be abandoned or matter must be newly defined. Spirit and matter must be considered “as two opposite faces of the self-same mystery.” “Any definition which omits life and thought must be inadequate, if not untrue.”[137] [136] Tyndall:Fragments of Science, pp. 453, 454.

[137]Ibid., pp. 454, 458.

Here is a demand for a far more radical change in the definition of matter than is required in the interpretation of Genesis in order to adjust it to the discoveries of modern science. But what is gained by the new definition? The difficulties of materialism are not diminished. If life and thought must be included in order to provide for naturalistic evolution, then they must be original and permanent qualities of matter, and must have belonged to it just as really in the primordial fire-mist of science as in the present living organism and the thinking mind. Of course there could be no actual or phenomenal existence of either. The substitution of a latent or potential form for an actual form would not relieve the case because they must none the less have been real properties of matter in that primordial state in order to their development into actual form. The notion of a double-faced matter is equally fruitless of any relief. One face represents the mental facts; the other, the physical facts. According to this view the two classes of facts must have the very same ground—that is, must be predicates of the same essence of being. But their contrariety makes this impossible. As we previously pointed out, some of them are in contradictory opposition. The same subject cannot possess the qualities of spontaneity and inertia. There is no relief in any resort to a mere potential or latent state. Mental facts must have a ground in spiritual being.

3. Material Genesis of Mind an Impossibility.—Nothing can arise out of matter not primordially in it. This is really conceded by the call for a new definition of matter which shall include in it the ground

of mental facts. The notion that any thing not primordially in matter should arise out of it is contradictory to all rational thinking, and equally contradictory to the deepest principles of naturalistic evolution. How then shall we account for mind? There might be assumed an eternally existent spiritual essence, just as there is assumed an eternally existent material nature. This would avoid the direct difficulty of deriving mind from matter, or of finding in matter the ground of mental facts, but the new position would be open to much perplexing questioning. Did this assumed spiritual essence originally exist in separate portions or in a mass? If the latter, how comes its individuations into distinct personalities? If the former, how comes their mysterious union with human bodies? What is the law of affinity whereby a portion of the spiritual essence assumes each newly forming human body, or each body appropriates a spiritual mind? It would be easy to answer that on any theory the facts of mind are a mystery. It is just as easy to reply, and with all the force of logic, that the facts of mind are not contradictory and absurd on the ground of theism as they must be in any purely naturalistic theory. With a divine Creator of mind we have a sufficient account of its origin and personality. This is the only sufficient account. Human minds, with their only possible origin in a creative agency of God, affirm the truth of his existence. The impossibility of a material genesis of mind is deeply emphasized by the character and grade of its powers. We have previously shown that there are not only marked differences, but face-to-face contrarieties between these powers and the properties of matter. When studied in their intellectual and moral forms and traced to the height of their own scale, the more certain is the impossibility of a material source, and with the deeper emphasis do they affirm the existence of a personal God as their only sufficient original.

There is no occasion to expatiate upon the intellectual powers. The history of the race is replete with their achievements. In the multiform mechanisms which minister to our present life, in the inventions which give us power over the forces of nature and make them our useful servants, in the sciences which so broaden the knowledge of nature and open its useful resources, in literature and philosophy, in the creations of poetic and artistic genius, we see their wonderful productions. These achievements spring from powers which can have no basis in physical nature.

If we deny the reality of mind as a spiritual essence, separate and distinct from matter, then we must hold the potential existence of the mental faculties, with all their achievements, in the primordial fire-mist, and as one in nature with the physical forces therein latent or operative. This is the assumption of naturalistic evolution. “But the hypothesis would probably go even farther than this. Many who hold it would probably assent to the position that, at the present moment, all our philosophy, all our poetry, all our science, and all our art—Plato, Shakespeare, Newton, and Raphael—are potential in the fires of the sun.”[138] Surely this is- a case of great credulity. Nor can we see that the believers in such potentialities of the primordial fire-mist are any less credulous. There is no support of empirical proof in either case. It is accepted as the implication or requirement of a mere hypothesis. In the light of reason our philosophy, and poetry, and science, and art are not now potential in the fires of the sun. Nor were they potential in the primordial fire-mist of science. In either case matter and physical force are the whole content. The force is of the nature of its material basis. Can this force transmute itself into intelligence, sensibility, and will—into personality—and betake itself to the study of philosophy, and the construction of the sciences, so as to trace its own lineage back through an unbroken series of physical causalities to the fire-mist of which it was born? This transcends the utmost reach of theistic faith, however

possible it may seem to the faith of naturalistic evolutionists.

[138]Tyndall:Fragments of Science, p. 453.

“The question is this: How, in a nature without an end, does there appear all at once a being capable of pursuing an end? This capacity, it is said, is the product of his organization. But how should an organization, which by hypothesis would only be a result of physical causes happily introduced, give birth to a product such that the being thus formed could divine, foresee, calculate, prepare means for ends? To this point the series of phenomena has only followed the descending course, that which goes from cause to effect; all that is produced is produced by the past, without being in any way determined, modified, or regulated by the necessities of the future. All at once, in this mechanical series, is produced a being that changes all, that transports into the future the cause of the present—that is capable, for instance, having beforehand the idea of a town, to collect stones conformably to mechanical laws yet so that at a given moment they may form a town. He is able to dig the earth, so as to guide the course of rivers; to replace forests by crops of grain; to bend iron to his use—in a word, to regulate the evolution of natural phenomena in such a way that the series of these phenomena may be dominated by a future predetermined phenomenon. This is indeed, it must be confessed, a final cause. Well, then, can it be conceived that the agent thus endowed with the power of co-ordinating nature for ends is himself a simple result that nature has realized, without proposing to itself an end ? Is it not a sort of miracle to admit into the mechanical series of phenomena a link which suddenly should have the power to reverse, in some sort, the order of the series, and which, being itself only a consequent resulting from an infinite number of antecedents, should henceforth impose on the series this new and unforeseen law, which makes of the consequent the law and rule of the antecedent? Here is the place to say, with Bossuet: ‘One cannot comprehend, in this whole that does not understand, this part that does, for intelligence cannot originate from a brute and insensate thing.’”[139] [139] Janet:Final Causes, pp, 149, 150. That this lucid and logically cogent passage deals so directly with the question of final cause does not make it less applicable to the present point. It proceeds and concludes with the impossibility of a material genesis of our faculties of intelligence. The moral faculties rise to the highest grade of mental endowment. As rational intelligence rises above the highest forms of sentience and instinct, so the moral nature rises above the purely intellectual nature. The moral reason, the conscience, the sense of God and duty are the crown of mental endowments. When the life is ordered according to moral principles and in obedience to moral motives, it rises to its highest form. This fact commands the assent and homage of mankind. Such a life is possible, and has often been exemplified. In many instances conscience and duty have been supreme—supreme over all the allurements of the world, and even at the cost of life. Such lofty souls belong to a higher realm than the physical. Their lives have no limitation to an earthly horizon; their clear vision grasps the infinite and the divine. The life of such souls is a free and holy obedience to the law of duty, not the determination of physical force. Yet such souls live simply according to the moral nature with which they are endowed, nothing above it. Such a moral nature belongs to the constitution of man; and our life is true to this nature, and therefore true to ourselves, only when it takes this higher form. Now, is such a life possible on materialistic ground? We have seen how utterly impossible it is to account for our intellectual life on such ground. Much loss can we thus account for this higher moral life, or for the mental endowments which render it possible. The ground of such endowments must be a spiritual mind, with its only possible origin in

a divine creation. The moral facts of mind are thus the proof of the divine existence.

4. Mental Adaptations to Present Relations.—That knowledge is possible is one of the most wonderful of known facts. That it is possible we know as a fact. The deep mystery lies in the mode of our knowing. Yet this mystery does not conceal the fact that we have faculties of knowledge in wonderful adaptation to our present relations. A little study of the facts concerned in the question must lead us up to a divine intelligence as the only sufficient original of these provisions.

We proceed on the assumption of a spiritual mind in man. This mind which is the knowing agent is in essence and attributes the opposite of matter. It is enshrined in a physical organism which shuts it in from all direct contact with the outer world. Here we meet the provisions for such contact as renders knowledge possible. Here are the sense-organs and the brain, with their relation to each other, and the relation of the mind to both. The sensations necessary to knowledge are thus rendered possible. Any material change in any of those provisions might prevent the sensations or so modify them as to render knowledge impossible. Further, the mental faculties must be capable of so interpreting those sensations as to reach a knowledge of the external world. What is the original of these adjustments? Their very remarkable character cannot be questioned. Nothing can seem more complex or difficult. The fitting of part to part in the most elaborate and complicated mechanism is too open and simple to be brought into any comparison. The only alternative to a divine original of these wonderful provisions is a blind physical force. Its utter inadequacy is manifest in the light of reason. Only a divine intelligence can be the original of such facts.

There are other facts which vitally concern the possibilities of knowledge. Here is a profound fact. The mental faculties must be in proper adjustment to the realities of nature. The mind might have been so constituted as to be capable of knowing only individual things. In this case no scientific knowledge would have been possible. Nor could any relief come from all the orderly forms of nature. On the other hand, rational faculties could not of themselves make any science possible. For any such result the orderly and rational forms of nature are just as necessary as the proper rational cast of the mental faculties. Hence the necessity for the proper adjustment between these faculties and the realities of the world. No science could else be possible. For knowledge every thing would be purely individual. There could be no genera or species, classes or families; no abstraction or generalization; no philosophy. The Comtian positivism, low as it is, is a lofty height compared with such a state. Any noble manhood of the race would be impossible. If subsistence were possible, the merest childhood of the race would be perpetual. The harmony of our rational faculties with the rational forms of nature is the possibility of science in its many spheres. Thus comes the elevation of man, the broad knowledge of nature, the sciences with their manifold utilities in our civilization, and the philosophy which underlies all true knowledge. There is a cause for all these facts—the rational cast of mind, the rational forms of nature, and the harmony of the one with the other, so that knowledge in its manifold forms is possible. Again, there are the only two alternative resources: blind force, or a divine intelligence. The utter inadequacy of the former excludes it. The facts prove the existence of a divine intelligence as the only rational account of themselves. The sensibilities are as remarkable for their adaptation to ends as the mental faculties or the bodily organs. Mere intellectual faculties could not fit us for the present life. The springs of action are in the sensibilities. In them are the impulses to forms of action necessary to the present life. Inquisitiveness and acquisitiveness both have their impulse in the appropriate sensibilities. Without the former there could be but little attainment in knowledge; without the latter, no

necessary accumulation of property. The domestic affections are the possibility, and the only possibility, of the family. Neither wealth, nor station, nor intellect, nor culture, nor all combined can make the home. Love makes the home. The home is the profoundest necessity and the crowning benediction of human life. Some good agency, with wise intent, must have ruled the deep implanting of that love in the human soul which creates and blesses the family, and blesses mankind in this blessing. Society and the State are possible only through the appropriate sensibilities. These are richly provided in the constitution of human nature. There is the social affection which finds satisfaction in the fellowship of others. There are all the kindly affections which are the life and beauty of society. Patriotism, native to the human soul, is the life and strength of the State. The aesthetic sensibilities open to us a world of beauty and pleasure in the forms of nature and the creations of artistic genius. Is all this mere fortuity, or the work of physical force? It cannot be. In those endowments of mind which so widely and beneficently provide for so many interests of human life we see the purposive agency of a divine intelligence.[140] [140] Chalmers:Moral and Intellectual Constitution of Man, part ii; McCosh;Typical Forms, pp. 440-492.

5. Proofs of a Moral Nature in God.—In natural theology the chief proofs of a moral nature in God are furnished in the moral constitution and history of man. There is some light from a lower plane: for instance, in the provisions for happiness in the sentient, intellectual, and social forms of life. As provisions above all the requirements of subsistence, happiness must be their end. Hence their author must be of benevolent disposition and aim. We could not assert an absolute impossibility of benevolence apart from a moral nature. Conceivably, there might be generous and kindly impulses in a nature without moral endowment. But in the facts of human history we see that benevolence, especially in its higher forms, is ever regarded, not only as praiseworthy, but as morally good. This is certainly the case when we recognize benevolence as the constant and ruling aim. Such we must think the benevolence of God in the many provisions for the happiness of his creatures. Thus in God, as in man, we find in a moral nature the source of such benevolence. However, it is still true that in the moral constitution and history of man we find the chief expression and proof of a moral nature in God. Of course, we here view the question entirely apart from the Scriptures as a supernatural revelation from God. In the present argument we require the proof of two things: first, that man is constituted with a moral nature; and, second, that the moral nature of man is the proof of a moral nature in God.

We study the mind in its phenomena, and thus reach a knowledge of its endowments. This is the common method of science. We thus find the mind to be rationally constituted. This is one of the certainties of psychology. In like manner we determine the several forms of intellectual faculty. In the same manner we find the mind to be constituted with sensibility, and distinguish the different forms of feeling. Further, we find the choosing of ends and voluntary endeavors toward their attainment, and determine the mind to be endowed with a faculty of will. The several classes of mental phenomena are conclusive of these several forms of mental endowment. No phenomena of mind are more real, or constant, or common than the phenomena of conscience. But conscience means a moral nature, and can have no psychological explication without such a nature. Thus with the utmost certainty of scientific induction we reach the truth of a moral constitution of the mind. The phenomena of rational intelligence, of feeling, and of volition, which reveal themselves in the consciousness, no more certainly determine the mental endowments of intellect, sensibility, and will than the phenomena of conscience determine the moral constitution

of the mind. Further statements may set this truth in a yet clearer light. The history of the ages, the religions of the world, philosophy and poetry witness to the profound facts of conscience proofs of a in human experience. The profoundest students of our mental nature unite in this testimony. Conscience is present in all minds, and asserts its right to rule all lives. This right is not disputed, however its authority may be resisted. In the sensibilities there are many incitements to action, and, in the absence of a supreme law, the question as to which should prevail would be merely a question of secular prudence. “But there is a superior principle of reflection or conscience in every man, which distinguishes between the internal principles of his heart, as well as his external actions; pronounces determinately some actions to be in themselves just, right, good; others to be in themselves evil, wrong, unjust: which, without being consulted, without being advised with, magisterially exerts itself, and approves or condemns him, the doer of them, accordingly.” “Thus, that principle by which we survey, and either approve or disapprove, our own heart, temper, and actions, is not only to be considered as what is in its turn to have some influence; which may be said of every passion, of the lowest appetites: but likewise as being superior; as from its very nature manifestly claiming superiority over all others: insomuch that you cannot form a notion of this faculty, conscience, without taking in judgment, direction, superintendency. This is a constituent part of the idea, that is, of the faculty itself, and, to preside and govern, from the very economy and constitution of man, belongs to it. Had it strength, as it has right; had it power, as it has manifest authority, it would absolutely govern the world.”[141] “Every man has conscience, and finds himself inspected by an inward censor, by whom he is threatened and kept in awe (reverence mingled with dread); and this power, watching over the law, is nothing arbitrarily (optionally) adopted by himself, but is interwoven with his substance.”[142] [141] Butler:Fifteen Sermons, sermon ii.

[142]Kant:Metaphysic of Ethics, p. 245.

While conscience is thus at once the central fact and the proof of a moral nature in man, it is the clear proof of a moral nature in God. “Hence, while the direct function of conscience is to discriminate the right and wrong in actions, while its immediate sphere is the human will, it goes far beyond this. In fact, it can perform those functions only in this way. It carries the soul outside of itself, and brings the will before a bar independent of its own impulses. It inevitably awakens in the soul the perception of a moral law, universal, unchangeable, binding under all circumstances; in short, of a moral order of the world analogous to the physical order which it is the province of science to trace and illustrate. The moral consciousness of man refuses to stop short of this conclusion. Man feels himself, not merely related to physical laws, but even more closely and more vitally related to moral laws, laws which not only enter into the structure of his own being, and go to form the frame-work of human life, but laws which extend beyond himself and his own hopes and struggles, and assert themselves as every-where supreme. Such recognition of the moral order of the world is not only the highest, but the only conclusion that can satisfy the educated moral consciousness of mankind.”[143] [143] Diman:The Theistic Argument, pp. 248, 249.

“Now it is in these phenomena of Conscience that Nature offers to us far her strongest argument for the moral character of God. Had he been an unrighteous being himself, would he have given to this, the obviously superior faculty in man, so distinct and authoritative a voice on the side of righteousness? . . . He would never have established a conscience in man, and invested it with the

authority of a monitor, and given to it those legislative and judicial functions which it obviously possesses; and then so framed it that all its decisions should be on the side of that virtue which he himself disowned, and condemnatory of that vice which he himself exemplified. This is an evidence for the righteousness of God, which keeps its ground amid all the disorders and aberrations to which humanity is liable."[144] [144] Chalmers:Moral and Intellectual Constitution of Man, vol. i, pp. 85, 86.

Thus in the moral consciousness of man there is the recognition of a moral law of universal obligation, and also of a supreme moral ruler to whom we are responsible. The moral nature of man is thus the manifestation of a moral nature in God. In the cosmological argument we found in the existence of the cosmos, as a world originating in time, conclusive proof of the existence of an eternal and infinitely potential being as its only sufficient cause. On the same grounds we found that this being must possess the power of self-energizing—must indeed possess an infinite potency of will. In the teleological argument we found in the adaptations of means to ends the proofs of a divine intelligence as their only sufficient cause. Then in grouping these truths thus attained we already have the proof of the divine personality. This same truth is confirmed by the nature and faculties of the mind as presented in the anthropological argument. The moral nature of man is his highest endowment and the crowning proof of his divine original. It is specially the manifestation of a moral nature in God; and the truth of a moral nature in God is the truth of his holiness, justice, goodness.

015. Chapter 3: Antitheistic Theories.

Chapter 3 Antitheistic Theories.

Theism means the existence of a personal God, creator and ruler of all things. Any theory, therefore, which excludes or omits these contents of the doctrine is thereby determined to be antitheistic. There are differences in the analysis and classification of such theories. We think that all may be properly classed under five terms: atheism, pantheism, positivism, naturalistic evolution, agnosticism. This omits materialism, one of the most common terms in the usual classifications. There is a sufficient reason for its omission in the fact that two or three of the theories named are grounded in materialism. This is openly true of atheism. It is really true of naturalistic evolution. The attempt of some evolutionists to change the definition of matter so as to provide for vital and mental phenomena rather concedes than disputes this fact. Positivism would be materialistic but for its rigid self-limitation to the sheerest phenomenalism. It is certainly nothing higher. Secularism is so closely kindred to positivism that it requires no separate classification. No elaborate discussion or refutation of these several theories is intended. The chief aim is to point out their antitheistic elements. Mostly, their refutation lies in the proofs of theism, as previously adduced.

016. I. Atheism.

I. Atheism.

1. Meaning of Atheism.—After the analysis and classification of antitheistic theories each should have its own place in the further treatment. Atheism should thus be restricted, and none the less so because other theories may have atheistic elements. They still possess some peculiar characteristics as antitheistic theories, and which differentiate them from outright atheism. This is the form of atheism with which we are now concerned. It means the open and positive denial of the existence of God. There may be a skeptical atheism, and there is often such a designation of atheism; but in such a state of mind there is the absence of any proper theistic faith rather than the presence of any positive disbelief of the divine existence. Such a state of mind goes with other antitheistic theories rather than with atheism in its own distinctive sense. Dogmatic atheism, such as we here consider, must be thoroughly materialistic, or must lapse into the merest phenomenalism.

It is still a question in dispute whether there are now, or ever were, any real instances of speculative or dogmatic atheism, actuality of Such atheism is not a mere ignorance of the divine existence, as in a state of mind in which the idea has never been present. A dogmatic atheist is one to whose mind the idea is present; one who assumes to have considered the evidence in the case, and who still positively denies the existence of God. Profound thinkers, and profound students of questions directly relating to this issue, deny that there ever was an instance of such atheism. Others dissent. We think their position the true one. In the possible aberrancies of the mind there is the possibility of atheism. Yet the instances are either rare or transient. Atheism is mostly sporadic, and cannot broadly possess the mind of a community except in such favoring conditions as were furnished in the frenzy of France in the time of the Revolution. If the history of the past throws light upon the future, atheism must ever be sporadic, or only a transient mania. The moral and religious sentiments, native to the soul and never permanently repressible, must rise in resentful protest against it. The inevitable results of its prevalence must become so repugnant and shocking, even to such as are whelmed in the frenzy of the hour, as speedily to work its own cure. The battle of Christianity is not with dogmatic atheism.

2. Negations of Atheism.—Primarily and directly, atheism is the negation of God. Of all negations, this in itself is extreme of the greatest that the human mind can think or utter. It cannot remain alone, but must carry with it many others, and others of profound moment. Atheism is a system of negations. The negation of the divine existence is the negation of all Christian truth. If there is no God, there can be no Son of God; and, hence, no incarnation, no atonement, no salvation. There can be no spiritual existence. Matter must be all. There is no mind in nature, no intelligence that planned the earth and the heavens, and no omnipotent will that set them in order, or that preserves their harmonies. There are no intuitions nor absolute truths; for atheism is as thorough a negation of our reason as of our God. There can be no spontaneity or freedom of mind. There is no mind. Mental phenomena are a mere physical process determined by mechanical force. There

can be no moral obligation or responsibility. Morality is no duty. Whatever expediency may urge in behalf of secular interests, without God there can be no ground of moral duty. There is no future existence. Death is the oblivion of man just as it is the oblivion of a beast.

3. Dialectic Impotence of Atheism.—In the issue with atheism the affirmative is with theism. Atheism should regard this fact with favor, especially for the reason of its inevitable impotence for any direct support of its own position. Atheism cannot reply to the proofs of theism. Its impotence lies in its own philosophy, or, rather, in its utter negation of philosophy. Atheism grounds itself in sensationalism. Sensationalism is really no philosophy. It repudiates all the deeper principles which must underlie a philosophy, all the intuitions of the reason which are necessary to the construction of a philosophy. The bald and skeptical sensationalism of atheism furnishes no principles upon which it can reply to the proofs of theism—proofs which are grounded in a true and deep philosophy. If atheism possessed equal logical data with theism it could only balance proof with disproof, with the result of skepticism, not atheism. It possesses no such data. A denial of the principle of causation is no answer to the theistic argument so strongly builded upon that most certain principle. The denial of a teleological agency in the adaptations of nature is no answer to the argument from design, since such agency renders the only rational account of these adaptations, just as the teleological agency of mind is the only rational account of the facts of human civilization. The denial of a moral nature in man is no answer to the argument constructed upon that ground, so long as the moral consciousness of the race affirms its reality The shallow sensationalism of atheism must deny the higher faculties of our rational intelligence, and the atheist is thereby rendered helpless against the proofs of theism, just as a blind man is helpless for any contention against the perceptions of vision. The negation of a God is not the annihilation of the universe. The earth and the heavens are still realities of existence, worlds of order and beauty. Atheism can give no rational account of these things. After ages of effort, and with all the resources of science and philosophy at command, it utterly fails. No real advance has been made since Democritus and Epicurus theorized about the tumultuous atoms at last tumbling into orderly forms. The notions of an eternal series of systems like the present, or of an accidental concursus of discrete elements into cosmical forms, or of physical forces eternally latent in matter and the source of evolutions in time have no scientific warrant, and make no answer to the logical demand of the facts concerned.

Most of all is the dialectic impotence of the atheist manifest in his utter inability to bring any support to his own position. All such endeavor is rendered utterly fruitless by the nescience of his own philosophy. His sensationalism denies him all the higher forms of knowledge, and all the principles which must underlie such knowledge. He can know only the facts given in sensation, and may easily doubt their reality. Now, with such narrow limits of knowledge, and such uncertainty of any true knowledge, how can the atheist know that there is no God, or disprove his existence? It is only on an assumption of knowledge infinitely transcending all human attainment that he can deny the existence of God. “The wonder then turns on the great process, by which a man could grow to the immense intelligence that can know that there is no God. What ages and what lights are requisite for this attainment! This intelligence involves the very attributes of Divinity, while a God is denied. For unless this man is omnipresent, unless he is at this moment in every place in the universe, he cannot know but there may be in some place manifestations of a Deity, by which even he would be overpowered. If he does not know absolutely every agent in the

universe, the one that he does not know may be God. If he is not himself the chief agent in the universe, and does not know what is so, that which is so may be God. If he is not in absolute possession of all the propositions that constitute universal truth, the one which he wants may be that there is a God. If he cannot with certainty assign the cause of all that he perceives to exist, that cause may be a God. If he does not know every thing that has been done in the immeasurable ages that are past, some things may have been done by a God. Thus, unless he knows all things, that is, precludes another Deity by being one himself, he cannot know that the Being whose existence he rejects does not exist. But he must know that he does not exist, else he deserves equal contempt and compassion for the temerity with which he firmly avows his rejection and acts accordingly."[145]

[145] John Foster:Essays, essay i, letter v. References: Buchanan:Modern Atheism, chap, i; Flint:Antitheistic Theories, lect. i; Pearson:On Infidelity, pp. 6-21.

017. II. Pantheism.

II. Pantheism.

1. Doctrinal Statement of Pantheism.—A history of pantheism would be necessary to the presentation of all its phases, variations. Variations of the theory seem very natural, we might say inevitable, in view of the wide place it has occupied in both time and territory. It flourished in Hindu philosophy long before the Christian era, and also in the earlier Greek philosophy, particularly in the Eleatic school. It appears in the Christian thought of the Middle Ages, in the speculations of the scholastics, and more fully in German philosophy. It was indeed inevitable that minds so widely separated, and of such variant speculative tendencies, should construct the doctrine in different forms. The outcome appears in some radical variations. There is a materialistic pantheism —so called—in which matter is all; and life and thought are forces of matter developed through its organizations. In this view matter is God, and life and thought are modes of his operation. There is an ideal pantheism, according to which God and the universe are merely mental creations. This theory logically leads to absolute egoism. Such mental creation must be the work of each individual mind, and each should account all others its own mental production, and then assert for itself the sum of existence. What then is God?

Spinoza, of the seventeenth century, is the representative of modern pantheism. He treated the subject in a philosophic manner never before attempted, and wrought it into a more exact and definite form than it had ever received. “Assuming the monistic doctrine, he laid down the proposition that the one and simple substance is known to us through the two attributes of infinite thought and infinite extension. Neither of these attributes implies personality, the essential elements of which are denied to the substance. The latter is self-operative, according to an inward necessity, without choice or reference to ends. All finite existences, whether material or mental, are merely phenomenal.”[146] This brief passage leads us to the central facts of the Spinozan pantheism. The facts, however, are simply placed side by side; not skillfully articulated; not scientifically combined. Thought is an act of personal mind, not an attribute of being; and the denial of personality to the being denies the possibility of the infinite thought. Extension is a spatial quality and must have a ground in spatially extended being. It thus appears that the two attributes are not coherent. Nor do the attributes seem integral to the one substance, but rather to hang loosely from it, and to give no expression of cither its reality or nature. Indeed, the one substance and the two attributes are pure assumptions of the theory.

[146]Fisher:Essays, pp. 549, 550.

We may easily give the central and determining facts of the doctrine in its more exact form. Pantheism is rigidly monistic in principle. There is one substance or being. This principle is so fundamental that materialistic pantheism must speculatively transform matter into a sense of oneness, or fail to be pantheism. The one substance is without intelligence, sensibility or will, consciousness or personality. The one substance is blindly operative from an inward necessity. There is neither creation nor providence. In these facts pantheism is thoroughly antitheistic. The

purely phenomenal character of all manifestations, whether in material, organic, or mental forms, is determined by the monistic principle of pantheism. The one substance is neither divisible nor creative, so that it can neither part with any thing nor produce any thing to constitute real being in any form of finite existence. All finite things, therefore, are mere modes of the one infinite substance, and have a merely phenomenal existence.

2. Monistic Ground of Pantheism.—The mind by a native tendency seeks to combine the manifold into classes, and even into unity. This is a fortunate tendency, and the beneficial results of its incitement appear in science and philosophy. But the mental process in such work has its imperative laws which must be observed; for, otherwise, instead of any valid result, we have mere hypothesis or assumption. This is the error of pantheism. Monism is not a truth of the reason: nor is it inductively reached and verified through a proper use of the relative facts. As we have elsewhere shown, the physical and mental facts known to us in experience and consciousness absolutely require distinct and opposite forms of being as their ground. Nor can matter and mind both be modes of the monistic ground which pantheism alleges. Both may be the creation of the one omnipotent personal being; but a mere nature, without personality and operative through a blind necessity, cannot manifest itself in such contradictory modes. The monistic ground of pantheism can no more account for the two classes of physical and mental facts than the material atoms of Democritus. Further, such a ground of the cosmos, a mere natura naturans, is disproved by the arguments adduced in proof of theism. The monistic ground of pantheism is a pure assumption, and an assumption contradicted by the facts of nature. The utter erroneousness of pantheism is manifest in this, that the monism which it maintains determines all finite existences to be mere modes of the one infinite substance, mere phenomena without any reality of being in themselves. The physical universe becomes as unsubstantial as in the extremest form of idealism. Mind becomes equally unreal. Neither can be thus dismissed from the realm of substantial existence. In the physical universe there is very real being. Not all is mere appearance. And every personal mind has in its own consciousness the absolute proof of real being in itself. Personal mind is not a mere phenomenon. The monism of pantheism is utterly false in doctrine.

3. Relation of Pantheism to Morality and Religion.—It is mostly admitted that pantheism is something more for the religious nature of man than atheism. We think this the case only with some minds. Pantheism is as really blank of all objective truth which can minister to the religious cravings of the soul as atheism itself; and only the devout whose religious fervor clothes God with many perfections which this doctrine denies him—only such souls can find spiritual nourishment in their conception of him. But so far they replace pantheism with theism. With most minds pantheism must be as really without God as atheism itself—just as it is in fact. There is no personality of God, no divine majesty for the soul’s reverence, no love for the inspiration of its own adoring love, no providence over us, no place for prayer, no knowledge of us, no heart of sympathy with us, no hand to help us, no Father in heaven. There can be no religious helpfulness in the idea of a being so utterly blank of all that the soul craves in God. In the doctrine of pantheism man is nothing in himself, a phenomenon only, a mere mode of the infinite, appearing for a while, and then vanishing forever. But such totality of God and nothingness of man are utterly exclusive of both morality and religion. Nothing in us called religion or irreligion, morality or immorality, is from any agency of our own. All is the operation of the infinite which manifests itself in such modes. “One essential and constituent element of pantheism is the suppressing of all particular causes, and the

concentrating of all causality in a single being; that is, in God. This arises from another element of pantheism, yet more essential, which consists in suppressing all particular beings, and concentrating all existence in one sole being, which is God. If there is but one substance, there is but one cause; for without substance there can be only phenomena; and phenomena can only transmit action; they cannot produce it. Pantheism, laying down the principle, therefore, that there can be only one being and one cause, and that the universe is only a vast phenomenon, necessarily concentrates in God all liberty, even if it attributes liberty to him, and necessarily denies it every-where else. Man and all other beings, therefore, lose their quality of being and of cause, and become only attributes and acts of the divine substance and cause. Deprived thus of all proper causality, man is also deprived, at the same time, of all liberty, and, consequently, can have neither a law of obligation nor a controlling power over his own conduct. Such are the evident and necessary consequences of pantheism; and the pantheist, who does not adopt them either does not comprehend his own opinions or is voluntarily false to them."[147] [147] Jouffroy:Introduction to Ethics, vol. i, p. 193.

If God is not thus all, then he must be an utter blank. Pantheism must hold the one side or the other. The tendency is toward the blankness, which is not other than atheism. "In conceiving of God, the choice before a pantheist lies between alternatives from which no genius has as yet devised a real escape. God, the pantheist must assert, is literally every thing; God is the whole material and spiritual universe; he is humanity in all its manifestations; he is by inclusion every moral and immoral agent; and every form and exaggeration of moral evil, no less than every variety of moral excellence and beauty, is part of the all-pervading, all-comprehending movement of his universal life. If this revolting blasphemy be declined, then the God of pantheism must be the barest abstraction of abstract being; he must, as with the Alexandrian thinkers, be so exaggerated an abstraction as to transcend existence itself; he must be conceived of as utterly unreal, lifeless, non-existent; while the only real beings are these finite and determinate forms of existence whereof 'nature' is composed. This dilemma haunts all the historical transformations of pantheism, in Europe as in the East, to-day as two thousand years ago. Pantheism must either assert that its God is the one only existing being whose existence absorbs and is identified with the universe and humanity; or else it must admit that he is the rarest and most unreal of conceivable abstractions; in plain terms, that he is no being at all."[148] Whichever alternative is taken, all grounds of morality and religion disappear. When pantheism is divested of all false coloring and set in the light of its own principles it is seen to be much at one with atheism.[149] [148] Liddon:Bampton Lectures, 1868, lect. viii.

[149]Saisset:Modern Pantheism.; Plumptre:History of Pantheism; Hunt:Essay on Pantheism; Buchanan:Modern Atheism, chap, iii; Jouffroy:Introduction to Ethics, lects. vi, vii; Flint:Antitheistic Theories, lects. ix, x; Thompson: Christian Theism, book i, chap. vi.

018. III. Positivism.

III. Positivism.

1. The Positive Philosophy.—Positivism, considered as a philosophy, is much newer in its name than in its determining principles. The term came into this use with the system of M. Comte, in the earlier part of this century.[150] This use of the term positive has been sharply criticised; with which fact, however, we are here little concerned. The meaning could not be simply an affirmative system in distinction from negative systems. There was no place for any such distinction. The real meaning of M. Comte seems to be that his system dealt only with facts certainly known, while opposing systems admitted many delusions.

[150]Philosophie Positive. The system of Comte is a most pretentious one. “The positivism which he taught, taken as a whole, is at once a philosophy, a polity, and a religion. It professes to systematize all scientific knowledge, to organize all industrial and social activities, and to satisfy all spiritual aspirations and affections. It undertakes to explain the past, to exhibit the good and evil, strength and weakness, of the present, and to forecast the future; to assign to every science, every large scientific generalization, every principle and function of human nature, and every great social force its appropriate place; to construct a system of thought inclusive of all well-established truths, and to delineate a scheme of political and religious life in which duty and happiness, order and progress, opinion and emotion, will be reconciled and caused to work together for the good alike of the individual and of society.”[151] [151] Flint:Antitheistic Theories, pp. 178, 179.

What then are the facts with which M. Comte deals, which may be so certainly known as to preclude all mistake, and with which so mighty a structure is to be builded? With such high pretension one might reasonably expect the fullest recognition of all the powers and resources of the mind, not only in observation and experience, but equally in the profoundest intuitions of the reason. Indeed, the view is very narrow. The only facts to be known and used are facts of phenomena. Even here there is a narrow restriction. All facts of consciousness are excluded. Only external phenomena, only facts outward to the senses, are admitted into the circle of positivist verities. Nor are these facts to be known in either ground or cause. For positivism they have neither ground nor cause. They are simply sensible facts, or facts of change, to be observed and known in the order of their succession, and in their likeness or unlikeness.

Positivism is an extreme phenomenalism, and must have its psychological ground in a narrow form of sensationalism. We know that Comte utterly repudiated psychology, and no doubt would have resented any suggestion of such a ground of his philosophy. This could not have changed the facts in the case. A phenomenon means, not only something to appear, but also a mind to which it appears—a fact which Professor Bowne has pointed out with special force. External things make no appearance to our sense-organs. These outward facts of change can have no phenomenal character until perceived by the mind. How shall the mind reach them? It has no power of immediate vision; and there is required, not only the mediation of the sense-organs, but also the sensations resulting from the impression of external things. The mind must be conscious

of these sensations, or still there could be no perception of any thing external. Not a single phenomenon would otherwise be possible. And what would positivism do without phenomena, since it has nothing else with which to build its mighty structure? But the sensations necessary to phenomena are facts of mind, and hence it is utterly futile for the system to deny for itself a ground in psychology. That the system is grounded in a purely sensational psychology, and of the very narrowest type, is manifest in this, that external phenomena are the only really knowable facts. Even the facts of consciousness are denied to knowledge. There are no truths of the reason, no ontological realities. Properties mean nothing for substance; events, nothing for cause. Neither has any reality for knowledge. Both are excluded by the narrow limitation of knowledge to external phenomena. Neither substance nor cause is such a phenomenon. If only phenomena can be known, sensations are the only lights of knowledge. Such sensationalism is not new. It is certainly as old as the earlier Greek philosophy, and probably has never since failed of representatives. It has flourished in more modern times, particularly in the eighteenth century. Positivism is therefore only a new name for a system which is not new in the determining principles of its philosophy. No philosophy constructed upon the ground of this narrow sensationalism can ever satisfy the demands of our rational intelligence.

Two things have special prominence in the system of Comte: the law of the three states, and the classification of the sciences. The three states are three forms of human thought respecting the phenomena of nature. In the first state all facts of change are attributed to some supernatural agency: this is the theological state. In the second the facts of change are attributed to the intrinsic forces of nature: this is the metaphysical state, with the ruling ideas of substance and cause. The third state is the positivistic, in which the ruling ideas of the first and second are dismissed, and science deals only with the phenomena of nature. Here no account is given of the origin and course of nature. The question is excluded as delusive and unscientific. For positivism there is no reality of nature back of phenomena. Nothing has any account in causation. The law of the three states means that the human mind passes successively through the three, or through the first two into the third, beyond which it cannot advance. This then is the doctrine of the three states. The mind’s first ideas are in the theological state; then in the metaphysical state; and finally in the scientific or positivistic state. This is the uniform and necessary law of mental movement, for both the individual and the race. It is a part of the doctrine that each state is exclusive of the others, so that the mind must leave the first in order to enter the second, and the second in order to reach the third. The facts in the case do not warrant any such law. It is neither true of the individual mind nor of the race. The ideas of the child respecting the things about it are far more positivistic than either metaphysical or theological. The ideas of the barbarian mind are a mixture of theology and positivism—in open contradiction to this law of the three states. A higher mental development may eliminate many superstitions assigned to the theological state, and discover in the forces of nature the causes of many events previously accounted to supernatural agency; but there is no necessary parting with either theology or metaphysics on the most thorough entrance into the sphere of science. The proof of this statement is in the fact that many very eminent scientists are true believers in God and his providence, in the law of causation, and in the intrinsic forces of nature. Positivism does not dominate the higher mental development of the times. With all the advancement of science the truths of both religion and metaphysics are still firmly held. In the classification of the sciences the ruling principle is, to begin with the least complex, to proceed in the order of increasing complexity, and so ending with the most complex. The sciences, as given

in this order, are mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology, sociology. As this philosophy admits into its service only facts of external phenomena, it is compelled so to characterize the facts of mathematics. This is a dire necessity. In none of its principles or processes has mathematics any such quality. There is nothing outward for the organic eye; all is for the inner eye of the mind. And, on its ruling principle of classification, how can this philosophy begin with mathematics as the more simple, and then proceed to astronomy as more complex, when the very complexity of astronomy arises from the profound problems of mathematics which are its necessary ground? Then biology is made to include the whole man, just as it includes the animal and the plant. The mind has no distinct place in this grand hierarchy of the sciences. It cannot have any in a system which repudiates all the inner facts of consciousness. Mind belongs to our physiological constitution and must be studied in the convolutions of the brain. This is not the way to any true classification of the sciences. Yet mostly the disciples of Comte specially admire this part of his work. It has not escaped severe criticism, even from some who sympathize with many of his views. Spencer and Mill and Huxley are in this list. In this criticism there is at times a mingling of contempt. Of course, open inaccuracies in matters of science are specially glaring and offensive in any one of such lofty pretensions.

M. Comte did a queer thing, and a thing very offensive to most of his admirers, when he proceeded to construct upon the ground of his positivism a new religion. They naturally thought that in a system so utterly atheistic there was no place for religion. The offense was the deeper because of the character of the new religion. Indeed, it is a very queer affair. There are ceremonies and sacraments, a priesthood and a supreme pontiff. Collective humanity, symbolized by a woman, is the enthroned idol. Society must be absolutely subject to the new social and religious regime. No individual liberty nor rights of conscience can be tolerated. No wonder that the new religion gave great offense. Huxley bitterly styles it “Catholicismminus Christianity.” It could not be so much the absence of Christianity as the Romish cast of this religion that so deeply offended Mr. Huxley. Mill joins in this severity of criticism; hardly, however, because this new religion was purposely constructed “‘sans Dieu,” since he ventures for himself the opinion that a religion is possible without a God, and such a religion as may be, even to Christians, an instructive and profitable subject of contemplation. M. Comte sharply resented these criticisms, and denounced his followers who accepted his philosophy, but rejected his religion, as deficient in brains. It is a quarrel in which we have little concern. The new religion is enshrined in—ink. Its devotees are very few.

2. The Philosophy Antitheistic.—The heading of this paragraph might suffice for all the necessary content. Positivism is openly and avowedly antitheistic. It was purposely constructed without God. In the low plane of its principles there is no need of God, and no proof of his existence. If knowledge is limited to external phenomena, there can be no knowledge of God, for he is not such a phenomenon. We can readily believe La Place that, on surveying the heavens with a telescope, he saw no God. He could thus discover only physical phenomena, and God is not such a phenomenon. It is on such ground that for positivism he can have no existence. If there is no truth in either efficient or final causation, nothing in nature leads up to God. Positivism is thus determined to an antitheistic position by the low form of its phenomenalism. Its weakness as against theism arises from this low plane of its philosophy. A position which can be held only by a limitation of knowledge to external phenomena, and a virtual denial of our rational intelligence,

cannot be strongly held. That intelligence will assert for itself a much larger sphere. Nor will reason, with its absolute truths, and conscience, with its sense of God and duty, vacate their rightful place in our consciousness to the occupancy of positivism.[152]

[152] Comte:Philosophie Positive, condensed in an English translation by Miss Martineau;Politique Positive,translated by English admirers; Littre:Auguste Comte et la Philosophie Positive; Congreve:Essays, Political, Social, and Religious; Bridges:Unity of Comte's Life and Doctrines—a reply to Mill; Lewes: History of Philosophy, vol. ii, pp. 590-639; Morley:Encyclopaedia Britannica, art. "Comte;" Spencer:Genesis of Science;Classification of the Sciences; Mill:Auguste Comte and Positivism; Huxley:Lay Sermons, vii, viii; McCosh:Christianity and Positivism; Flint:Antitheistic Theories, lect. V; Martineau:Essays, vol. i, pp. 1-62; Morell:History of Modern Philosophy, pp. 354-362.

3. The Kindred Secularism.—Mr., Holyoake is the acknowledged leader in the propagation of the modern atheistic secularism. His theories are set forth and advocated in various publications.[153] The late Mr. Bradlaugh was in the same leadership, but not in full accord with Mr. Holyoake. The former was a dogmatic and openly avowed atheist; the latter repudiated the term on account of the opprobrium associated with it, and assumed merely a skeptical or agnostic position respecting the divine existence. "The theory of secularism is a form, not of dogmatic, but of skeptical, atheism; it is dogmatic only in denying the sufficiency of the evidence for the being and perfections of God. It does not deny, it only does not believe, his existence. There may be a God notwithstanding; there may even be sufficient evidence of his being, although some men cannot, or will not, see it. 'They do not deny the existence of God, but only assert that they have not sufficient proof of his existence.'[154] 'The non-theist takes this ground. He affirms that natural reason has not yet attained to (evidence of) Supernatural Being, He does not deny that it may do so, because the capacity of natural reason in the pursuit of evidence of Supernatural Being is not, so far as he is aware, fixed.' 'The power of reason is yet a growth. To deny its power absolutely would be hazardous; and in the case of a speculative question, not to admit that the opposite views may in some sense be tenable is to assume your own infallibility, a piece of arrogance the public always punish by disbelieving you when you are in the right.'[155] Accordingly, the thesis which Mr. Holyoake undertook to maintain in public discussion was couched in these terms: 'That we have not sufficient evidence to believe in the existence of a Supreme Being independent of Nature,' and so far from venturing to deny his existence, he makes the important admission that 'denying implies infinite knowledge as the ground of disproof.'"[156]

[153] Paley Refuted; Trial of Theism; Townly and Holyoake;Grant and Holyoake, and other public debates;The Reasoner, a periodical edited by Mr. Holyoake, and the chief organ of the modern Freethinkers of England.

[154]The Reasoner, xii, pp. 24, 376.

[155]Ibid., New Series, pp. 9, 130.

[156]Buchanan:Modem Atheism, p. 365.

Secularism is the practical application of positivism to the conduct of the present life. While less pronounced in its atheism, it equally denies all present knowledge of God, and all sufficient proof of his existence. If there is no God, there is no future existence; certainly no proof of such an

existence. The present world and the interests of the present life we know. Therefore we should wholly dismiss from our thought and care both God and religion, and give our whole attention to the interests of the present life. A divine providence must be substituted by the providence of science. A practical atheism should thus rule the present life. This secularism must be more thoroughly atheistic at heart than in open profession, for otherwise it could not thus enforce the lesson of practical atheism. It often occurs in our seculiar interests that prudence imperatively demands attention to the slightest chance of certain contingencies. How much more should this be the case respecting interests which may stretch away into eternity! Secularism admits that there may be a God and a future life; that it is impossible to prove or know the contrary. It is a principle admitted by all thoughtful minds that questions of interest should receive attention according to their importance. Then, with the admissions of secularism respecting the divine existence and a future life, it opposes itself to all the dictates of prudence, and is utterly without rational warrant. It takes this position against the common faith of the race in the existence and providence of a divine being, and the future existence of man; against the universality of religion, and against its necessity as arising from the constitution of the mind, which, with rare exceptions, is now admitted by all students of the question; against the conclusion of the profound thinkers of the ages that in the works of nature and the endowments of mind there are conclusive proofs of the existence of God.

Secularism is not content to be merely a theory; it becomes a propaganda. That from such merely skeptical ground any one should draw for himself the lessons of practical atheism is unreasonable enough. That he should feel impelled to a propagandism for the purpose of indoctrinating the masses into a life without God, or religious duty, or thought of a future state leads us again to an atheism, far deeper at heart than in the open profession, as the only account of such a propagandism. Its method is most skillful. So much must be conceded to secularism. Dogmatic atheism is not winsome. A merely skeptical atheism, quite concealed in the appeals to secular interests, encounters far less opposition in the common moral consciousness. Then the propagation is attempted among the masses, the men of toil whose secular lot is often a hard one. Secularism is not for men of affluence. Little need is there for preaching to such the paramount duty of exclusive attention to the interests of the present life. The common toilers suffer many privations, and, with open professions of sympathy and a purpose of helping them, it is not difficult to get their attention. Advantage is easily taken of the state of unrest or discontent with the laboring class, and their prejudices turned to practical account in favor of secularism. The improvement of the condition of the laboring classes is a worthy aim. Whether secularism has any such honest aim is uncertain. Its leaders may think so, and yet be self-deceived. An unsuspected depth of atheism and intensity of prejudice against Christianity may rule them in a measure unknown to themselves. No unperverted mind can think that the secularism which they preach can improve the temporal condition of the laboring masses. It is not secularity that they need. Mostly this is already dominant. The need is for its wise direction. Such direction can never come from an atheistic secularism. The deepest need is for higher ideas of life; pre-eminently for moral and religious ideas. These ideas are the best practical forces for even the present life. They nourish higher aims and purposes, preserve from vice and waste, inspire industry and economy, patience and hope. Atheism utterly blanks these ideas, opens the flood-gates of vice and waste, and breeds discontent and despair. It is a shallow assumption of this atheistic secularism that religion, even that Christianity is a detriment to the present life—an assumption utterly irrational on the face of it,

and utterly disproved by the facts of history.[157] [157] Buchanan:Modern Atheism, chap, ix; Flint:Antitheistic Theories, lect. vi; Pearson:On Infidelity,Appendix.

019. IV. Naturalistic Evolution.

IV. Naturalistic Evolution.

1. Theory of Evolution.—The theory of evolution has become so familiar, even to the popular mind, that for our own discussion it needs no very exact statement. The theory involves two questions: one, a question of fact respecting the origin of species in the mode of evolution; the other, respecting the law of the process, or the force or forces which determine the evolution. Respecting these forces there are among evolutionists marked differences of opinion; with which, however, we are not here concerned. Respecting the question of fact, the theory is that species arise in the mode of evolution, the higher being evolved out of the lower. The process is from a beginning up to man. The ascension is either in the mode of slight, insensible variation and improvement, as maintained by Darwin, or by leaps, as others hold. In one or the other mode, or in both, higher species are held to have been successively evolved from the lower. Thus from some incipient form or forms of life, and through successive evolutions into higher organic orders, the human species has been reached. Man is the last and the highest result of the process. Whether he is the highest possible evolution, the theory does not inform us. On the principles of the theory, there is no reason why the process should terminate with man, unless the evolving forces are already exhausted. If these forces are purely and exclusively natural, they can possess only a finite potency, and must therefore reach a point of elevation above which they cannot ascend. The evolution of an order as high above man as man is above mollusk would be a grand result. Mere naturalistic evolution can hardly promise so much.

Naturalistic evolution requires a preparation in the inorganic world for the inception and development of the organic. It is admitted that life could not exist in the primordial state of matter as known to science. Only through a long process of change could the necessary conditions be provided for the origin and progress of life. The nebular cosmogony covers much of this preparation, and is really a part of the theory of naturalistic evolution. We previously explained that theory of world-building. In the beginning all matter existed in a state of intensest heat, in the form of a fire-mist. By the operation of natural forces a process of change began therein, and has continued without interruption through the formation of the world, the origin of life, and the evolution of species. Thus the inception of change in the primordial fire-mist was theoretically the real beginning of this form of evolution.

2. Distinction of Theistic and Naturalistic Evolution.—Theistic evolution means a divine agency in the process. There are differences of opinion respecting the measure of this agency. Some posit special interpositions, as in the origin of life and in the origin of mind. Others hold the nebular cosmogony and the evolution of species, not as a process carried on by the forces of nature, but as the method of the divine agency in creation. In the view of such the divine agency is just as real in the origin of a new species as it would be in its original or immediate creation. Such theories might modify the proofs of the divine existence, but could not void nor even weaken their force. Some would claim an enhancement of their cogency. Even Darwin’s narrow limitation of the divine

agency to an incipient vitalization of a few simple forms leaves the ground of theistic proofs in its full strength. In the light of reason, that agency which could endow a few simple organic forms with potencies for the evolution of all living orders is possible only in a personal being of infinite wisdom and power. The view is false to the divine providence, and to the true sense of creation, but leaves the cosmological, the teleological, and the moral arguments in their full strength. The theory of a purely naturalistic evolution is in the nature of it antitheistic. It allows no divine agency at any point in the whole process, and asserts an absolute continuity of the physical forces which initiated the movement in the primordial fire-mist. Such a theory cannot be other than antitheistic. No repudiation of materialism or atheism, or of both, can change this fact. Instances of such repudiation are not wanting; but they mean little or nothing contrary to either materialism or atheism. Materialism is denied under the cover of a new definition of matter which classifies the phenomena of mind with the phenomena of matter. The result is not the elevation of the latter to a spiritual ground, but the reduction of the former to a material ground. The mental facts are thoroughly merged into the physical process, under an absolute continuity of force. There is no escape from materialism in this mode. Sometimes the denial of materialism means simply a denial of the reality of matter, or means our utter ignorance of any such reality. After a long discussion of "the physical basis of life," thoroughly materialistic in its process and outcome, even to the inclusion of all mental facts, Huxley says: "I, individually, am no materialist, but, on the contrary, believe materialism to involve grave philosophical error.[158] That we correctly stated the ground of this denial appears in his words which follow: "For, after all, what do we know of this terrible 'matter,' except as a name for the unknown and hypothetical cause of states of our own consciousness? And what do we know of that 'spirit' over whose threatened extinction by matter a great lamentation is arising, like that which was heard at the death of Pan, except that it also is a name for an unknown and hypothetical cause, or condition, of states of consciousness? In other words, matter and spirit are but names for the imaginary substrata of groups of natural phenomena."[159] This is pure phenomenalism, and, instead of an ascent to the spirituality of mind, is a descent to the lowest level of the Comtian positivism. This level is most thoroughly antitheistic. The denial of atheism often means a nescience of God rather than any faith in his existence. This is certainly the case with some evolutionists who confess to many mysteries of nature which have no solution in any empirical mode. "They have as little fellowship with the atheist who says there is no God as with the theist who professes to know the mind of God."[160] Such a separation from atheism means no acceptance of theism.

[158]Lay Sermons, p. 139.

[159]Ibid., p. 143.

[160]Tyndall;Fragments of Science, p. 457.

Much of the modern antitheism allies itself with the theory of naturalistic evolution. The theory itself is antitheistic. We must not here overlook the distinction of this theory from the theistic theory. The facts upon which the theory is professedly constructed are not in the line of our studies, and hence we have no preparation for its scientific discussion. Yet some questions which deeply concern the theory are open to fairly intelligent minds. Such we may briefly consider.

3. Perplexities of the Naturalistic Theory.—As we have seen, this theory begins with the nebular cosmogony. Its only material is the primordial fire-mist; its only agencies, the physical forces latent

therein. With such material, and through the operation of such forces, it must build the world and originate all the forms of life, including man himself. The results are before us. Such are the assumptions of the theory. Surely they are extravagant enough to perplex the shrewdest and appall the boldest. In the light of reason insuperable difficulties beset the theory at many points.

What account can the theory give of the primordial fire-mist? If it be granted that the indices of geology and cosmogony point to such a prior state of matter, unanswered questions still remain. The fire-mist, primordial with science, is not primordial with reason. Whence the fire-mist? Reason demands the real beginning, and a sufficient cause for it, as for every transition in the upward cosmical movement. The primordial fire-mist makes no answer to these demands. The hypothesis of evolution gives us no light. “It does not solve—it does not profess to solve—the ultimate mystery of this universe. It leaves, in fact, that mystery untouched. For, granting the nebula and its potential life, the question, whence they came, would still remain to baffle and bewilder us. At bottom, the hypothesis does nothing more than ‘transport the conception of life’s origin to an indefinitely distant past.’”[161] The granting a potential life in the fire-mist is a pure gratuity, without any ground or proof in empirical science. The hypothesis of evolution, with its beginning in the nebular cosmogony, is, for any rationale of the cosmos, confessedly an utter blank.

[161]Tyndall:Fragments of Science, p. 455. No theory could be in profounder need of the most certain and most certainly verifying facts than this of naturalistic evolution. On the face of it the theory is most irrational. As previously stated, there is for a beginning only the nebula or fire-mist. Through the operation of physical forces this fire-mist goes to work, forms itself into worlds and sets them in the harmony of the heavens, just as if directed by an omniscient mind. For our own world, as probably for many others, it provides the conditions suited to living beings, originates life in the many forms which swim in the waters, fly in the air, roam in forest and field. A wonderful ascent is this, but a mere starting compared with the culmination. In the process of evolution this fire-mist mounts to the grade of man and invests itself with the high powers of personality. Now it legislates in the wisdom of Moses, sings in the psalmody of David, reasons in the philosophy of Plato, frames the heavens in the science of Newton, preaches in the power of Paul, and crowns all human life and achievement with the divine life of the Christ. All this is in the assumption of naturalistic evolution. “Surely the mere statement of such a notion is more than a refutation. But the hypothesis would probably go even farther than this. Many who hold it would probably assent to the position that, at the present moment, all our philosophy, all our poetry, all our science, and all our art—Plato, Shakespeare, Newton, and Raphael—are potential in the fires of the sun. We long to learn something of our origin. If the evolution hypothesis be correct, even this unsatisfied yearning must have come to us across the ages which separate the unconscious primeval mist from the consciousness of to-day. I do not think that any holder of the evolution hypothesis would say that I overstate or overstrain it in any way. I merely strip it of all vagueness, and bring before you, unclothed and unvarnished, the notions by which it must stand or fall. Surely these notions represent an absurdity too monstrous to be entertained by any sane mind.”[162] In this exigency Tyndall seeks relief in a new definition of matter. His effort is utterly fruitless, and leaves in all its strength his characterization of the hypothesis of naturalistic evolution. All this, however, could not disprove the theory in the presence of clearly ascertained facts sufficient for its verification, but it clearly points to an absolute necessity for such facts. Their absence must be fatal to the theory.

[162]Tyndall:Fragments of Science, pp. 453-454. The origin of life is a crucial question with this theory. A wide gulf separates the living from the lifeless. How shall this gulf be crossed? Can this theory bridge it? It the origin must, if it would itself live. The bridge must answer for the crossing. Abiogenesis, the origin of living matter from lifeless matter, is a necessity of the theory. Hence no mere speculation, conjecture, or illogical inference will answer at this point. Only the veritable facts will answer. What is the present state of the question? Comparatively recently, and after reviewing the relative facts. Professor Huxley said: abiogenesis. " The fact is, that at the present moment there is not a shadow of trustworthy direct evidence that abiogenesis does now take place, or has taken place within the period during which the existence of life on the globe is recorded."[163] There is no better witness to this state of the case. Huxley is familiar with all the facts concerned, and has said many things which clearly m.ean that he is a reluctant witness.

[163]Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Biology." The bent of Huxley's mind is so strongly toward a purely naturalistic evolution that he could not close the case with such a statement. Hence he proceeds: "But it need hardly be pointed out that the fact does not in the slightest degree interfere with any conclusion that may be arrived at deductively from other considerations that, at some time or other, abiogenesis must have taken place." Indeed, we think this pointing out very urgent, and, moreover, that this abiogenesis must be proved as a fact, because it is a necessary part of naturalistic evolution. Without the proof of that fact the theory must utterly fail. The proof is attempted. How? Thus: "If the hypothesis of evolution is true, living matter must have arisen from not-living matter; for, by the hypothesis, the condition of the globe was at one time such that living matter could not have existed in it, life being entirely incompatible with the gaseous state. . . . Of the causes which have led to the origination of living matter, then, it may be said that we know absolutely nothing. But postulating the existence of living matter endowed with that power of hereditary transmission, and with that tendency to vary which is found in all such matter"—why, then Darwin could show how the process of evolution went on. This is jumbling logic, and in a case where exactness is needed. Its fallacies are easily pointed out. On the hypothesis of evolution, living matter must have arisen from not-living matter, because there could have been no life in the primordial fire-mist. This is the deductive process, suggested in the first citation, by which abiogenesis is to be proved. But abiogenesis is not a necessary part of evolution. Evolution might be a process in nature, while at the beginning life originated in a divine fiat. No doubt a majority of evolutionists hold this view. Hence abiogenesis is necessary only to the purely naturalistic theory of evolution. It is absolutely necessary to this theory. How, then, is abiogenesis proved as a fact? From the hypothesis of naturalistic evolution Huxley deduces the reality of abiogenesis. If the hypothesis be true, abiogenesis must be true. But this "must be" is merely a consequence in logic, not a reality in nature. And it is a consequence that hangs upon a mere hypothesis. Here is queer logic. Abiogenesis is deduced as a fact in nature from evolution as a mere hypothesis. This is the sheerest fallacy. Then life thus surreptitiously got is postulated as a reality in possession of high endowments: "But postulating the existence of living matter endowed with that power of hereditary transmission, and with that tendency to variation which is found in all such matter"—then we may accept the hypothesis of naturalistic evolution.

Any theory could be proved in this way. It is a short and easy process. Make your hypothesis; deduce its logical consequence; transform this consequence into a reality in nature; make this reality the proof of your hypothesis, and the work is done. This is really the way in which Huxley

proves the naturalistic theory of evolution. By a saltative process of logic he constructs a science of evolution. The structure tumbles in the presence of the facts. Abiogenesis is an essential part of naturalistic evolution, the very ground of the theory, and must be verified as a fact before the theory can have any standing. The verification must proceed in an inductive mode, with the support of the necessary facts. But the necessary facts are not at hand. There is not a shadow of proof in favor of abiogenesis. We know absolutely nothing about any such origin of life. This is the open confession. In such a case there is absolutely no proof. Had there been any, Huxley would certainly not have resorted to such fallacies of logic, and to a method utterly unscientific. In no other hands could the theory have fared any better. The warranted conclusion is that naturalistic evolution is utterly groundless. It must remain groundless until proof is furnished of a material genesis of life.

If naturalistic evolution could prove a material genesis of life, it might claim an open way up through all organic orders—certainly through all below man. In the utter failure of this proof, the theory must verify itself in every grade of the assumed evolution. There are openly confessed perplexities at many points. However, we leave these questions to scientists. The proof of evolution up to man could not conclude his origin in the same mode. He is too distinct in his constitution, and too high in his grade, for any such conclusion. This view is widely accepted. Many evolutionists separate man from all lower orders, and account his origin, particularly in his mental and moral nature, to the creative agency of God. In bodily form, in organic, structure, in volume of brain, man is so widely separated from all other orders, so elevated above all, that his immediate evolution from any known order clearly seems impossible. This may be said in the presence of all the determining principles which underlie the theories of evolution. In the distinctive facts which place man at such a height, he was the same in his earliest existence that he is now. No discovered remains represent him in the beginning as far down the scale in approximation to the ape. Mr. Huxley has closely examined this subject, and with special view to the question of man's origin in the mode of evolution. In this investigation he critically studied the notable Engis and Neanderthal skulls, among the very oldest human fossils yet discovered. His conclusion is that man was man then as he is man now. Respecting the Engis skull, he says: "It is, in fact, a fair average human skull, which might have belonged to a philosopher, or might have contained the thoughtless brains of a savage." The Neanderthal skull represents a man of somewhat lower type, but still a man as widely separated from the ape as the lower races of the present. "In conclusion, I may say that the fossil remains of man hitherto discovered do not seem to me to take us appreciably nearer to that lower pithecoid form, by the modification of which he has probably become what he is."[164] Dawson confirms these views, and even adds to their strength by the study of other fossil remains.[165] The meaning of all this is that the wide separation of living man from the ape is not in the least narrowed by any discovered remains of fossil man.

[164]Huxley:Man's Place in Nature, pp. 181, 183.

[165]Nature and the Bible, lect. v.

These facts render the evolution of man simply in his organic nature a very difficult question for thorough-going evolutionists. Of course, there is no pretension to any knowledge of actual instances of such evolution. "Where, then, are the proofs? If in the evolution of lower orders instances could be shown of as wide a variation by a single bound as that which separates man

from the ape, some proof of his evolution might therein be claimed; but there are no such instances. Besides, the Darwinian theory excludes the saltatory mode of evolution, and therefore must pronounce such instances an impossibility. The only other resource, if any, is in transitional links. If some paleontologist should uncover the fossilized remains of anthropoids successively ascending from the ape into a higher likeness to man until the last transition seemed possible, much proof would be claimed for his evolution. Confessedly, these links are still missing. Evolutionists are looking in the direction just pointed out. “Where, then, must we look for primeval man? Was the oldest homo sapiens pliocene or miocene, or yet more ancient? In still older strata do the fossilized bones of an ape more anthropoid, or a man more pithecoid, than any yet known await the researches of some unborn paleontologist?”[166] That no such discovery has yet been made is much against all hope of the future. Evolutionists may continue looking, but they should not meantime claim the evolution of man just as though the necessary proofs were on hand. “No remains of fossil man bear evidence to less perfect erectness of structure than in civilized man, or to any nearer approach to the man-ape in essential characteristics. The existing man-apes belong to lines that reached up to them as their ultimatum; but of that line which is supposed to have reached upward to man, not the first link below the lowest level of existing man has yet been found. This is the more extraordinary in view of the fact that, from the lowest limits in existing man, there are all possible gradations up to the highest; while below that limit there is an abrupt fall to the ape-level, in which the cubic capacity of the brain is one-half less. If the links ever existed, their annihilation without trace is so extremely improbable that it may be pronounced impossible. Until some are found, science cannot assert that they ever existed.”[167] [166] Man’s Place in Nature, p. 184.

[167]Dana:Geology, 1875, p. 603.

Other difficulties than the wide separation of man from all lower orders beset the theory of his evolution. We should not be misled by all that we hear about the anthropoid ape, nor lured into the notion of some one family specially man-like. Nor should we admit the notion of an ascending scale of man-likeness through a succession of ape families until the higher points of similarity converge in a single family. There is in these families no such prophecy of the evolution of man. That the ape families do not in any order of succession represent a growth of anthropoid quality an eminent scientist clearly points out.[168] In his careful study of the question, Mivart shows that the points of likeness to man are widely distributed among the ape families, and in a very miscellaneous way. Thus there is no gathering of anthropoid qualities into any one family, and no ascension through the several families toward a higher man-likeness. “In fact, in the words of the illustrious Dutch naturalists, Messrs. Shroeder van der Kolk and Vrolik, the lines of affinity existing between different primates construct rather a network than a ladder.”[169] There can be no ascent toward man through such a state of facts. Hence the perplexity of evolutionists in locating the parentage of man, whether in the chimpanzee, or in the gibbon, or in the gorilla, or in the orang, or in some other ape family. Of later years the gorilla has been in much favor. Mivart, however, sends him to the rear and denies him all chance of appropriating the high honor of fatherhood to mankind. It seems impossible for evolutionists to construct a ladder out of such a web, so as to gain any ascent toward man.

[168]Mivart:Man and Apes, part iii.

[169]Ibid., pp. 175, 176.

Wallace studied this same question, and recognized its perplexities. “On the whole, then, we find that no one of the great apes can be positively asserted to be the nearest to man in structure. Each of them approaches him in certain characteristics, while in others it is widely removed, giving the idea, so consonant with the theory of evolution as developed by Darwin, that all are derived from a common ancestor, from which he existing anthropoid apes as well as man have diverged.”[170] The ape-parentage of man is thus abandoned, while an earlier parentage common to ape and man is assumed. The present tendency of evolutionists is strongly toward this view. Clearly, the reason for it arises from the insuperable difficulties which beset the theory of an ape-parentage of man. How are they less in the new view? There is no reason to think a remoter ancestor more anthropoid than the ape. No evidence is given of such a fact. Thus, too, the line is lengthened, instead of shortened, along which the missing links must be found, in order to any proof of the evolution of man. There is really no proof of the evolution of man’s organic nature.

[170]Wallace:Darwinism, pp. 452, 453.

Naturalistic evolution assumes the burden of proving the evolution of the whole nature of man. No exception can be made in respect to his mental and moral nature. A theory which begins with the fire-mist as its only material, and the forces latent therein as its only agencies, must proceed to the end with such equipment. No other essence or agency can be admitted or assumed at any point in the evolutionary process. The naturalistic evolution of man’s mental nature involves infinitely greater difficulty than the evolution of his organic nature. This is the reason for the imperative demand for a new definition of matter. We already have Tyndall’s view of the absurdity of evolution on the definition current in science since the time of Democritus. Others join him in the demand for a new definition which shall thoroughly transform matter. If only they had the power of transubstantiation, success might crown their endeavor. However, a new name does not change an old nature. Matter is still the very same. Some adopt a Hylozoistic view of nature. Others are forced into idealism or agnosticism. Matter is nothing substantively, or a mystical something about which we know nothing. All this makes full concession that matter as we know it, and as it really is, cannot be the source of mind, and that the higher nature of man could not have its origin in naturalistic evolution. As previously stated, many evolutionists, and some who hold the evolution of the organic nature of man, do not admit the origin of his higher faculties in this mode. They deny its possibility on the very principles of evolution. Wallace is an instance, and his view may have the greater weight because he is a Darwinian, and might fairly have claimed to share with Darwin the originality of his theory. But with the conclusion of Darwin, “that man’s entire nature and all his faculties, whether moral, intellectual, or spiritual, have been derived from their rudiments in lower animals,” he joins issue. We need not follow his discussion; but he shows the impossibility of such an evolution of our higher faculties, such as the mathematical, musical, artistic, and moral.[171]
[171] Wallace:Darwinism, pp. 461-478.

4. No Disproof of Theism.—Only in its extreme form is evolution antitheistic. We have seen that eminent scientists hold the nebular cosmogony and the evolution of species as a method of the divine agency in creation, and hence in the fullest accord with theism. So that the proof of evolution as a process in nature would not in itself prove any thing against theism. But the theory of evolution is yet in an hypothetic state. It is not yet an established science. The diversities of

theory among evolutionists deny it a scientific position. There are many gaps yet to be closed;[172] many facts not yet adjusted to the theory, and serious deficiencies of direct proof. “Those who hold the doctrine of evolution are by no means ignorant of the uncertainty of their data, and they only yield to it a provisional assent. They regard the nebular hypothesis as probable, and, in the utter absence of any evidence to prove the act illegal, they extend the method of nature from the present into the past.”[173] Evolution then is an inference from a mere hypothesis. This is not the method of science. Hypothesis is an utterly insufficient ground for any science. No theory can claim a scientific position until it has verified itself by facts.

[172]McCosh:Christianity and Positivism, pp. 343-345.

[173]Tyndall:Fragments of Science, p. 456. In some instances there are generalizations from a few observed facts. Thus from the observed co-existence of certain characteristics in a few animals their invariable co-existence is inferred. This inference, however, is not in itself a scientific principle, and becomes such only on the warrant of the uniformity of nature. But the theory of evolution has the warrant of no such law. Production in kind rules the propagation of life. This is a most certain generalization. But it is one which gives no support to the theory of evolution. Indeed, it is in direct opposition to the origin of species in the mode of evolution.[174] Much more is the evolution of man a mere hypothesis. The scientific proof of it is hardly a pretension. It is an inference from the hypothesis of evolution in the lower forms of life. We have already seen how Huxley attempted its deduction from such an hypothesis. It is really in the same way that Wallace maintains the origin of man’s organic nature in evolution.[175] It is a very common method. The method, however, is utterly unscientific. The truth is that the deductive method is wholly inapplicable to such a science. It is the method of mathematics and metaphysics, to which evolution is foreign, and not of the natural sciences, which include evolution.[176] The origin of man in the mode of evolution is without proof. And this resort to deductive proof, at once utterly unscientific and in open violation of logical method, is a confession that the theory is without the facts necessary to its scientific verification. Opposed to such an unwarranted inference of the evolution of man are the overwhelming disproofs of such an origin. Surely such a state of facts can make nothing against the proofs of theism.

[174]Winchell:Evolution, p. 54; Dawson:Story of the Earth and Man, p. 327; Quatrefages:The Human Species, p. 80.

[175]Darwinism, p. 446.

[176]Krauth-Fleming:Vocabulary, “Deduction.”

If the origin of new species in the mode of evolution were of present occurrence, and open to the most searching observation, a purely naturalistic evolution could neither be known nor proved. A supernatural agency in the process would not be open to sense-perception, but would be manifest in our reason. This accords with the theory of many evolutionists. Scientific authority is very largely against a purely naturalistic evolution. This fact means the more because it arises from scientific or philosophic grounds, not from religious predilection. What is the conclusion? As evolution is yet in an hypothetic state; as a purely naturalistic evolution is in the nature of it unprovable; and as scientists are by a very weighty preponderance against such a doctrine, there is nothing in the theory which in the least discredits the proofs of theism.[177]

[177] Darwin:The Origin of Species; The Descent of Man; Professor Gray:Darwiniansim; Haeckel: History of Creation; History of the Evolution of Man; Mivart:On the Genesis of Species; Man and Apes; Lessons from Nature; Schmidt:Doctrine of Descent and Darwinism; Wallace:Contributions to the Theory of Natural Selection; Darwinism; Wilson:Chapters on Evolution; Conn:Evolution of To-day; Hodge:What is Darwinism; Winchell:Evolution; Joseph Cook:Biology, lects. ii, iii, “Concessions of Evolutionists;” Dawson:Nature and the Bible, lects. iv-vi;Story of the Earth and Man, chaps, xiv, xv; Quatrefages:The Human Species.

020. Chapter 4: Antitheistic Agnosticism.

Chapter 4 Antitheistic Agnosticism. That form of agnosticism with which we are here concerned will appear in the discussion. It belongs to pantheism, on the one hand, and, on the other, has its special representatives in Sir William Hamilton and Herbert Spencer.

021. I. Denial Of Divine Personality.

I. Denial Of Divine Personality.

1. Assumption of Limitation in Personality.—The pantheistic view is stated as follows: “Personality only exists on condition of a limitation, that is to say, by a negation. From this it follows that Infinite Being, excluding all negation and all limit, excludes also all personality. To conceive God as a person, we must attribute to him the forms of human activity, thought, love, joy, will. But thought supposes variety and succession of ideas. Love cannot exist without want, nor joy without sadness, nor will without effort, and all this implies limitation, space, and time. A personal God is therefore limited, mutable, imperfect. He is a being of the same species as man, more powerful, wiser if you will, but like him imperfect, and infinitely below an absolute principle of existence.”[178] It will not be overlooked that Saisset has thus given, not his own doctrine, but that of pantheism—a doctrine which he treats with a masterly analysis and refutation.

[178]Saisset:Modern Pantheism, vol. i, pp. 11, 12. The following passage from Spencer gives the substance of his doctrine: “Those who espouse this alternative position Spencer’s—of an ultimate personal cause—make the erroneous assumption that the choice is between personality and something lower than personality; whereas the choice is rather between personality and something higher. Is it not just possible that there is a mode of being as much transcending intelligence and will as these transcend mechanical motion? It is true that we are utterly unable to conceive any such higher mode of being. But this is not a reason for questioning its existence; it is rather the reverse.”[179] What would Spencer think of a theologian who should so reason about the Trinity? He has an unquestioning faith in such a “higher mode of being,” but loyalty to his nescience of the Infinite permitted only an hypothetic statement of it. The passage cited, especially as taken in connection with his doctrine of the Absolute, plainly denies the divine personality as a limitation and imperfection. In the same connection he declares the ascription of personal attributes to God a degradation of him. Then follows a homily upon “the impiety of the pious “who meanly worship God as a person instead of reverently worshiping the Unknowable Absolute. There is the charitable concession of a contingent good, an element of truth even within the impious creeds of theology: “that while these concrete elements in which each creed embodies this soul of truth are bad as measured by an absolute standard, they are a good as measured by a relative standard.”[180] The standard is relative with a personal God; absolute with an unknowable. Somewhat. But how can the nescience of Spencer reach an absolute standard? If this Absolute is utterly unknowable, there can be no knowledge of an absolute standard of religion. The fountain of charity still flows. Toleration for the impious creeds is a duty because “these various beliefs are parts of the constituted order of things; and not accidental but necessary parts. Seeing how one or other of them is every-where present, is of perennial growth, and when cut down redevelops in a form but slightly modified, we cannot avoid the inference that they are needful accompaniments of human life, severally fitted to the societies in which they are indigenous. From the highest point of view, we must recognize them as elements in that great evolution of which the beginning and the end are beyond our knowledge or conception—as modes

of manifestation of the Unknowable; and as having this for their warrant."[181] A solace for the Christian conscience in an impious worship. There is still a grave question which the charity of Spencer has strangely overlooked. It is the question whether this palliation may continue in the higher light of his own philosopliy of the Unknowable. On the other hand, Ave may even suggest a doubt whether he might not have made a more gracious use of the fact that the impious creeds are necessary parts in the evolution of the great Unknowable. It was clearly open for him to say that, as necessary parts in this evolution, they could not be impious even in the worship of a personal God. Enough has been said to show that in the doctrine of Spencer personality is a limitation and in contradiction to the Infinite. That such is the doctrine of Hamilton and Mansel will appear under the next head.

[179]First Principles, p. 109.

[180]First Principles, p. 121.

[181]Ibid., pp. 121, 122.

2. Erroneous Doctrine of the Infinite and Absolute.—As these terms are used in an abstract form, they are not properly definitive, but terms in need of definition. The definition which renders them essentially contradictory to personality gives a sense for which there is no need in human thought, no evidence of truth in reality, and certainly not the true sense of the divine infinity and absoluteness. In order to reach the truth in the case we require, first, the sense of the terms in the philosophy which makes them contradictory to personality, and, secondly, their true sense in application to God. To the terms infinite and absolute Sir William Hamilton adds the term unconditioned as of special significance in his philosophy. He notes their distinction, and holds the first two to be related to the third as species to genus.[182] Hence the unconditioned is with him the deepest term. These distinctions, however, do not specially concern the relation of the doctrine embodied in the terms to the question of the divine personality.

[182]Discussions, pp. 20, 21. The doctrine of Hamilton, as given in the definition of these terms, denies to the unconditioned, and hence to the infinite and absolute, causal agency, or, at least, holds such agency to be a contradiction in thought to the unconditioned. "A cause is a relative, and what exists absolutely as a cause exists absolutely under relation. Schelling has justly observed that 'he would deviate wide as the poles from the idea of the absolute who would think of defining its nature by the notion of activity.' But he who would define the absolute by the notion of cause would deviate still more widely from its nature; inasmuch as the notion of a cause involves not only the notion of a determination to activity, but of a determination to a particular, nay, a dependent, kind of activity—an activity not immanent, but transeunt."[183] If the absolute cannot be a cause, or if the notion of causation is contradictory to the absolute, then either God cannot be the absolute, or his personality must be contradictory in thought to his absoluteness; for the power of causal agency is central to the notion of personality. The sense of the absolute or unconditioned thus appears in the doctrine of Hamilton as contradictory to the divine personality.

[183]Ibid., p. 40.

Mansel is properly the expositor of Hamilton, and more fully sets forth the implications of his doctrine of the unconditioned as contradictory to the notion of divine personality. It is proper to cite a few passages from his treatment of this question.

“To conceive the Deity as he is, we must conceive him as First Cause, as Absolute, and as Infinite. By the First Cause is meant that which produces all things, and is itself produced by none. By theAbsolute is meant that which exists in and by itself, having no necessary relation to any other Being. By the Infinite is meant that which is free from all possible limitation; that than which a greater is inconceivable; and which, consequently, can receive no additional attribute or mode of existence, which it had not from all eternity.”[184] Little exception need be taken to these definitions so far as the true sense of the terms is concerned, but exception must be taken to the erroneous inferences drawn from them or the false sense given in further statements. “The metaphysical representation of the Deity, as absolute and infinite, must necessarily, as the profoundest metaphysicians have acknowledged, amount to nothing less than the sum of all reality. ‘What kind of an Absolute Being is that,’ says Hegel, ‘which does not contain in itself all that is actual, even evil included?’ We may repudiate the conclusion with indignation; but the reasoning is unassailable.”[185] The reasoning is unassailable only on an extreme and false sense of the absolute, which is contradictory to the co-existence of the finite, and equally contradictory to the personality of God. This consequence appears in the further words of Mansel: “A cause cannot, as such, be absolute: the absolute cannot, as such, be a cause. . . . How can the Infinite become that which it was not from the first? If causation is a possible mode of existence, that which exists without causing is not infinite; that which becomes a cause has passed beyond its former limits.”[186] A power of causation may be reckoned an intrinsic mode of being, but the becoming a cause is not such a mode. Hence becoming a cause is not the acquisition of any new quality of being. These obvious and valid distinctions bring to naught the logic of the above passage. But the sense of the infinite and absolute as therein given is openly contradictory to the divine personality; for personality and the power of causal agency are inseparable truths. The same contradictory sense runs through the further treatment of the question. A necessary causation is contradictory to the infinite and absolute. A voluntary causation is equally contradictory, because it implies consciousness.[187] The same contradictory sense is thus manifest; for it is needless to say that consciousness is an essential fact of personality.

[184]Limits of Religious Thought, p. 75.

[185]Ibid., p. 76.

[186]Ibid., p. 77.

[187]Ibid., pp. 77-79.

Thus, in the doctrine of the infinite and absolute as maintained by Hamilton and Mansel, personality is not only an inevitable limitation in human conception, but must be intrinsically a limitation. The reasoning proceeds in this manner: Consciousness can only be conceived under the form of a variety of attributes; and the different attributes are, by their very diversity, conceived as finite. The conception of a moral nature—even as we must think of a moral nature in God—is in itself the conception of a limit.[188] But God cannot be a person without a distinction of attributes, nor a moral personality without a moral nature. If such facts are contradictory to the infinite and absolute, does it not follow that we must either deny these qualities to God or deny his personality? It certainly follows that so far as in religious thought God is conceived as a person he is neither infinite nor absolute. Thus from Mansel: “But personality, as we conceive it, is essentially a limitation and a relation.”[189] [188] Limits of Religious Thought, p. 127.

[189]Ibid., p. 103.

Herbert Spencer maintains substantially the same doctrine of the Absolute, as the ground of contingent existences. How must we think of the First Cause, if we can think of it at all? “It must be independent. If it is not independent it cannot be the First Cause; for that must be the First Cause on which it depends. . . . But to think of the First Cause as totally independent is to think of it as that which exists in the absence of all other existence. . . . Not only, however, must the First Cause be a form of being which has no necessary relation to any other form of being, but it can have no necessary relation within itself. There can be nothing in it which determines change, and yet nothing which prevents change. For if it contains something which imposes such necessities or restraints, this something must be a cause higher than the First Cause, which is absurd. Thus the First Cause must be in every sense perfect, complete, total: including within itself all power, and transcending all law. Or, to use the established word, it must be absolute.”[190] How causation, as necessary to finite existences, can arise in such an absolute is a question for Mr. Spencer to answer. The only modes of action are in spontaneity or necessity; but both are denied to the absolute. Yet there can be no causation without action.

[190]First Principles, p, 38. The doctrine of Spencer is further given thus: “The objects and actions surrounding us, not less than the phenomena of our own consciousness, compel us to ask a cause; in our search for a cause, we discover no resting-place until we arrive at the hypothesis of a First Cause; and we have no alternative but to regard this First Cause as the Infinite and Absolute.”[191] No exception could be taken to these positions, but for the false doctrine of the Infinite and Absolute, which equally with that of Hamilton and Mansel excludes the divine personality. Indeed, Spencer appropriates their doctrine, and freely cites their discussions in its support.

[191]First Principles, p. 38.

It should be said that Spencer adheres to this doctrine with a consistency which can scarcely be accorded these eminent Christian philosophers. In his own philosophy there was no need, as in their theology, to dispose of the doctrine in consistency with Christian theism. He repudiates their appeal to faith in God as an immediate and necessary datum of the religious consciousness. If a personal God is thus saved to their theology, it is difficult to see in what consistency with their doctrine of the infinite and absolute. This faith, even if a reality, cannot cancel the contradiction of that doctrine to the divine personality. What, then, is God as thus saved in theology? He cannot be both a person and the infinite and absolute. Or if held to be both, it is against the contradiction of thought. This cannot be satisfactory.

Such an absolute and infinite as appears in the doctrine under notice is no immediate truth, and no requirement of the mind. In the activities of thought the finite may suggest the infinite, the conditioned the absolute, the temporal the eternal, the changeable the immutable; but the truth or objective reality of these suggestions is not thus either given or required. Much less is such an infinite and absolute as posited in the doctrine under notice either given or required. The necessity of thought, the only necessity, and comprehensive of the whole, is for a cause of finite and dependent existences. The necessity is definitely and only for such a cause as will account for the finite and dependent. Such a cause is no impersonal infinite and absolute. The original or first cause which answers to the necessity of thought must possess the power of a beginning, and an

intelligence equal to the order and adjustments of the cosmos; must be equal to the origination of rational and moral personalities. A personal God, and only a personal God, can answer to this necessity of thought.

There is no such an infinite and absolute as that posited in the doctrine of Hamilton and Spencer; certainly no need of it in human thought, and no proof of it in human reason. There must be an eternal being; for otherwise present existences must have sprung from nothing, which is unthinkable. An eternal being is by no necessity eternally the totality of being. Nor need it be such an infinite and absolute that it must at once exclude all distinction of attributes and modes, and yet necessarily include all actualities and possibilities of both. The infinite which must forever be the totality of being is an infinite in the sense of magnitude or bulk, and so space-filling as to allow no room for any other existence. “To think of the First Cause as finite is to think of it as limited. To think of it as limited, necessarily implies a conception of something beyond its limits: it is absolutely impossible to conceive a thing as bounded without conceiving a region surrounding its boundaries. What now must we say of this region? If the First Cause be limited, and there consequently lies something outside of it, this something must have no First Cause—must be uncaused. . . . Thus it is impossible to think of the First Cause as finite. And if it cannot be finite it must be infinite.”[192] With all the use of causal terms, the First Cause is here treated simply as being, not as causal agency. The being is an infinite magnitude, a bulk filling all space. It is a very crude notion. It is only such an infinite that can allow no room for the finite. God is not such an infinite. There is no such an infinite. The absolute which is, and must forever be, so unrelated that it cannot be a cause—such an absolute being, if an existence at all, must be a dead existence, and therefore utterly useless for any requirement of thought or any rational account of the universe.

[192]Spencer:First Principles, pp. 37, 38. The doctrine of Hamilton and Mansel was maintained in the interest of Christian theology, as against the German transcendentalism, the drift of which was into rationalism and pantheism. It is true, however, that the contention of Hamilton was more directly with Cousin, who held with the German transcendentalists the capacity of the soul for an immediate cognitive vision of the Infinite, though with the rejection of its pantheistic implication. The refutation of this transcendentalism should in itself be reckoned a valuable service; but the method of it involves a detriment not less than the gain. There was no necessity for the nescience of the Infinite which the method involved, or for the representation of personality as contradictory to the divine infinity. In the doctrine of an immediate and necessary faith in the divine personality there is little relief from the agnosticism which, for our reason, sinks the personality of God in his infinity. It is not pretended that this faith either changes the sense of the Infinite or replaces the consequent nescience with any true knowledge of God. Hence God is still beyond the reach of cognitive thought. We may affirm his personality as an immediate datum of the religious consciousness, but for rational thought personality is still a limitation. Hence God can be the Infinite for faith only by a divorcement of faith from rational thought; indeed, only against the contradiction of thought. “It is greatly to be lamented that men should teach that the only way in which it is possible for us to form any idea of God leads to no true knowledge. It does not teach us what God is, but what we are forced against reason to think he is.”[193] [193] Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. i, p. 344.

3. The True Infinite and Absolute.—In the true sense of these terms in application to God we shall find their consistency with his personality. The true sense of these terms must be determined in

view of the subject of their predication. Only in the observance of this principle can we reach any definite or clear result. There may be an infinite and absolute without relevancy to any question respecting the co-existence of the finite, or the consistency of causation and personality with itself. Or these terms may be used in a false sense, and are so used in the doctrine of the unconditioned.

Space is infinite and absolute—without either limitation or relation. Yet it is neither the ground nor cause nor quality of any existing thing. There are what we call the spatial qualities of being, but these are purely from the nature of the being, and are in no sense caused or affected by the nature of space. A body may occupy space, or rest or move in space, and undergo great change, so that a chaos shall become a cosmos, but space itself is ever the same, and without any effect upon that which occupies it or transpires in it. Hence the questions whether the infinite and absolute must be the totality of being, and unrelated, and impersonal, can have no relevancy to such an infinite and absolute as space. The same is true of duration, also infinite and absolute—without limit and unrelated. Succcssional events and uniform revolutions of bodies which mark off periods of time to us do not affect duration itself: neither does duration affect them. The power of time to affect existences and to work changes is purely a figure of speech. All such changes are from interior constitution or exterior influence, in neither of which has duration any part. It is without influence upon any thing, and is itself unaffected by any. Hence there can be no relevancy in the questions whether such an infinite and absolute can admit the co-existence of the finite and become the relative through causal agency.

We have previously noted the crude and contradictory notion of the infinite in the sense of quantity or space-filling being, and so space-filling as to preclude all other existences—a sense which certainly can have no application to God. Yet this sense ever appears in the transcendental philosophy of the infinite, and is too often present in the doctrine of Hamilton and Mansel. “The very prevalent tendency in philosophic speculation on this subject, to argue as if ‘our idea of infinity arises from the contemplation of quantity, and the endless increase the mind is able to make in quantity, by the repeated additions of what portions thereof it pleases,[194] has led to various uses of the term ‘infinite,’ which are not only inapplicable to the Divine Being, but even contradictory of his nature. Such, for example, are these: ‘an infinite line,’ ‘an infinite surface,’ and ‘an infinite number.’ All such expressions have obviously been used from a tacit admission that ‘our idea of infinity arises from the contemplation of quantity.’ But, as I have said, the terms ‘infinite’ and ‘unlimited,’ while they apply to the nature of God, do not explain what that nature is, and as soon as the nature of the Deity is indicated all these expressions immediately disappear. When it is declared that God is a spirit it is affirmed that God is not extended, and that all references to quantity are inapplicable to him.”[195] A being infinite in the sense of quantity, and therefore preclusive of finite existences, must be infinite in spatial extension. Thus the notion inevitably becomes materialistic with respect to both the infinite being and the finite existences in question; for otherwise the question of co-existence could not arise. There is no such an infinite. Whatever is extended in space in the manner of material bodies must be actually divisible into parts, and nothing thus divisible can be infinite. The parts must be finite, and yet equal to the whole; therefore the whole cannot be infinite, because the finite parts, however many or great, cannot make an infinite. There is no actually infinite line, or surface, or number. The crude and contradictory notion of the infinite in any sense of quantity should be eliminated from this question. Martineau, having cited from Mansel a passage in which there is too much of that notion, says with force: “Now what

does all this prove? This, and this only: that if we take the words ‘Absolute’ and ‘Infinite’ to mean that he to whom they are applicable chokes up the universe, mental and physical, and prevents the existence of every one else, then it is nonsense and clear contradiction for any one else, who is conscious of his own existence, to use these words of God at all. Surely this might have been said without so much circumlocution. And what does Mr. Mansel thereby gain? Simply, so far as we can see, that he has established the certain non-existence of any Being in this sense ‘absolute’ or ‘infinite.’”[196] [194] Locke:Essay, book ii, chap, xvii, sec. 7.

[195]Calderwood:Philosophy of the Infinite, pp. 183, 184 [196]Essays, Philosophical and Theological, vol. i, pp. 291, 292. The summary method which posits an infinite and absolute ground of things, and then denies its consistency with personality, cannot be admitted, it has no claim to admission on the ground of either a priori or inductive truth. The inconsistency alleged is in the definition of the terms, not in their true sense as predicates of the First Cause. The inference of inconsistency may be legitimate to the premise as determined by definition, but the premise itself is an instance of the sheerest material fallacy. The question of the divine personality cannot be thus negatively concluded. It is the great question of the divine reality, and cannot be disposed of by a false definition. God is what he is. As an eternal being, there is no cause of his existence, and no reason for his being what he is or other than he is. Hence no a priori assumption can be valid against his personality. The reality of a ground of finite and dependent existences is given as a necessity of thought, and only the boldest phenomenalism or positivism can question its truth. But, as we previously found, the same law of thought requires by an equal necessity the personality of the First Cause. The true sense of the infinite and absolute in their application to God is given in the perfection of his personal attributes. This accords with the principle previously noted, that the sense of these terms must be determined by the nature of the subject of their application. God in personality is here the subject. We must not anticipate, further than the requirement of the present question, what more properly belongs to the treatment of the divine attributes; but we cannot conclude the present question without reference to these attributes. We need not include all.

God is infinite in knowledge and power. Omniscience and omnipotence are his personal attributes. It may be objected that objects of the divine knowledge and products of the divine power are finite, and therefore no conclusive manifestation of an infinite knowledge and power. Things known to God are mostly finite; yet they are such in number, complexity, and relation, especially as we include the possible with the actual, that only an omniscient mind can know them as he knows them. God has perfect knowledge of himself, and this is infinite knowledge of the infinite. Dependent existences are finite; yet the power which produced them, and, according to their nature as physical or spiritual, set them in their order or endowed them with intellectual and moral reason, must be infinite. There is an infinite love of God.

It will be easy for the doctrine of the conditioned as the utmost limit of human thought, with its inevitable nescience distinction of God, to attempt a criticism of this view. With a ready relapse into the crude and contradictory notion of a quantitative infinity, it must object to a triplicity of infinites, with the implication of a fourth—an infinite God with three infinite attributes. But the criticism falls with the false and contradictory notion of an infinite magnitude or quantity. God is a spiritual being, and, with a distinction of attributes, a simple unity of being, without any spatial or quantitative quality. His measureless personal perfections are not preclusive of finite existences. Infinite

knowledge, power, and love are neither reciprocally preclusive nor a limitation of each other. The divine knowledge is not the less for all the knowledge of finite minds, nor the divine power less for all the forces of physical nature or power of finite wills, nor the divine love less for all the love of human and angelic spirits.

God is the absolute. The absolute is the self-sufficient, the unconditioned, the unrelated, except as voluntarily related. Any sense of the absolute which excludes even the possibility of relation must be false to the ground or cause of finite and dependent existences. Causal agency is the only original of the finite and dependent; but such original must come into relation to its own agency and effects. An absolute, therefore, which cannot become related cannot be the ground of the finite and dependent. God as an eternal personal being, with the perfections of infinite knowledge and power and the free determination of his own agency, is absolute in the truest, deepest sense of the term. We challenge a comparison with the transcendental absolute which precludes personality. Such an absolute must forever remain unrelated, and therefore can account for nothing. Otherwise, the finite, and self-conscious personalities, as really as material forms of existence, must be accounted as purely phenomenal, with the result of a monism which at bottom is pantheism. Far truer and grander is the view of a personal God, infinite in his perfections, with the power of free causal agency. God is the true absolute.

Thus we find the divine personality consistent with the truest, deepest sense of the infinite and absolute. The true sense is not in being itself, but in the perfection of being or the perfection of attributes. “The infinite is to be viewed as having an independent being, it is not to be regarded as a substance or a separate entity; it is simply the quality of a thing, very possibly the attribute of the attribute of an object. Thus we apply the phrase to the Divine Being to denote a perfection of his nature; we apply it also to all his perfections, such as his wisdom and goodness, which we describe as infinite.”[197] “We cannot think of God as the unconditioned Being conditioning himself, without conceiving him as Reality, Efficiency, andPersonality. These constitute the conception of the divine essence whereby it is what it is. When we think of the attributes of such a Being we must necessarily conceive them as Absolute, Infinite, and Perfect.”[198] “In particular, Mansel sought to show that God could not be thought of as cause, because as cause it must be related to its effect. He cannot, then, be creator, because as such there must be a relation between God and the world. But this objection overlooks the fact that relation in the abstract does not imply dependence. The criticism would be just if the relation were necessary and had an external origin. But as the relation is properly posited and maintained by himself there is nothing in it incompatible with his independence and absoluteness.”[199] As we thus expose and eliminate the contradictory notion of a quantitative infinite and absolute, and find the true sense of the terms in the perfection of personal attributes, their consistency with the divine personality is manifest. Only a personal God, infinite and absolute in the perfection of his attributes, can answer in human thought for any rationale of finite and dependent existences. God in personality is the true infinite and absolute.

[197]McCosh:Intuitions of the Mind, p. 197.

[198]Cocker:Theistic Conception of the World, p. 41.

[199]Bowne:Metaphysics, p. 131.

4. Personality the Highest Perfection. — This we confidently maintain against the assumption of pantheism, and against the theistic nescience which posits an infinite and absolute inconsistent with personality. The question may be appealed to the clearest logical judgment and to the profoundest intuitions of the reason. In the orders of existence directly known to us man is the highest, and the highest by virtue of the facts of personality. If this be not the truth, then Judgment and reason are no longer trustworthy and we are incapable of any rational treatment of the question. Judgment and reason are trustworthy, and the truth we stated is above question. With this basis of truth, we may rise to the thought of God, and find in personality the highest conception of his perfection. In all the range of being, finite and infinite, personal attributes are the highest. What impersonal terms can replace the personal with any comparable idea of God? In the vague and contradictory use of the terms infinite, absolute, unknowable, inscrutable, in application to the original cause of finite and dependent existences, with personality lost in the confusion, there is an infinite descent from the notion of God as personal cause.

There is a false principle underlying all the speculations in which personality is held to be a limitation. It is the principle that all determination, predication, or distinction of attributes is a limitation, or, in the extreme form of Spinoza, a negation. We cannot know the infinite and absolute, because as such it exists out of all limitation and relation. If we predicate intelligence, will, affection, causal agency of God, we so distinguish his attributes and bring him into relation to the products of his agency as to deny his infinity and absoluteness. This denial is on the principle that all predication is limitation or negation. This point is so admirably treated by another that the citation of his words should be heartily approved.

“If I do not mistake, the whole system of those reasonings rests on an error common to skepticism and pantheism, which formerly misled, and still deceives, many a superior mind. This error consists in maintaining that every determination is a negation. Omnis determinatio negatio est, says Hamilton after Spinoza. Nothing can be falser or more arbitrary than this principle. It arises from the confusion of two things essentially different, namely, the limits of a being, and its determinate and constitutive characteristics. I am an intelligent being, and my intelligence is limited; these are two facts equally certain. The possession of intelligence is the constitutive characteristic of my being, which distinguishes me from the brute being. The limitation imposed on my intellect, which can only see a small number of truths at a time, is my limit, and this is what distinguishes me from the Absolute Being, from the Perfect Intelligence which sees all truths at a single glance. That which constitutes my imperfection is not, certainly, my being intelligent; therein, on the contrary, lies the strength, the richness, and the dignity of my being. What constitutes my weakness and my nothingness is that this intelligence is inclosed in a narrow circle. Thus, inasmuch as I am intelligent, I participate in being and perfection; inasmuch as I am only intelligent within certain limits, I am imperfect.

“It follows from this very simple analysis that determination and negation, far from being identical, differ from each other as much as being and nothing. According as a being has more or less determinations, qualities, and specific characteristics it occupies a rank more or less elevated in the scale of existence. Thus, in proportion as you suppress qualities and determinations, you sink from the animal to the vegetable, from the vegetable to brute matter. On the other hand, exactly in proportion as the nature of beings is complicated, in proportion as their bodies are enriched with new functions and organs, as their intellectual and moral faculties begin to be displayed, as more

delicate senses are added to their grosser senses, to sensation, memory, to memory, imagination, then the superior faculties, reasoning, and reason, and will, you rise nearer and nearer to man, the most complicated being, the most determined and the most perfect in creation. . . . God is the only being absolutely determined. For there must be something indetermined in all finite beings, since they have always imperfect powers, which tend toward their development after an indefinite manner. God alone the complete Being, the Being in whom all powers are actualized, escapes by his own perfection from all progress, and development, and indetermination. It would be a pure illusion to imagine that different determinations could, by any chance, limit or contradict each other. Could intelligence prevent liberty? or the love of the beautiful extinguish the love of the good ? or truth, or beauty, or happiness be any hinderance, the one to the other? Is it not evident, on the contrary, that these are things perfectly analogous and harmonious, which, far from excluding, require each other, which always go together in the best beings of the universe, and, when they are conceived in their eternal harmony and plenitude, constitute the living unity of God?

“Now, let us hear our skeptics. They say the Absolute excludes all limits, and, consequently, all determination. I reply the Absolute has no limits, it is true, that is to say, that his being and the powers that are in him are all full, complete, infinite, eternal; but far from these determinations limiting his being, they characterize and constitute it.”[200] [200] Saisset:Modern Pantheism, vol. ii, pp. 69-72.

Unity is a perfection of being; but the highest unity lies in the harmony of differentiated qualities. Man, most complex of creaturely orders directly known to us, is yet a higher unity than any other. This higher unity is in personality; and personality is the highest perfection. In the plenitude and harmony of personal attributes in God there is an infinite perfection of unity. Herbert Spencer was far astray from truth and reason in saying that the question of personality in the First Cause was not a question between personality and something lower, but one between personality and something higher. There is nothing higher. Personality is the highest perfection. Being without qualities or attributes is a blank in itself, and a blank for thought. “Also, it must be added, that it is a strange perversion of thought which takes this caput mortuum, this logical phantom, and gives it the place of the highest reality, the object of profoundest veneration, in bowing down to which science and religion are to find their ultimate reconciliation. For, in so doing, we are simply turning away from all the concrete wealth of the world of thought and being, and deifying the barest, thinnest abstraction of logic. It is not too much to say that almost any object of reverence would be more worthy than this, and that in nature worship, animal worship, even the lowest fetichism, there is a higher cultus than in the blind veneration of the philosophic Absolute.”[201] [201] Caird:Philosophy of Religion, p. 38.

If we compare the Absolute of pantheism, or as posited in the doctrine of Hamilton and Spencer, with the theistic conception of Moses and the prophets and apostles, the infinite transcendence of the latter must be manifest. Can any impersonal somewhat, however styled, be comparable with the divine Father as revealed by the divine Son? Personality is the highest perfection of the Absolute.[202]

[202] Cocker:Theistic Conception of the World, pp. 43, 43; Martineau:Essays, vol. i, pp. 292, 293; Fisher:Grounds of Theistic and Christian Belief, pp. 69-71; Herbert:Modern Realism, pp. 408-423; Mansel:Limits of Religious Thought, pp. 103, 104; Christlieb:Modern Doubt and Christian Belief,

Third Lecture, iii, iv.

022. II. Denial Of Divine Cognoscibility.

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1. The Infinite Declared Unthinkable.—It is the doctrine of Hamilton and Mansel, as also of others, that the Infinite is unknowable and unthinkable. As in relation to God, this is the doctrine of theistic nescience. God may be the object of faith, but is beyond the reach of cognitive thought. This consequence is inevitable, if the principles of the doctrine be true. Religious thought, just as thought in any other sphere, is conditioned by the mental capacity. There might be a revelation of truths undiscoverable by the mind itself, or a divine illumination which should raise the power of thought to its highest capacity, but this power would still be conditioned by the mental capacity. Nor is there for us any immediate vision of God wherein we may grasp him in a comprehensive knowledge. These facts disprove the transcendentalism which Hamilton controverted, but they neither imply nor prove the nescience of God which he maintained. The analysis of this doctrine will place it in a clearer view. Thought is finite and relative; therefore it can have no cognitive apprehension of the infinite and absolute. The only movement of thought toward the infinite is in thinking away the finite. The thinking is thus purely negative, and the infinite forever reachless. In denying the qualities of the finite to the infinite the finite supplies the whole content of thought. The absolute is both unrelated and infinite, while thought is conditioned by relations or a distinction of qualities, both of which are declared to be contradictory to the absolute. With such elements of the doctrine, it follows that, if God is such an infinite and absolute, he is unknowable and unthinkable.

Such a doctrine of theistic nescience is spread widely upon the pages of Hamilton and Mansel in the treatment of this question. The culmination of the doctrine is in these words: “The Divinity, in a certain sense, is revealed; in a certain sense is concealed: He is at once known and unknown. But the last and highest consecration of all true religion must be an altar — Αγι■στ■ Θε■ — ‘To the unknown and unknowable God.’”[203] [203] Hamilton:Discussions, p. 22.

Such an altar Paul found in Athens. Was this the last and highest consecration of all true religion? It was such in style, if not in truth. However many and great the errors and superstitions of the Athenians, it seems that this altar signified no defect of either truth or worship. Yet Paul assumes a very serious defect in both. Plainly in his mind the ignorance of their worship was in their ignorance of the true God. Him therefore he would declare or make known, that they might worship him in truth. Paul had not attained to this theistic agnosticism. Hence in the declaration of the true God there is not a word about an unthinkable infinite, or an absolute blank for thought; there is the declaration of a personal God, Creator and Lord of all, and whoso offspring we are’ (Acts 17:23-31).

2. Concerning the Limitation of Religious Thought.—As previously stated, religious thought, just as thought on other questions, is conditioned by the mental capacity and the laws of thinking. The mind does not become divine by the study of divine things. The thinking is still human, however divine the subject, or whatever the divine revelation or illumination. Christianity makes no pretension to a comprehensive knowledge of God. Such a pretension is the extravagance of the

transcendentalism which professedly grasps the Infinite in the mode of an immediate vision, but mostly loses the divine personality in the pretended knowledge. Along the Christian centuries it has been the wont of theologians to confess the inadequacy of thought to the full comprehension of God. It was very easy, therefore, for Hamilton, as for others, to array such eminent Christian authors—Tertullian, Cyprian, Augustine, Chrysostom, Grotius, Pascal, and others—as witnesses to this limitation of religious thought. He could hardly claim their authority for his own doctrine of theistic nescience. Surely such a doctrine was far from their thought. Their meaning was simply the divine incomprehensibility—a very familiar truth in Christian theology. Hence their utterances are valueless for the doctrine of theistic nescience as against the doctrine of a true knowledge of God in religious thought.

3. God Truly Knowable.—There may be a true knowledge—true in the measure of it—which is not fully comprehensive of its subject. It is easy to embody the contrary doctrine in a definition of thinking. If such definition be true, God must be unthinkable and unknowable. Cognitive thought must fully compass the subject. But human thought can not compass the infinite. Thinking is possible only under conditions of limitation, which must place the infinite beyond the reach of thought. Such is the summary method of this doctrine. “To think is to condition; and conditional limitation is the fundamental law of the possibility of thought.”[204] Mansel[205] and Spencer[206] hold the same doctrine. The meaning is that only the conditioned and limited is thinkable. The law may be valid against the comprehension of God in thought, but is not valid against all cognitive thought of God.

[204]Hamilton:Discussions, p. 21.

[205]Limits of Religious Thought, pp. 98, 99.

[206]First Principles, pp. 81, 82. The central position of this doctrine is that all thought of the infinite is purely negative, and only of the finite which is denied to the infinite. “The unconditioned is incognizable and inconceivable; its notion being only of the conditioned, which last can alone be positively known or conceived.”[207] If this be true, the terms infinite and unconditioned have no positive meaning, signify no positive content of thought. Yet, while negative in form, they are predicates in fact, and therefore must have a positive sense. There can be no predication without a subject, and no subject except in positive thought. The full comprehension of a subject in thought is not necessary to predication, but the cognitive apprehension of it is absolutely necessary. We cannot affirm the infinity and absoluteness of God without the apprehension of God in thought; for this would be predication without a subject, which the laws of thought render impossible. Such is the fallacious outcome of the doctrine which places God beyond the reach of cognitive thought.

[207]Hamilton:Discussions, p. 19.

It is not true that the notion of the unconditioned or infinite is “only negative” of the finite, and the finite the only content of thought. We appeal the question to consciousness it self. Infinite space and infinite duration are more for thought than the mere negation of finiteness. Consciousness is indeed witness that we cannot comprehend either in thought; but consciousness is equally witness of a form and content of thought which are not merely of the finite. The same is true in our thought of God. We cannot indeed fully comprehend God, but our thinking is not purely negative, with only the finite for content. The Infinite is reached in cognitive thought. We rest this issue on the

testimony of consciousness.[208] [208] Calderwood:Philosophy of the Infinite, pp. 266-268; Martineau : Essays, vol. i, pp. 395-298. So far, we have maintained the issue against the nescience of the Infinite as it is interpreted in this antitheistic agnosticism. In this view of the question the result is entirely satisfactory. Our position is much clearer and stronger with the true notion of God as the Infinite. We have previously shown the erroneousness of the doctrine which denies the knowableness of the Infinite; that there is no such an Infinite as this agnosticism maintains; no demand for it in reason; no proof of its existence; no use for it in the universe. Most of all is God not such an Infinite. God, the true Infinite, is a personal being, with the attributes of personality in absolute perfection. The essential attributes of all personality, intellect, sensibility, and will are realities known in our own consciousness. That these attributes are infinite in God does not render them unthinkable or unknowable. Through his moral government and providential agency God is truly knowable. In the view of Spencer, the Absolute is too great for any apprehension in cognitive thought. The real difficulty for knowledge in his Absolute is in its utter blankness, not in its greatness. When the false Infinite is replaced with the true, the personal God, the Infinite is manifestly thinkable and knowable. In the results of this discussion it is clearly seen that this form of antitheistic agnosticism is without force against the truth of theism.[209]

[209] Calderwood:Philosophy of the Infinite; Fisher:Grounds of Theistic and Christian Belief, pp. 85-102; Harris:The Self-Revelation of God, pp. 172-182; Porter:The Human Intellect, part iv, chap, vii; Martineau:Essays, Philosophical and Theological, vol. i, pp. 224-243; Bascom:Philosophy of Religion, chap, iv; Herbert:Modern Realism, pp. 430-441.

General reference.—Theistic literature has become so voluminous that only a selection can be given in such a reference. We shall not be careful to omit all works previously referred to, or from which citations have been made.

Cudworth: The Intellectual System of the Universe; Howe: The Living Temple, part i; Paley: Natural Theology; The Bridgewater Treatises; Hickok: Creation and Creator; Saisset: Modern Pantheism; Diman: The Theistic Argument; Argyll: The Reign of Law; Chadbourne: Natural Theology; Randies: First Principles of Faith; Harris: Philosophical Basis of Theism; The Self-Revelation of God; Tulloch: Theism; Bowne: Studies in Theism; Philosophy of Theism; Thompson: Christian Theism; Buchanan: Modern Atheism; Blakie: Natural History of Atheism; Flint: Theism; Antitheistic Theories; Cocker: Theistic Conception of the World; Janet: Final Causes; Bishop Foster: Theism.

023. Part II.— Theology.

Part II.— Theology. This part is for the discussion of truths relating directly to God. For the representation of these truths we place at its head the single term theology. Some think that its modern use in a much wider sense renders it inappropriate for such representation. Hence we often find with it some interpretative phrase or limiting word. We thus have, in form, theology—doctrine of God; oftener, theology proper. This is neither graceful in style nor definitive in sense. Appropriateness still lies in the etymological sense. Theology thus means a doctrine of God, and may properly represent all the truths more directly relating to him. Primarily it was used in this sense. We so use it here; and we thus secure a symmetry of terms not otherwise attainable for the several parts of systematic theology.

024. Chapter 1: God In Being.

Chapter 1

God In Being.

025. I. Being And Attribute.

I. Being And Attribute.

1. Definitive Sense of Attribute.—In a general sense an attribute is any thing which may be affirmed of its subject. This wider sense may include what is accidental as well as what is essential. In the more definite sense an attribute is any quality or property which is intrinsic to the subject, which characterizes and differentiates it, and by virtue of which the subject is what it is.

Attribute, property, quality, faculty, power, are in common use much in the same sense, though mostly with some distinction in application. Thus extension, solidity, divisibility are properties or qualities of body; intellect, sensibility, will are faculties or powers of mind; omniscience, goodness, omnipotence are attributes of God. We do not allege an invariable uniformity in such distinctions of application, yet we think them common. We certainly do not use the term faculty in application to either body or God, while it is the common term in application to the human mind.

2. Distinctive Sense of Being.—Qualities are neither possible nor thinkable as separate or self-subsisting facts. For both thought and reality body is more than its properties, mind more than its faculties, God more than his attributes. Sensationalism or positivism may, in a helpless agnosticism, be content with the surface of things or with the merest phenomenalism; but for deeper thought, the thought without which there is neither true science nor philosophy, properties, faculties, attributes must have a ground in essential being. The necessity is as absolute as that of a subject to its predicate in a logical proposition. The essence of being is a truth of the reason, not a cognition of experience. The reality is none the less sure because such a truth. Physical properties must have a ground in a material substance. Reason equally determines for the mental faculties a necessary basis in mind. For the divine attributes there must be a ground in essential divine being. Reason is in each case the indisputable authority. The distinctive sense of being in God is that it is the ground of his attributes.

3. Connection of Attribute and Being.—We are again within the sphere of reason, not in that of experience. As there is no empirical grasping of essential being, so there is no such grasping of the connection of attribute and subject. Even reason cannot know the mode of this connection. But reason can and does affirm it to be most intrinsic. The connection is in no sense a loose or separable one. Being is not as a vessel in which attributes may be placed and from which they may be withdrawn; not as a ground on which they may repose as a building upon its foundation or a statue upon its pedestal, and which may remain after their removal. The connection must be most intrinsic, so that neither is nor can be without the other. Being and attribute are separable in abstract thought, but inseparable in reality. Neither can exist without the other. While extension must have a basis in material body, such body must exist in extension. “While intellect must have a ground in mind, mind must have the faculty of intelligence. In the present conditioning relation of a nervous organism to the activities of the mental powers their normal working may be interrupted or temporarily suspended, but they must ever exist potentially in mind, because necessary to the very notion of mind. In the very being of God are all his attributes. Without them he would not be

God.

4. True Method of Treatment.—While attribute and being are correlatives of thought and inseparable in fact, they are separable in abstract thought, and for clearness of view must be so separated. Only thus can we attain to the truer notion of attribute and subject respectively, and in the unity of being.

What is thus generally requisite to a true method is specially requisite in the study of the truths now in question. A right view of God as subject is necessary to the truer notion of his attributes, and therefore to the truer notion of himself. It is only in a distinctive view of God as subject that we can reach the ground of a scientific classification and category of his attributes.

5. Common Error of Method.—The common error in the treatment of these questions is in the omission of all distinction between the being of God and his attributes—such an error as would appear in the omission of all distinction between subject and predicate, which must render impossible any logical process or result. The truths which directly relate to God as subject are drawn into the circle of his attributes. For instance, spirituality, the very essence of his being, is classed and treated as an attribute. But an attribute of what? There is nothing deeper than essential being of which it may be an attribute. With such an error of method, it is not strange that the classification of the attributes is felt to be most difficult. The result is that mostly the modes of classification are purely arbitrary. With a proper distinction between subject and attribute in God, most of all, with the deepest and most determinative truth of God as the ground of his own attributes, a scientific classification is clearly attainable. But this question may be deferred for the present, as it must recur with the distinct treatment of the attributes.[210]

[210] Sir William Hamilton:Lectures on Metaphysics, pp. 104-106; D. H. Hamilton:Autology, part i, chap, ii; Porter:The Human Intellect, pp. 619-630.

026. II. Spirituality Of Being.

II. Spirituality Of Being.

1. Notion of Being through Attribute.—As the essence of being is a truth only of the reason, but cognizable only on some knowledge of its qualities, so a rational notion of the nature of being must be conditioned in a like manner. This law of the notion of being may seem to require a study of properties previous to any inquiry into the nature of the substance in which they are grounded. It would so require in the case of an entirely new question. But the present is not a new question; and we may so far anticipate the more direct treatment of the divine attributes as to appropriate our present knowledge of them in a previous inquiry into the divine nature. There are two other facts which legitimate this course. One is that we are here directly within the sphere of revelation, pre-eminently the sphere of truth respecting the nature of God as well as of his attributes. The other is that the real question of the divine attributes is not so much the question of their kind as that of their perfection. A complete analysis of this question finds the attributes of God to be distinctively and exclusively personal in kind. But as such they are involved in the profound question of the personality of God. The truth of his personality carries with it the truth of his personal attributes. The question of their perfection still remains; and this is distinctively the question of the divine attributes. The question of personality may, therefore, properly precede this question of the attributes. Personality is related to spirituality as its necessary ground. It is true that neither personality nor spirituality can be properly treated without a forward glancing at the personal attributes. But with the distinctive sense of the question of the divine attributes it is in the order of a proper method to treat previously tho questions of both spirituality and personality.

2. Requirement for Spiritual Being.—As the notion of essential being is conditioned on some knowledge of properties, so the notion of a distinction of subjects must be through some known distinction of properties. As an attribute requires a subject, so it requires a subject answering in kind to its own distinctive quality. The latter requirement is as absolute as the former. For the two kinds of facts classed as the properties of body and the faculties of mind reason must imperatively determine essentially distinct and different subjects. Empirical science can allege nothing of any weight against this position. It may gratuitously deny any real distinction between the two classes of facts or assert the identity of the mental with the physical; or it may pronounce for agnosticism in respect to the nature of matter, and then by the covert assumption of a most pretentious gnosticism proclaim a new face of matter which accounts for the facts of mind. No assumption could be more gratuitous, no assertion more groundless. It is a dogmatizing which would shame the method of the most positive theology. Reason is still the decisive authority. While a material ground can answer for the properties of body, only a spiritual ground can answer for the faculties of mind. The divine attributes must have their ground in spiritual being.

3. Truth of Divine Spirituality.—The theistic conception of the race, while often very crude and low, is without rational explication except with the notion of divine spirituality. The mere idol is rarely the whole mental conception of the devotee.[211] Mostly it is but the symbol of a being whom he

apprehends, however dimly and feebly, as cognizant of his life, with power to help or to harm, and in whose regards, whether of approval or reprehension, he is deeply concerned. The divine spirituality is the rational implication of these conceptions. The once prevalent notion of God as the life of nature or the soul of the world, now known as Hylozoism, has no sufficing ground in either materialism or pantheism. Even fetichism so far recognizes a conscious intelligence and agency in the many gods resident in many things as to rise above both materialism and pantheism in a high advance toward the conception of a divine spiritualism. Monotheism, now recognized by the most thorough students of the question as the primitive faith of the most ancient races, must be grounded in a divine spirituality.[212] [211] Caird:Philosophy of Religion, p. 177.

[212]Gillett:God in Human Thought. The arguments of theism, while conclusive of the divine existence, are equally conclusive of the divine spirituality. Spontaneity or the power of personal will is an absolute requirement for the original cosmical cause. The adjustments of the world and the universe evince the teleology of a divine intelligence. The anthropological argument finds in a divine mind the only possible original of human minds, with their vast and varied powers, while their moral constitution is conclusive of a moral personality in their author. These facts require and evince the divine spirituality. On this question the sense of Scripture is uniform and clear. The recorded agency of God in creation and providence, his manifestations in patriarchal history and the Jewish theocracy, the theistic conceptions of the sacred writers, the thoughts and affections which they ascribe to God, their conception of his transcendence above nature—all these facts carry with them the sense of the divine spirituality.

There are more explicit utterances. God is not only our Creator, but the Father of our spirits. We are his offspring (Numbers 16:22; Numbers 27:1; Acts 17:28; Hebrews 12:9). The truth of spirituality in God is thus revealed in our own spiritual being. The same truth is deeply wrought into the second commandment (Exodus 20:4). The full sense of Scripture is completed in the explicit words of our Lord: “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24).

4. God Only in Spirituality.—If there is no divine spiritual being there is no God. The inevitable logic of materialism is atheism. The absolute monistic principle of pantheism, however set forth as the cause of all phenomenal facts, is not God. The case is not other with the alleged attributes of infinite thought and infinite extension. These are purely hypothetic in pantheism, and in no proper sense intrinsic to the being of God. The former can have no meaning except as the predicate of an infinite personal mind. With these hypothetic attributions, the monistic principle is still without consciousness or intelligent agency; a mere force, working without ends or aim. No mere force, though it were omnipotence itself, can answer to the theistic demands of the human soul. It requires an overseeing conscious intelligence, a ruling providence and a fatherly love. There must be the assurance of sympathy and helpfulness in the trying exigencies of life. These imperative requirements are absolutely impossible except in a divine spiritual being.

5. Immutability of Being.—The question of immutability may have in relation to God a twofold application: one as a predicate of his essential being; the other as a predicate of his personally, or, more broadly, of his personal attributes and the principles of his providence. The latter is the real question of the divine immutability, but properly belongs to the treatment of the divine attributes. There is truth in the former application. God is immutable in his essential being. There is no proof

of any change in the essence of the human spirit. The question is not open to any empirical testing. The unity of consciousness and the persistence of personal identity through the extremest changes of the most prolonged life are conclusive against any such change. There is no proof of any change even in the essence of matter, however common and great the changes in its chemical combinations and organic forms. There is no quality of spirit which can become a law of essential change. What is true of the human spirit is profoundly true of the absolutely perfect Spirit. With any law of change in his essential being, he could not be the true and eternal God.

6. Question of Divine Infinity.—The real question of the infinity or omnipresence of God is a question of the perfection of his personal attributes, and will be treated in its proper place. The divine infinity has proved itself a most perplexing question, even to the profoundest thinkers. We must think that much of this perplexity arises from an error of method, or, rather, from a mistaken sense of the question. The mistake is in treating the question in the sense of an infinite essence, not in the sense of infinite personal attributes. The ubiquity of God is a ubiquity by virtue of his personal perfections. The question of an infinite divine essence is for rational thought an abyss of darkness. It is the question of an infinite magnitude or extension of essential being. Spatial ideas thus inevitably arise, but only for the deeper confusion and helplessness of thought. But the divine Spirit has no spatial qualities. Hence there is no place for the question of an infinitely present divine essence.

027. Chapter 2: God In Personality.

Chapter 2 God In Personality.

028. I. Personality.

I. Personality. The question of personality must be studied first of all and Chiefly in the light of one's own consciousness. There is no other way to a knowledge of other personalities, whether human or angelic, or even the divine. We have no immediate knowledge of the facts in others which constitute personality. When these facts are known in one's own consciousness, then the personality of others is revealed to him through a manifestation of the same facts. This is a true mode of knowledge; and the knowledge is validated by the deepest and most determining principle of science. The generalizations and constructions of science would be groundless if things which manifest the same qualities were not the same in fact.

Personality is a unity in the deepest sense of the term. The facts of consciousness are manifold and diverse, but consciousness itself, the very center of personality, is one. Consciousness and memory, but memory as a fact of consciousness, reveal to one's self his personal identity. The unity of personality is in the truth of personal identity. With the deepest sense of the unity of mind, its faculties are open to analysis and classification. Otherwise there could be no mental science. Personality, while a unity itself, admits of scientific treatment because it consists, not in a single principle or power, but in a complex of powers. Analysis may open this complex and discover its content of powers. This process is necessary to a clear insight into personality itself, and the way to a truer view of the divine personality. The first thing, then, in the opening of this question is to find the necessary facts of personality.

1. Determining Facts of Personality.—There are mighty forces in physical nature; but they can act only on the proper adjustment or collocation of material things, and thereon must necessarily act. Their action is without consciousness or aim as well as under a law of necessity. Such forces, however great in potency or wonderful in operation, can have no quality of personality. Life, Math its marvelous agency in the vegetable kingdom, still makes no advance beyond the purely physical realm toward any intrinsic personal quality. In the animal orders, notably in those of the higher grades, there are instinctive impulses toward ends, and a voluntary power for their attainment, but no evidence of other essential requisites of personality. We cannot study the psychology of animals as we can that of minds like our own, because we cannot place the facts of the former in the light of our own consciousness as we can the facts of the latter. Yet strong instinctive impulses and strong voluntary power are manifest facts in animal life. But there is no evidence of such rational intelligence in the conception of ends and such freedom in the choice of ends as must combine in the constitution of personality.

Pure intellect, intellect without any form of sensibility, however great, could not constitute personality. Conceptually, such an intellect is a possibility, though its sphere of knowledge could not be universal. A deeper analysis must find in the sensibilities a necessary element of knowledge in many spheres. Such a mind might have great intuitive power and a clear insight into the abstract sciences, but it could have no interest in their study. Neither could there be for it any eligibility of ends. For such a mind the mightiest potentiality of will would be useless for the want of

all motive or reason of use. The only possible action would be purposeless and purely spontaneous. Personality is intrinsically a free rational agency. This is impossible in pure intellect, however great—impossible even with the complement of a will potentially very strong.

Rational or moral motives are a necessity to personal agency, and therefore to personality. Such motives are not mere instinctive impulses toward action, but forms of conscious interest in ends of action, which may be taken up into reflection and judgment. Motives are possible only with a capacity for conscious interest in ends. This capacity is broader and deeper than can well be expressed by the term sensibility. The profounder motives arise from the rational and moral nature rather than from what we usually designate as the feelings. There can be for us no eligibility of ends, and therefore no rational choice, except through motives arising in some form of conscious interest in ends. But rational choice is the central fact of rational agency, and the only difference between rational agency and personal agency is a difference of verbal expression. With the power of personal agency there is personality. It follows that for the constitution of personality an emotional nature, with a capacity for rational interest in ends, must combine with rational intelligence. Will is the central power of personal agency, and therefore a necessary constituent of personality. Without the will there could be no voluntary use or direction of the mental faculties, no voluntary action of any kind. In such a state man would be as incapable of personal agency as an animal or even as any force of physical nature. The result of the previous analysis is that rational intelligence, sensibility, and will are essential requisites of personality. But such a complex of faculties does not in itself complete the idea of personality. There must also be the freedom of personal agency. Such agency means, not merely the freedom of external action, but specially the free rational choice of the ends of action. The freedom of external action requires simply the freedom of the bodily organism from interior impotence and exterior restraint, and may be as complete in an animal as in a man. The bodily organism is merely instrumental to the external action, and can be free only as a freely usable instrument. The mere freedom of external action can have no higher sense. The true freedom must lie back of this in the personal agency, and must consist in the power of free rational choice. With this there is true personality.

There is still a profound question which vitally concerns the realty of personality. It is the question of the relation of motive to choice, or, more properly here, the decision of the mind with respect to an end—more properly, because whether such decision be a choice or not depends upon the relation of the motive to the mental action. That motive is a necessary condition of choice is a plain truth—so plain that the maintenance of a liberty of indifference may well seem strange. Any voluntary decision in a state of indifference must be a purely arbitrary volition, and therefore cannot be a choice.[213] Choice in the very nature of it is the rational election of an end. For its rationality there must be a motive. But what is the action of the motive upon the elective decision ? This is the question which vitally concerns the reality of personality. If the motive is simply a solicitation or inducement which may be taken up into reflection and weighed in the judgment, personality is secure. But if the motive is a causal efficience which determines the decision to the end, then there is no choice, nor the possibility of one, and personality sinks with personal agency beneath an absolute law of determinism.

[213]Kant:Metaphysic of Ethics, p. 204; Miley: “The Freedom of Choice,”Methodist Quarterly Review, July, 1881.

Only as rational intelligence, sensibility, and will combine in the constitution of free personal agency is there the reality of personality. There must be rational intelligence for the conception of ends, sensibility as the source of motives with respect to ends, and will in combination with intelligence and sensibility as the complement of power in choosing between ends. With these facts there is personality. Our own personality is in this complex of powers. With moral reason and a capacity for moral motives, motives sufficient for the choice of the good against the evil, there is a moral personality. Conceptually, there might be a rational personality without the necessary powers of a moral personality. These powers might be an original omission, or the rational might remain after the moral were sunken beneath a law of necessitation. Moral personality must sink under a moral necessity to evil, just as rational personality must sink in the want of its essential requisites. There is no deeper moral necessity, none more exclusive of moral personality, than an incapacity for the motives necessary to the choice of the good. For complete moral personality there must be free moral agency.

2. Requisites of All Personality.—There can be neither human nor angelic personality, nor even a divine personality, without this complex of essential requisites. There is no need and no purpose of asserting a complete parallelism in all personalities. There is no such implication. As we ascend through the orders of higher intelligences, angels and archangels, even up to God himself, there may be, and in the divine must be, large variations from such a parallelism. The variations may be not only in the grade of faculties, reaching to the infinite in the divine, and particularly in the forms of sensibility, but there may be other powers, now wholly unknown to us. The position is that the complex of requisites in our own personality is a necessity for all personality. Neither angel nor archangel is or can be a person in the true, deep sense of the term without these powers, whatever their grade in such higher intelligences, whatever variation in the forms of sensibility, or whatever other powers they may possess. The same law of requisites must hold for the divine personality. But this application must be treated under a distinct heading.

029. II. The Divine Personality.

II. The Divine Personality.

1. In the Light of the Human.—Any conception of the divine personality irrespective of our own is for us impossible. It does not follow that our own must be the measure of the divine. We have previously disclaimed any necessary complete parallelism between human and angelic personalities, and pointed out how profoundly this is true as between our own and the divine. Still there may be a likeness between the former with its finite powers and the latter with its infinite perfections which is greatly helpful toward a truer and clearer notion of the divine. There is a deep truth in our creation in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). With the revelation of this truth, there is no rashness in looking into our own personality for the likeness of the divine. Nor is it, after a recognition of the difference in the grade of powers and the forms of sensibility between the two, open to the reprehension: “Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself” (Psalms 50:21). Personality is the deepest truth of our likeness to God. Our vision of his personality is in the reflection of his image in our own.[214] [214] Fisher:The Grounds of Theistic and Christian Belief, pp. 1, 2.

2. Same Complex of Powers Requisite.—There must be in God the three forms of power which constitute personality in us. In the lack of any one he could not be a person. Such perfections as omniscience, omnipotence, and immutability, in however complete a synthesis, could not of themselves constitute a divine personality. There must be even for God the eligibility of ends and freedom in the choice of ends. These are an absolute requirement of personal agency, which is the central fact of personality. But, as we have previously seen, the eligibility of ends can arise only with some form of conscious interest in them. This conscious interest cannot arise either from pure intelligence or from the will—not even from an infinite intelligence or an omnipotent will. There must be motivities of the divine nature, as in distinction from intellect and will—rational and moral motivities as the necessary ground of interest in ends. With the powers of intellect, sensibility, and will, and the freedom of rational and moral self-determination with respect to ends, there is a divine personality. The question of the divine freedom will be treated elsewhere.

3. Personality Manifest in Proofs of Theism.—Theism is the doctrine of a personal God. The arguments for the truth of theism are conclusive of personality in the original cause of the dependent cosmos. A glance at these arguments, as previously given, will make this manifest. We recur to them in the order of theistic discussion, not as the facts of personality arise in the method of psychological treatment.

We begin with the cosmological argument. On the principle of causation, with the dependence of cosmical facts, there is manifest in the existence of the cosmos the power of will. Only in a self-energizing will is there an adequate cause for the beginning and ongoing of cosmical formations. This is not in itself conclusive of personality, but the argument goes so far as to give us one essential attribute of personality in the original cosmical cause. In the teleological argument there is in the formation of the cosmos a manifestation at once of both intelligence and sensibility.

The adjustments of the cosmos are the work of intelligence. As these adjustments appear in the harmony of the heavens, in the wonders of vegetable and animal organism, in the formation of man, only an omniscient mind could have planned them. Thus another essential attribute of personality in the original cause is given us. But teleology is not complete in the mere intellectual conception of ends and the adjustment of means to their attainment. The choice of ends is an essential element. This choice, essentially rational in its nature, must be for a reason—for a reason in the sense of motive. The ends chosen must have possessed a rational eligibility for the divine mind; for otherwise its whole work in the formation of the cosmos must have been purely arbitrary. But, as we have previously shown, the actual eligibility of ends is dependent upon some form of conscious interest in the electing mind. Such interest is possible neither from pure intellect nor from will, but only in a subjective motivity combined with those powers in the constitution of personality. This subjective motivity is of the nature of feeling; and we thus find in God the third essential attribute of personality. The anthropological argument for theism proves that a material genesis of mind is impossible; that God is the only sufficient original of mind. The adaptations of mental endowment to our manifold relations and duties, secular and moral, clearly evince the highest form of divine teleology. In such teleology there is manifest at once all the essential attributes of divine personality. In the provisions for the happiness of sentient life, provisions above the mere necessities of existence, there is the proof of a rational benevolence which must be a personal quality in the author of such life. In the moral endowments of the soul there is the proof of a moral nature and a moral agency in its divine original.[215] A moral nature, with its agency in the creation of beings morally constituted, is possible only in a divine personality.

[215]Mansel:Limits of Religious Thought, p. 122.

4. The Sense of Scripture.—It seems quite needless to carry this question into the Scriptures. No attempt need be made to cite the multitude of texts expressive of personal attributes in God. Little more is required than to note and emphasize the fact that from beginning to end, without the slightest halting or variation, the Scriptures utter the one great truth of the divine personality. The theistic conception of patriarchs, prophets, and apostles is ever the conception of a personal God. The personal divine Son is the revelation of the personal divine Father. In the sublime words which open the Scriptures—“In the beginning God created, the heaven and the earth”—there is the profound truth of a personal God, eternally before the beginning. In the giving of the law, notably in the contents of the ten commandments, the same deep truth is manifest. The Lord’s Prayer is replete with the truth of the divine personality. We breathe its petitions to the Father in heaven, devoutly recognize his will, pray for the daily ministries of his providence, for his gracious forgiveness and heavenly guidance. This prayer is useless and without meaning for any one who does not believe in a personal God.

If the texts which openly express or clearly imply the sense of divine personality were properly classified, they would be found ascribing to God the three forms of attribute which constitute personality. There is first the ascription of intelligence or omniscience (Psalms 147:5; Proverbs 15:3; Acts 15:18; Hebrews 4:13). Again, there is the ascription of feeling or affection. The Lord loves righteousness and hates iniquity. He is pitiful and of tender mercy (Psalms 33:5; Psalms 45:7; James 5:11). One great fact might well suffice for the present truth. The great redemption originated in the divine love (John 3:16; 1 John 4:10). In this love there is an infinite fullness of feeling. “God is love” (1 John 4:16). This is the deepest truth of God; and it is the truth of an

emotional nature. This does not imply the excessive or passionate forms of emotion as in ourselves, but it does mean the reality of affections in God. Finally, there is ascribed to God the attribute of will as the power of personal agency (Psalms 65:3; Isaiah 46:10; Daniel 4:35; Matthew 19:26). Thus distinctly and definitely the Scriptures ascribe to God the three attributes, intelligence, feeling, will, which constitute personality.

5. God Only in Personality.—If God is not a personal being, the result must be either atheism or pantheism. It matters little which. The dark and deadly implications are much the same. There is no God with self-consciousness or the power of rational and moral self-determination, no personal divine agency in the universe. A blind, necessitated force is the original of all. The existence of the world and the heavens is without reason or end. There is no reason for the existence of man, no rational or moral end. God has no interest in him, no rational or moral rule over him. The universal sense of moral obligation and responsibility must be pronounced a delusion. There should be an end of worship, for there is wanting a truly worshipful being. All that remains is the dark picture of a universe without divine teleology or providence.[216]

[216] Hamilton:Autology, part v.; Strong:Systematic Theology, pp. 121, 123; Harris:Philosophical Basis of Theism, pp. 98, 99;The Self-Revelation of God, part iii; Olssen:Personality, Human and Divine.

030. Chapter 3: God In Attributes.

Chapter 3 God In Attributes.

We have previously given the definite sense of attribute, the distinction of attribute and essential being, and the immanence of attribute in being. In treating the question of divine personality we unavoidably anticipated the divine attributes. But they were then brought into notice only incidentally, and only so far as that discussion required, and their proper treatment we still have on hand. This discussion should proceed on a scientific analysis and classification, A neglect of this method allows various divine predicables to be classed and treated as attributes which are not distinctively such. There are many instances of this error. These divine verities should not be omitted, but we should avoid the artificial method of classing them as attributes, and should treat them separately.

031. I. Classification Of The Attributes.

I. Classification Of The Attributes.

1. Method of Classification.—There are peculiarities in the classification of the attributes, as compared with the classifications in the sciences of nature, which should not be overlooked. In these sciences the classifications are made under terms which express general conceptions, not realities of existence. Such are the terms mollusca, vertebrata, mammalia, ruminantia. The attributes have no such a conceptual ground. God as their subject is the deepest reality of existence. It was an egregious error of Mill to assert the contrary: “God is as much a general term to the Christian or Jew as to the polytheist.”[217] With the polytheist to whom there are many gods the term might express a general conception, but with the Christian or Jew, to whom there is only one God, it cannot have such a sense. If this term expressed a mere conception or general notion, no ground would remain for the attributes as concrete realities in the divine personality. But God is a personal term, with the definite and concrete sense of a proper term. As the subject of the attributes he is the infinite reality of being. In this fact lies one peculiarity in the classification of the attributes as compared with the classifications in the sciences of nature.

[217]Logic, p. 94.

There is another peculiarity of this classification. Under the common terms or general conceptions, as above stated, the things classed are essential, individual existences; whereas the attributes are neither essential nor individual existences, but are concrete realities of the divine personality. With these profound differences, we may still observe a scientific method in the treatment of the divine attributes. Such a method requires their classification on the ground of what is the deepest in God as their subject. This law must exclude all predicables which, however true of God, are not distinctively attributes. It follows that a catalogue of divine predicables, however complete and true, is not a classification of the divine attributes. Nor is any division on grounds which do not thoroughly differentiate the several groups a proper classification. A neglect of these principles results in artificial distinctions—of which there are many instances.

2. Artificial Classifications.—It will help us to a clearer view of the question if we notice a few instances of such artificial distinctions and groupings.

Such is the division of the attributes into the natural and the moral. Instances of the kind are so common that it is needless to give any special reference. It might be proper to distinguish the spheres of the divine agency into the natural and the moral, but such a distinction of the attributes is groundless. God acts in the physical and moral spheres, but not by two distinct sets of powers. Such a distinction in the spheres of his operation cannot be carried back into the powers of his agency. A grouping of the attributes as positive and negative is equally artificial. It is artificial because this distinction in the terms marks no real distinction in the attributes. The negative terms have just as positive a sense as the class of positive terms. Infinity and immutability express the reality of the limitless and changeless in God just as omniscience and omnipotence express the

absolute plenitude of his knowledge and power. It thus appears that there is no ground for this classification of the attributes. It is a grouping without any real distinction. It will further appear that the divine predicables which we express negatively are not distinctively attributes.

There is no scientific advance on the ground of a distinction between what God is in himself and in his manifestations: “the Majesty which he has in himself, and the glory which he outwardly manifests; the inner brightness, consequently, and the outward radiance of the light; the attributes which relate to his mode of existence, and those which become known to us in his mode of Operation.”[218] There is no ground for such a distinction. In any proper sense in which some attributes are related to the mode of the divine existence all must be so related. Hence they cannot be thus divided into distinct classes. Further, all are eternally complete in God; hence no manifestation of a part in the mode of his operation can constitute a ground of classification.

[218]Van Oosterzee:Christian Dogmatics, vol. i, p. 254.

Dr. Hodge accepts the classification of the Westminster Catechism. He thinks that, while open to speculative objection, it has the advantage of simplicity and familiarity.[219] He does not commend it, as certainly he could not, for any exact analysis or scientific construction. However complete as a catalogue, it is not in any strict sense a classification.

[219]Systematic Theology, vol. i, p. 376.

We may present together two instances of analysis and classification which, with verbal differences, are substantially the Dr. Pope gives, as the result of his analysis, “First, the attributes pertaining to God as absolute or unrelated being; then, those arising out of the relation between the Supreme and the creature, which indeed require the creature for their manifestation; and, finally, those which belong to the relation between God and moral beings under his government, with special reference to man.”[220] Dr. Cocker gives the result of his analysis and the grounds of his classification thus: “1. As related to our intuition of real being; by abstraction from all other being or personality—the immanent attributes of God. 2. As causally related to finite, dependent existence; by elimination of all necessary limitation—the relative or transitive attributes of God. 3. As ethically related to finite personality; by elimination of all imperfection—the moral attributes of God.”[221] It will readily appear, on a comparison of these two instances, that the three divisions of the one are the same in principle and method as the three divisions of the other. They are both specially formal endeavors toward a scientific attainment. We must think the method a mistake and the aim a failure. In the grouping of the attributes according to the three divisions, certain divine predicables are placed in the first which are not distinctively attributes. We may instance spirituality, which is of the very essence of God and not an attribute of his being; eternity, which is in no proper sense an attribute of the absolute being of God, and no truer of his absolute being than of his personal attributes which are grouped in the second and third divisions; immutability, which is not distinctively a truth of the essential being of God, as it is equally true of all his attributes; self-sufficiency, which, instead of being a distinct truth of the very essence of God, can be a reality only with his omniscience and omnipotence. In the second and third groupings, on a distinction of relations to the creature and to moral beings, with a resulting distinction of attributes as the transitive and the moral, it was impossible to complete the second division without placing in it some attributes which are necessary to the third—impossible, because that distinction is scientifically insufficient for the separate groupings. Omniscience, omnipotence, wisdom,

goodness, which could not be omitted from the relation of God to the creature, are equally necessary in his relation to moral government. The insufficiency of these distinctions may be further noted, particularly in the analysis of Cocker. The transitive attributes of his second division are as immanent in God as the attributes of the first, and no more transitive than those of the third. In both instances, the distinction between the second and third divisions is really the same as that, previously noticed, between the natural and moral attributes, and is open to the same insuperable objections.

[220]Christian Theology, vol. i, p. 291.

[221]Theistic Conception of the World, p. 50.

It was not our purpose to review comprehensively the many methods in the classification of the attributes, but to notice a few instances as illustrative of an artificial method. What we have given may suffice for this purpose.

3. Classification on the Ground of Personality.—In the true method of science classification is on the ground of what is most determinate in the subject. This is the natural method in distinction from the artificial. The same method should be observed in the classification of the divine attributes. Personality is the most determinate conception of God, and the truest, deepest sense in which he can be viewed as the subject of his own attributes. Personality is the only conception of God which immediately gives his attributes. Any other ground of classification must result either in a mere catalogue in which subject and attribute are confusedly jumbled, or in groupings without any sufficient ground of distinction. Personality gives all attributes which are properly such in distinction from what God is as their subject. This will appear on their direct treatment, while the attributes themselves will thus open into a clearness of view not otherwise attainable.

4. Category of the Attributes.—Our method omits from this category certain divine predicables usually classed as attributes. Of these there are several classes. Some belong to God as subject, not as attributes. Some, however true of God, are in no proper sense his attributes. Others result from the perfection of attributes, but are not distinctively attributes themselves. We have previously noted spirituality as belonging to the first class. Eternity and unity belong to the second. Immutability and omnipresence belong to the third. For the present it may suffice thus to name the several classes, as all must be treated in the proper place. It may be further stated that one attribute, as we shall find the category, includes what are usually treated as several attributes. As God in personality is the subject of his own attributes, so therein we must find their true category. This category must be determined by the constitutive and essential facts of the divine personality. These essential facts are the divine attributes. There are no single terms for their complete expression, and the best will require explication. The requirement is specially from the perfection of the powers which constitute the divine attributes. The terms which express these powers in the human personality require explication; and the requirement must be far deeper in their use for the divine attributes. A proper analysis gives us the essential powers of the human personality as intellect, sensibility, and will. For the present we shall use the same terms for the designation of the constitutive powers of the divine personality. We said for the present, because these terms must be left open for such modification or substitution as may be required by the plenitude and perfection of these powers in the divine personality.

Intellect is in both common and philosophic use for the power or capacity of rational intelligence in the human mind. It includes all the cognitive faculties, but signifies simply the capacity for knowledge, while knowledge itself must be an acquisition through their proper use. There is the reality of intellect in God; and, so far, there is a likeness of powers in the human and the divine personalities. Knowledge in God, however, is not an acquisition, but an eternal possession. This profound distinction requires the use of another term for the expression of the whole truth in God. Intellect well expresses the power of knowledge in the human mind, but cannot express the plenitude of the reality in the divine mind. No term is more appropriate than omniscience—the one long in theological use. Omniscience implies the profoundest sense of intellect as a power of knowledge, but omits all implication of a process of acquisition, while it expresses the infinite plenitude of the divine knowledge.

Sensibility is the term in philosophic use for all forms of mental feeling. It is also used without any qualification for all forms of divine feeling. It seems more appropriate for a philosophy grounded in sensationalism than for a philosophy which gives a proper place to the higher rational powers and to original truths. The profoundest motives of life arise with the activities of the philosophic and moral reason. Sensibility seems but a poor term for the expression of these higher motivities. Yet it is the term in philosophic use; nor have we another with which to replace it. It seems still more inappropriate and insufficient for the expression of the forms of feeling in the mind of God, and necessary to his personality. But the difficulty of replacing it with a better still remains. The term feeling is deficient in definiteness, and includes much of human sensibility which can have nothing analogous in the divine consciousness. Affection and emotion are in philosophic use for distinct forms of sensibility, and hence are respectively too specific and narrow for the present requirement. Even love, while the deepest truth of the divine nature, does not include all the forms of divine feeling. It seems necessary still to use the term sensibility. But we here use it only in the sense of the higher forms of feeling, particularly the rational and moral, which render man the image of God. These feelings are the response of his motivities to the objects of his conception, and constitute the motives of his providence. Without such motives he could have no reason for any action. Neither teleology, nor justice, nor love could have any place in the operations of his providence. There could be no divine providence. Neither could there be a divine personality. Will is the third and completing attribute of personality. It is the necessary power of personal agency, of rational self-determination, of rational action with respect to motives and ends. The will is not sufficient for personality simply as a power of self-energizing for the attainment of the ends of one’s impulses and appetences. Such a power is no higher than the self-energizing of an animal. It must be central to the personality, that it may be the working-power of the rational personal agency. It is thus the power of election with respect to ends, and the executive power whereby one may give effect to his choices. The will is thus a necessary attribute of personality. It is such an attribute in God. The truth of such a divine attribute is in the Scriptures, and in the reality of the divine personality. The power of personal agency in God, whether in creation, providence, or grace, is the power of his will. It has the plenitude of omnipotence. Hence will and omnipotence in God are the same attribute. For this reason “we may properly use the term omnipotence.

032. II. Divine Omniscience.

II. Divine Omniscience. As previously noted, we use the term omniscience instead of either intelligence or intellect for the reason that knowledge in God is immediate and infinite. The reality of intellect is given with his personality, while omniscience expresses the plenitude of its perfection. .Such perfection is the real question in the treatment of this attribute.

1. Sense of Omniscience.—In the measure of agreement between the mental concept and the object of conception there is knowledge, in whatever mind. The fact is the same whatever the mode of the conception or the extent of the knowledge. Omniscience must be God's perfect conception of himself, and of all things and events, without respect to the time of their existence or occurrence. Any limitation in any particular must be a limitation in the divine knowledge.

Omniscience must be an immediate and eternal knowing. The knowledge which is not immediate and eternal must be an acquisition. For the acquisition there must be time and mental process. Such knowledge must be limited. An acquired omniscience is not a thinkable possibility. The ideas are too alien for any scientific association in rational thought. Hence we must either admit an immediate and eternal knowing in God or deny his omniscience. These alternatives are complete and absolute.

Omniscience, in the truest, deepest sense of the term, must be prescient of all futuritions, whatever their nature or causality. Future free volitions must be included with events which shall arise from necessary causes. Only with such prescience can there be a true omniscience. Such a divine omniscience is the common Christian faith. There are exceptions; and the issue raised should not be entirely omitted.

2. Respecting Future Free Volitions.—The divine nescience of future free volitions as now maintained is, apparently, quite different from the doctrine of Adam Clarke, who held on the part of God a purely voluntary nescience. The difference, however, is rather apparent than real. The doctrine of Clarke must assume for God simply a faculty of knowledge, potentially existent in him and for his voluntary use, in analogy to his power. He did recognize this analogy, but plainly without apprehending its implication respecting the mode of the divine knowledge. A faculty of knowledge for voluntary use is simply a faculty for the acquisition of knowledge. An immediate and eternal knowing is thus precluded. But, as previously noted, such acquisition requires time and a mental process. Further, there must be the conditions necessary to the mental process. Such conditions might exist in relation to all necessary futuritions, as a knowledge of them might be reached through their necessitating causes, but no such conditions could exist in relation to future free volitions. The divine nescience of such volitions would, therefore, be a necessity, not a free choice. The outcome is thus contradictory to the doctrine of the divine nescience which Clarke maintained. With this result, we scarcely need add the usual adverse criticism, that a voluntary nescience in God must imply a knowledge of the things which he chooses not to know. The doctrine now specially maintained denies the possibility of a divine prescience of future free volitions. Thus the same ground is here openly asserted which we found as an implication of the

doctrine previously noticed, but as contradictory to the particular form in which it was maintained. In addition to this deeper ground on which a doctrine of nescience is maintained, various other arguments are adduced as corroborative of the doctrine. Some of these arguments we shall briefly notice, though our chief aim is to analyze the doctrine and set it in a clear light. The doctrine itself is not entirely new. Along the Christian centuries it occasionally appears in theological speculation. The earlier Socinianism openly avowed it. Some of the Remonstrants held the same view, though it does not appear with Arminius himself. The principle must be in the Calvinism which grounds the prescience of God in his decrees and denies the contingency of foreknown events. But the doctrine itself has more recently been treated with a definiteness and thoroughness and supported with a force of argument which are quite new.[222] It is much easier to pronounce the arguments of Dr. McCabe a nullity than to answer them in a process of lucid and conclusive logic. Divine omniscience, with prescience of future free volitions, however sure as a truth of Scripture, has real difficulty for rational thought. We need but instance the relation of the question to the freedom of choice. Some deny omniscience as contradictory to freedom. Some deny freedom as contradictory to omniscience. Many, while holding both, regard their reconciliation as above the power of human thought. But this is only one of many facts which seriously perplex the question.

[222]McCabe:The Foreknowledge of God; Divine Nescience of Future Contingencies.

Whatever the perplexities which may arise with the doctrine of omniscience, they must be as real respecting the futuritions of the divine agency as of the human. Indeed, there are difficulties which more directly concern the divine agency. It might be said that God freely predetermines his own future volitions, and therefore may foreknow them in entire consistency with their freedom. This, however, can relieve no difficulty of the question—indeed, simply avoids the real question. Such future volitions must be purely executive for the attainment of previously chosen ends. In the mind of God they must be subject to his predetermination, and therefore cannot stand in the attitude of future free choices. If future free volitions are unknowable because free, or unknowable for any other reason, then such volitions of God are as completely beyond the reach of his prescience as the future free volitions of men. If he cannot foreknow our free volitions, neither can he foreknow his own, which, in a wise dealing with us, must, in many instances, be shaped in adjustment to such as we put forth.

Whether the divine foreknowledge is consistent with the freedom of choice is a question which may be more appropriately treated in another place.

It is strongly urged against the doctrine of prescience that God deals with men, particularly with the wicked, in the use of means for their salvation, just as though he did not foreknow their decisive moral choices. This statement is, at least, apparently true. That is, there would be no apparent reason for a change of procedure if God did not foreknow the final moral choices of men. Is such a procedure so contradictory to the doctrine of prescience that both cannot be true? If this be the case, omniscience would disqualify God for the administration of a moral government over the human race. The only apparent alternative would be a divine allotment of final destinies on the foresight of what would be the decisive moral choices of men if placed in a probationary life. Such a doctrine of the divine procedure actually appears in theological speculation. In the many attempts to solve the perplexing dogma of Adamic sin as the common penal desert of the race, the position has been taken that God, foreknowing that every man, if placed in the same state as

Adam, would sin just as he did, might justly and did actually account the same sin to every man. Of course this doctrine can have no place in a true theology. Nor can it be true that omniscience would disqualify God for the administration of a moral government. If we were under a law of necessity, the divine use of means for our salvation would be without reason. This is manifestly true in the case of necessitation to evil. That we are free and salvable renders the use of means consistent with the divine prescience. Otherwise the total omission of means of salvation would be justified in all cases of a foreknown final sinful choice. Such an omission could not be reconciled with the requirements of a divine moral government. With the truth of prescience, God may consistently, and must in fatherly rule and love, deal with us in the use of means for our salvation just as though he did not foreknow our final moral choices.[223] [223] Bledsoe:Theodicy, pp. 241, 243.

It is objected that the creation of souls with prescience of a sinful life and a final penal doom is irreconcilable with the goodness of God. This is a weighty objection—so weighty that we might well prefer the doctrine of nescience if it could obviate the difficulties which beset the question of sin. But this it cannot achieve. Insoluble perplexities would still remain. The creation of souls for the moral responsibility of free personalities must be with the known possibility of a final sinful choice and penal doom. This is a fact which our reason cannot fully adjust to the goodness of God, and a fact which remains in all its force with the nescience of future free volitions. Further, even with the nescience of future choices, we must admit the divine knowledge of all actual choices, and therefore the knowledge that, up to the present time, many through the choice of evil have incurred the penal doom of sin. Yet, with this knowledge, and with the forecast of such results in the future, God still perpetuates the race. The difficulty in this case seems quite as inexplicable for our reason as that which arises with the doctrine of the divine prescience. The real difficulty is the existence of moral evil under the government of God. This still remains with the doctrine of nescience. An argument against the prescience of future free volitions is brought from their present nihility. Such volitions are nothing until their actuality, and therefore cannot be the object of any previous knowledge. The validity of this argument is not above question. Moreover, if properly analyzed, its implications must be found of very difficult adjustment to the realities of the divine knowledge. A future eclipse is as much a present nihility as a future free choice. What then is the difference between the two as it respects the divine prescience? The answer is obvious. For the former there is a necessitating cause; for the latter, a free cause. This is the only difference. Hence the implication of this argument is that the divine foreknowledge of any futurition is conditioned on a present knowledge of its necessitating cause. It follows that God foreknows an eclipse just as an astronomer foreknows it. His knowledge may be more ready and perfect, but cannot be other in its mode. Thus the divine knowledge is conditioned and must be an acquisition through a mental process. These facts cannot be adjusted to the perfection and plenitude of the divine knowledge as clearly revealed in the Scriptures.

Further, a present free choice is in itself a purely metaphysical fact, and, even with complete ethical quality, may be without any cognizable sign. Hence it may be rationally questioned whether a mind incapable of foreknowing a future free choice could know a present free choice in its pure metaphysical self. On the other hand, if it be true, as the Scriptures so fully declare, that the divine mind is ever cognizant of the most central and secret facts of the human mind, we may rationally think its vision so immediate and absolute as clearly to foresee our future free choices. The most

difficult question of omniscience concerns its relation to the divine personality. This, however, must go forward to a more appropriate place for its treatment. So far we have specially aimed to place the doctrine of nescience in the light of its implications respecting the divine knowledge. We think these implications irreconcilable with the plenitude of this knowledge as it is clearly revealed in the Scriptures, and as it must be in the truth of theism. We have not treated the question of nescience with any profound apprehension for the truth. Its doctrinal and practical bearing may easily be overestimated. The divine nescience of future free volitions, if accepted as a truth, is not necessarily revolutionary in theology. The “Calvinism which grounds foreknowledge in the divine decrees would remain the same. It can freely admit the divine nescience of future volitions as pure contingencies. This position it already occupies. But for it there are no such future volitions. The long-time debate on the question of freedom would still be on hand, and it would be necessary to carry this question convincingly against Calvinism before the doctrine of nescience could disturb its foundations. Nor would this doctrine be any more revolutionary in the system of Arminianism. Every vital doctrine would remain just the same. The chief perceivable result would be to free the system from the perplexity for freedom which arises with the divine prescience. The very serious difficulty in the attainment of this result is that we require the reality of freedom as the necessary ground of the doctrine of nescience. Only through the proved reality of the former can we reach the truth of the latter. This is their logical and irreversible order. If the truth of nescience were established or accepted, it would be as little revolutionary within the sphere of practical truth as in that of doctrinal truth. Certainly it could not in the least abate any of the moral forces of Christianity. God would still be immediately and perfectly cognizant of all the actualities of our moral life. Our responsibility would be Just the same; all divine promises and penalties the very same.[224] [224] Martensen:Christian Dogmatics, p. 219; Dorner:Christian Doctrine, vol. i, p. 336.

3. Truth of Omniscience.—There is for us no direct or complete knowledge of omniscience. We can no more fully grasp it in thought than we can grasp the omnipotence of the divine will or the infinitude of the divine love. If there be such a reality, only omniscience itself can absolutely know it. We may listen to the united utterances of nature and revelation and receive the great truth in faith, but cannot receive it in a comprehensive knowledge. In the fitness of material elements for cosmical uses, in the manifold and marvelous adjustments of nature, in the simplicity and far-reaching sway of the laws of nature, in the wonders of organic life, in the realm of rational intelligences there are manifestations of a mind which Ave must rationally think omniscient. These thoughts are in accord with the utterances of Scripture. “O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all” (Psalms 104:24). “The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding he hath established the heavens” (Proverbs 3:19).

There are more explicit words of Scripture respecting the infinite plenitude of the divine knowledge. Even in special applications the expression of the knowledge is so complete that its infinite comprehension is an inevitable implication. “Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; thou understandest my thoughts afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the

wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee" (Psalms 139:1-12). This passage is so replete with the deepest truth of the divine knowledge that we may well cite it in full. There is nothing in the life of man, nothing in his deeds or words, nothing in his most secret thoughts and feelings which is not perfectly known to God. This is the truth respecting all the multitudes of the race. Only an immediate and absolute knowing is equal to such knowledge. Neither height nor depth nor distance can impose any limitation. For it the night is as the day, the darkness as the light.

We may add a few texts: "Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite" (Psalms 147:5). "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Proverbs 15:3). The truth of each of these texts is the truth of the other. If God's understanding is infinite, he must every-where behold the evil and the good. If he every-where beholds the evil and the good, his understanding must be infinite. "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Hebrews 4:13). The divine knowledge is beforehand with the future. "Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them" (Isaiah 42:9). These texts reveal the infinite plenitude of the divine knowledge. In the sense of the former, all things, in the fullest sense of all, are in the open vision of God. The connection shows the inclusion of the most central and secret life of all men. The latter text brings the future with the past into the comprehension of the same knowledge.

It might be objected that all the texts which we have cited in proof of omniscience, with one exception, reveal simply the divine knowledge of the present, the truth of which no theist questions. It might further be said that the one text which embraces the future may not include free choices, but only such futuritions as shall arise from predetermining causalities. If all this should be conceded, the proof of omniscience must still lie in these texts. The plenitude and the mode of the divine knowledge which they reveal warrant the inference of omniscience in the truest, deepest sense of the term. We need not dwell upon the extent of the universe which, in all its magnitudes and minutiae, even to every atom, is perfectly known to God. Nor need we specially speak of higher intelligences, with lives replete with the deepest intensities of thought and feeling and action, all which are comprehended in the divine knowledge. Suffice, that God knows what is in man; all that is in man; all that is in all men. This is what the Scriptures declare, and what no theist can question. The knowledge is perfect. It embraces all the interior activities, all the springs of action, all the impulses and aims of every life. The knowledge is so complete that God can perfectly adjust his ministries to the exigencies of every life; so complete that he can finally be the perfectly righteous Judge of each life. Such knowledge must be immediate and absolute in its mode. Its plenitude can admit no process of acquisition, no conditions of space or time. The future, even in its ethical volitions, must be open to the vision of such absolute knowledge. The prophecies cannot be interpreted without the divine prescience of morally free and responsible volitions in men. We speak of the prophecies generally. Even if some could be interpreted on deterministic ground, the many require freedom in the responsible human agency so widely operative in their fulfillment. We need not enter into details or into the citation and unfolding of particular prophecies. A general view may suffice. Prophecy began its utterances in the earliest

history of the race, and continued to multiply them through all the progress of revelation, while the times of their application still stretched far down the centuries, even unto the final consummation. In a general way, we may instance the Jews and neighboring nations—Egypt, Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre—as the subjects of prophecy. Not only are their future fortunes severally sketched in bold outline, but the reason of their fortunes is given specifically in their own moral conduct. The various forms of vice and crime are depicted in their incipiency, progress, and repletion, as the prelude and provocation of the providential doom which successively befell them. These prophecies, so specific in facts, and often long antedating the fulfilling events, could not have been uttered and verified by the result without the divine prescience of the morally responsible conduct of these people severally and individually. This is the prescience of free choices. The Messianic prophecies should receive a separate notice in their relation to this question. Students of these prophecies find in them much of the life of Christ as it is given in the gospels. Moreover, the responsible conduct of others respecting him is equally foretold. The rejection and persecution which he should suffer from his own people; the heinous offense of his betrayal by Judas and his denial by Peter; his crucifixion, with singular detail of particulars in the cruel treatment which he should suffer, and the fearful sin of the authors of these cruelties—all this is in these prophecies. They equally disclose the providential doom of this people for the willful and wicked rejection of the Christ. How could all this be without the divine prescience of the free and responsible action of men? These prophecies were not the utterance of a mere judgment of the future in view of the drift of the present, but divine predictions of clearly foreseen events, in the production of which the free and responsible agency of men should be efficiently operative. Prophecy in its fulfillment seems conclusive of the divine prescience of free, ethical volitions.

4. Distinctions of Divine Knowledge.—There are certain distinctions in the knowledge of God which may be helpful toward an adjustment of omniscience to his personal agency. The originality of these distinctions is accorded to Fonseca and Molina, Spanish theologians of the Jesuit order. Naturally, they were formulated in the technical manner common at the time: scientia Dei necessaria; scientia Dei libera; scientia Dei media. Dorner gives a very full and clear statement of these distinctions.[225] Dr. Hodge also gives a clear statement, particularly of the third—scientia Dei media—from which, however, his stanch Calvinism dissents.[226] A summary statement in simpler terms may render these distinctions clearer.

[225]Christian Doctrine, vol. i, pp. 325-328.

[226]Systematic Theology, vol, i, pp. 398-400.

God’s knowledge of himself is necessary and eternal. This is an inevitable implication of his eternal personal existence. Personality is unreal without self-consciousness, which must include self-knowledge. The infinite perfection of the divine mind must imply the absolute plenitude of self-knowledge. In the perfection of this knowledge God must know his own potentialities, and therefore all possibilities with respect to his own immediate agency. Further, all rational and ethical truths which, with the personality of God, must be eternal realities, may properly be placed in the content of his necessary knowledge. There is thus a sphere of necessary knowledge, which is intrinsic to the divine personality. But as the universe is the creation of God on his own free choice (Isaiah 29:15; Matthew 6:32; Acts 15:8), a knowledge of it cannot be included in his necessary self-knowledge. The fact is the same even with an eternal prescience of his creative work. It is still

the work of his free agency, and therefore need not have been. In this case it could have been an object of knowledge only as a possibility, which belongs to the distinction of necessary knowledge. It follows that God's knowledge of the universe, whether as a purposed futurition or an effectuated reality, is conditioned on his own free agency, and may properly be designated scientia Dei libera—a knowledge within his own power or dependent upon himself. In the reality of our free moral agency, God must adjust the ministries of his government to the manner of our conduct as arising from our freedom. There is nothing surer than this. To deny it is to deny the reality of our own free agency. With freedom, human conduct is often other than it might have been. One man is bad who might have been good, and another good who might have been bad. The divine dealings with each must, as wise and good, be shaped according to his conduct, and would be different with a difference of conduct. In all such cases God's prescience of his own agency is conditioned on the foreseen free action of men. There is this logical mediation even with immediateness in the mode of the divine knowledge. Scientia Dei media is therefore no erroneous or misleading formula.[227] [227] Usual reference for illustration:1 Samuel 23:9-13;Jeremiah 38:17-18;Ezekiel 3:6;Matthew 11:21-24.

5. Omniscience and Divine Personality.—The scientific adjustment of omniscience to the divine personality and personal agency is no easy attainment. The real difficulty has not received its proper recognition. It should not be overlooked, even if without solution in our reason. The discussion respecting the consistency of foreknowledge and freedom has been conducted with little apprehension of the profound truth that free agency and personal agency are but different formulas for the same reality, and that, if free agency falls by the logic of foreknowledge, personality must fall with it, and the divine personality no less than the human. There can be no true personality or personal agency except in freedom. The necessary freedom is the freedom of choice. For the freedom of choice there must be the eligibility of ends—eligibility in the reality of motives to choice. Can there be the eligibility of ends for an omniscient mind? This is the real question of difficulty. It is far deeper than the usual question of consistency between fore-knowledge and freedom, which concerns only the relation of foreknowledge in God to freedom in man, while the question in hand concerns the consistency of omniscience and freedom, both being in God himself.

We cannot in rational thought separate God's conception of realities, even as futurities, from his motive-states respecting them. For our thought the latter must co-exist with the former and be as the former. If his conception is eternally complete in his eternal prescience, does it not follow that his motive-states are eternally the same respecting all realities? Seemingly, no distinction can be made between futurities and actualities. How can any thing take on a new form or appear in a new light of interest in the view of an absolute prescience? If all is eternally the same in that view, how can we avoid the consequence of an eternally fixed and changeless mental state, both cognitive and emotional, in God respecting all objects of his conception? Henc3 there would seem to be no reason for any choice or agency which was not eternally the same in the divine mind. In this case only an unthinkable eternal choice would seem possible. There could be no eligibility of ends arising in time, no specific choices in time; and therefore only a divine operation eternally predetermined. Such facts do not seem consistent with either a true personality in God or a true personal agency in his providence. It thus appears how far deeper this question is than the question of consistency between divine prescience and human freedom. How shall the necessary

adjustment be attained? The manifest truth of omniscience will not allow us to replace it with the divine nescience of all free and responsible futuritions, and thus eliminate the difficulty—if indeed this would eliminate it.

There is no clear way out of this perplexity. Yet we should not concede its utter hopelessness of all explication. Doubtless the moral principles of the divine procedure are eternally the same in the divine consciousness; but the divine feelings in view of moral conduct in the free subjects of moral government are not eternally the same, as seemingly implied in omniscience. Otherwise they would either be false to the truth of facts, or in many instances involve a contradictory dualism in the divine mind. Such would be the case in all instances of a radical change of moral conduct in human life. A very wicked man may become truly saintly—of which there are many instances. If respecting such there were eternally the same feelings in God, they could not be true to the facts. This possibility is precluded by the great change in moral character. If from eternity such are regarded with reprehension as bad and with approval as good, then the unthinkable dualism must exist in the divine mind. These implications are conclusive against an eternally changeless emotional state in the mind of God respecting the free subjects of his moral government.

It is the clear sense of Scripture that the divine feelings are not eternally the same nor yet dualistic respecting the responsible conduct of men, but in forms answering in time to the moral quality of their action: feelings of displeasure against their wickedness; of clemency and forgiveness on their true repentance; of approving love for their genuine piety. The truth of divine displeasure against the wicked, whatever the subsequent change in their moral conduct, is given in many texts; but it is a truth so familiar and sure that a few references may suffice (Numbers 32:14; Deuteronomy 7:4; 2 Kings 17:17-18; Psalms 7:11; Psalms 78:40). It is in the nature of God as holy and just that this must be so. It is equally sure on the same ground of his holiness that he does not and cannot be regard any others than the wicked. The truth of the divine propitiousness on a true repentance is also given in many texts (Isaiah 12:1; Isaiah 55:7; Daniel 9:16-19). The whole truth of an approving love on a genuine piety may be given in a single text: “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him” (John 15:21). It is thus clear that God’s personal regards of men ever answer in time to the moral quality of their personal conduct. Those who hold the doctrine of divine nescience, as previously noticed, may say that this precisely accords with their doctrine, and is therefore the proof of it. We admit the agreement, and would also admit the proof were it not for the paramount proof of the divine prescience. But the facts which we have found do not yet bring us the adjustment of omniscience to the divine personality and personal agency.

Even with the doctrine of prescience, it is still open for us to say that futurities of human conduct may not be the same for the divine conception and feeling as in their actuality. There is some ground for this position in the distinctions of the divine knowledge previously considered. The self-intuition of God is eternal and absolute. But the universe is the creation of his free agency, and therefore was eternally foreknown only as a futurity or as a freely purposed futurition, and known in its actuality only when by the free act of creation this purpose was set in reality. Even as a purposed futurition it could not be the same to the divine conception and consciousness as in its actuality. What is thus true respecting the universe as a creation may be specially true respecting the moral choices of free and responsible personalities. While eternally foreknown, they are yet

different in their actuality for the divine conception, and therefore different for the divine feeling. There may thus be a sphere of free personal agency for God. There is no other apparent reconciliation of omniscience with either his personality or his personal agency in providence. If the distinctions in the knowledge of God may not be claimed as absolutely valid for the sphere of his personal free agency, they yet appear reasonably sufficient; and this is about all that we could expect in so difficult a question. But further, than this: it is surely possible that the plenitude of personality in God may place him above any law of determinism which may seem to us an implication of his omniscience; so that there is for him all the reality of a free personal agency which seems so manifest in the history of his providence.

There is a providence of God, with ministries in time. Nor can all this be regarded as merely executive of eternal pre-determinations. The field of this providence is an historic world developing in time. Its successive facts can be actual for the divine conception only on their actuality. What is thus true respecting all must be specially true respecting the free ethical action of men. The interests of both morality and religion require the ministries of providence in the ever-living personal agency of God. There must be the ever-actual discrimination of human conduct in his moral judgment; the reprehension of the evil and the loving approval of the good in the very depths of his moral feeling. Without these facts there is for the moral and religious consciousness no living relation of God to the present life, and our theism must be practically as empty of vital content as deism or pantheism. If the ministries of providence in the free agency of God, with all the emotional activities of such ministries, be not consistent or possible with his foreknowledge, then foreknowledge cannot be true. If there must be for us an alternative between the prescience of God, on the one hand, and his true personal agency in the ministries of his providence, on the other, the former doctrine must be yielded, while we tenaciously cleave to the Letter, because it embodies the living reality of the divine moral government. With all the difficulties of the question, we have not found any contradictory opposition of the two doctrines, and therefore hold both in a sure faith.[228] [228] Dorner:Christian Doctrine, vol. i, pp. 329-337.

6. Divine Wisdom.—The wisdom of God is so closely related to his knowledge that the former may properly be treated in connection with the latter. Yet there are elements of wisdom which do not belong to mere knowledge. For wisdom there must be the practical use of knowledge. For the deepest truth of wisdom there must be the practical use of knowledge for benevolent ends. In the apt use of means for the attainment of evil ends there may be ingenuity or skill which requires knowledge, but there cannot be wisdom. Hence in wisdom there must be an element of goodness, a benevolence of aim. Benevolence requires affection. There can be no good end, either as a conception or an aim, without the emotional nature. Hence wisdom is not purely from the intellect, but from the intellect and the sensibility in co-operation. The wisdom of God appears in the co-operation of infinite knowledge and love. For the present life, even in its providential aspects, there is a mixture of good and evil; so that for our view the wisdom of God does not stand m the clearest light. The circle of our vision is but a narrow one, while often much of it lies in the shadow of cheerless clouds.[229] For our faith there is sunshine above and upon the vast fields beyond the circle of our vision, where the wisdom of God is revealed in the brightness of its own divine light. It is in truth deeply wrought into the wonders of creation, providence, and grace, however hidden from our present view. So the Scriptures witness. Wisdom was with God in determining the marvelous adjustments and laws of nature (Job 28:20-27). “O Lord, how manifold are thy works I

in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches" (Psalms 104:24). The wisdom of God assumes its divinest form in the manifestation and work of Christ, "in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence" (Ephesians 1:7-8).Thus is made known, even unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, "the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ephesians 3:10-11). The perfections of knowledge and love are here co-operative. "the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" (Romans 11:33).

[229]Butler:Analogy, part i, chap, vii; Bowne:Metaphysics, p. 847.

033. III. Divine Sensibility.

III. Divine Sensibility.

1. Sense of Divine Sensibility.—As previously noticed, sensibility is in philosophic use for even the highest forms of human feeling; for the rational and moral as for the lower appetences and impulses. Theology has no better term for substitution, and must still use the same, even in application to the divine feelings. There is an emotional nature in God. This nature is active in various forms of feeling respecting the objects of his conception. There may be feelings of approval or aversion, of pleasure or displeasure, of reprehension or love. There is the reality of such emotional states in the mind of God, as in the mind of man. This is the sense of divine sensibility. There are certain differences between the human and the divine which may be noted in the proper place.

2. Truth of Divine Sensibility.—An emotional nature is necessary to the divine omniscience; that is, there are forms of knowledge which would be impossible even to the divine mind if totally without sensibility. It has not been properly considered how much the sensibilities have to do with human knowledge. In empirical knowledge our conception or notion of things could not be what it is without the element furnished by sensation. In the higher spheres of truth the feelings are necessary to knowledge. Without the correlative emotions we could have no true notion of friendship, or country, or kindred, or home. Without the moral feelings there could be no proper knowledge of a moral system; no true conception of moral obligation, of right or rights, of the ethical quality of free moral action. There must be such a law even for the divine knowledge. Certainly there is no apparent reason to the contrary. Without an emotional nature in God, his omniscience, in the truer, deeper sense of the term, would be impossible. The Scriptures freely ascribe to God various forms of feeling—abhorrence, anger, hatred, love, patience, compassion, clemency. It is very easy to pronounce all this pure anthropopathism, carried into the Scriptures in accommodation to the modes of human thought and feeling. If these forms of feeling are not such a reality in God as to have a truthful reflection in our own, these terms of Scripture are but empty or deceiving words. Then divine holiness, justice, goodness, mercy, faithfulness, are meaningless or misleading. Why this perversion of the deepest truth of the divine nature? Too long has theology, in its deeper speculative form, arrayed the living God of the Scriptures in the apathetic bleakness of deism or pantheism. The endeavor to represent God as pure intellect or pure action may be reverent in aim, but is no less a sacrifice of the most vital truth. Without emotion God cannot be a person; cannot be the living God for the religious consciousness of humanity. No longer could we, in the profound exigencies of life, look up to him as the heavenly Father. There is no heavenly Father without an emotional love. There is the truth of an emotional love of the Father in the deep words of the Son: “For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world” (John 17:24); and also in those other deep and gracious words: “God so loved the world” (John 3:16). If there is reality in one form of divine sensibility there is reality in other forms. In the revelations of God by word and deed there is as clear and full a manifestation of sensibility as of intelligence or will. One knows his own emotional states in his own consciousness. Another’s he can know only

through the modes of their expression; but his knowledge is greatly aided by reading these expressions, as he can, in the light of his own experience. Hence he is quite as sure, though in a different mode, of emotional states in other minds as in his own. He is just as sure of their sensibilities as of their intelligence or voluntary power. We thus know the mind of God, and as surely in its emotions as in its intellections and volitions. His words and deeds which express emotions are the sign of divine realities. Otherwise they have for us no meaning and serve only to delude.

There are certain differences between the human and the divine sensibilities which may be noted, though seemingly open to the common view. We have forms of sensibility, as arising through our physical organism or in the circle of our peculiar relationships in life, which can have no analogies in the divine mind. Also our higher motive-states which arise with our rational and moral cognitions may have an intensity of excitement and a passionate impulsiveness which can have no place in the divine emotions.

3. Distinctions of Divine Sensibility.—There is not an absolute unity or oneness of feeling in God. His sensibilities are active in forms answering to the distinctions of their objects. The activities of our own higher sensibilities are conditioned on the mental apprehension of their appropriate objects, either as actual existences or as ideal conceptions. This must be a law for the divine sensibilities. It is no sign of limitation in God that for knowledge he requires the objects of his cognitions, or that for the activities of his sensibilities he requires their appropriate objects. It follows that his sensibilities must differ according to the distinctions of their objects. The law which requires an object for an affection must determine the quality of the affection according to the character of the object. Objects of the divine affection are very different. There is the profound distinction between the physical and the moral realms; in the former, between the chaotic and the cosmic states; in the latter, between the ethically evil and the ethically good. It is impossible that God should regard these profoundly diverse objects with the same affection. It is in the Scriptures, as in the philosophy of the facts, that he does regard them with distinctions of affection answering to their own profound distinctions. We might enter more largely into details; but, while the ground would be valid, the method might prove an unseemly attempt at a divine psychology. We may with propriety note some general distinctions.

There is in God a rational sensibility. We mean by this a conscious interest in the rational order and constitution of existences. The world is a cosmos, a world of order. This is the possibility of a rational cosmology. For science and philosophy, we require not only rational faculties, but also an order and constitution of existences which render them susceptible of scientific and philosophic treatment. There is such an order of existences. Both in reality and for rational thought law reigns in the realms of nature. Physics, chemistry, botany, zoology, astronomy are possible because the rational order of existences places them in correlation with rational mind. For the reason of this correlation the rational order and constitution of existences elicit an interest in all who have any proper notion of them. Gifted minds study them with a profound interest. That interest ever deepens with the clearer insight into this rational order. Thus in the spheres of study usually regarded as purely intellectual there is an intense conscious interest which can arise only from a profound rational sensibility. From this view we rise to the notion of God as the original of our own minds, and also of the forms of existence which constitute the subjects of our scientific study. He is the author of their rational correlation; the author of the rational constitution of existences in all the

realms of nature. That orderly constitution must have been with him, not merely an intellectual conception, but also an end of conscious interest and eligibility. These facts evince a profound rational sensibility in God. While he pronounces the successive orders of the newly rising world “very good,” his words no more express the conception of a divine thought than the pleasure of a divine emotion.

There is a divine aesthetic sensibility. The world, the universe, is as richly wrought in the forms of beauty as in the forms of rational order. The beautiful is so lavished upon the earth and the heavens that all are recipients of its grateful ministries. It is the fruitage of the divine constitution of the soul within us and the divine formation of existences without and above us. Such a correlation of the forms of nature to the constitution of the mind could not have been a mere coincidence, but must have been the divinely instituted means to a divinely chosen end, just as in the case of a master in the science and art of music, who through the harmonious combination of parts reaches the chosen end of a great symphony. The beautiful in its manifold forms was with God a chosen end in the work of creation. Therefore it was with him more than a mere mental conception. There is no eligibility for pure intellection, not even for the divine. The eligibility of the beautiful could arise in the mind of God only with the activity of an aesthetic sensibility. God loves the beautiful. In the following citation we have really the presentation of both a rational and an aesthetic sensibility in God, but especially the latter. “I must hold that we receive the true explanation of the man-like character of the Creator’s workings ere man was, in the remarkable text in which we are told that ‘God made man in his own image and likeness.’ There is no restriction here to moral quality: the moral image man had, and in large measure lost; but the intellectual image he still retains. As a geometrician, as an arithmetician, as a chemist, as an astronomer—in short, in all the departments of what are known as the strict sciences—man differs from his Maker, not in kind, but in degree—not as matter differs from mind, or darkness from light, but simply as a mere portion of space or time differs from all space or all time. I have already referred to mechanical contrivances as identically the same as the divine and human productions; nor can I doubt that, not only in the pervading sense of the beautiful in form and color which it is our privilege as men in some degree to experience and possess, but also in the perception of harmony which constitutes the musical sense, and in that poetic feeling of which Scripture furnishes us with at once the earliest and the highest examples, and which we may term thepoetic sense, we bear the stamp and impress of the divine image.”[230] Thus in the aesthetic element of our mental constitution, the source of pleasure in music and poetry and art, in all forms of the beautiful, we see the likeness of an aesthetic sensibility in God, who created man in his own image.[231] [230] Hugh Miller:Testimony of the Rocks, pp. 259, 260.

[231]Le Conte:Science and Religion, lect. iii. In the constitution of a moral personality there is moral reason, and also moral feeling. The moral personality could not be complete without the latter. For the true conception of a morally constituted personality and the true judgment of ethical conduct, whether one’s own or another’s, there must be the activity of a moral feeling. Pure intellection is not sufficient for either the conception or the judgment. This must be a law for even the divine mind. Without a moral consciousness in God the creation of moral beings must have been without eligibility, and therefore without reason or end. If there is any divine teleology in the universe the creation of the highest order of beings could not have been purposeless. The Scriptures freely express the reality of moral feeling in the divine judgment of human conduct. For

the good there is loving approval; for the evil, displeasure and wrath. These facts manifest the reality of moral sensibility in God.

We have thus presented the divine sensibility in three distinctions. The moral, however, must receive further treatment. Pure thought, pure intuition, pure intellection does not give the complete view of the divine mind. Infinite feeling completes the view. “We hold, therefore, that God is not only pure thought, but he is also absolute intuition and absolute sensibility. He not only grasps reality in his absolute thought, but he sees it in his absolute intuition, and enjoys it in his absolute sensibility. We cannot without contradiction allow that there is any thing in the world of the thinkable which is excluded from the source of all thought and knowledge. Our notion of God as pure thought only would exclude the harmonies of light, sound, and form from his knowledge; and limit him to a knowledge of the skeleton of the universe instead of its living beauty. The notion of God as sensitive appears as anthropomorphic only because of mental confusion. To the thoughtless, sensibility implies a body; but in truth it is as purely spiritual an affection as the most abstract thought. All the body does for us is to call forth sensibility; but it in no sense produces it, and it is entirely conceivable that it should exist in a purely spiritual being apart from any body. There can hardly be a more irrational conception of the divine knowledge than that which assumes that it grasps reality only as it exists for pure thought, and misses altogether the look and the life of things. On the contrary, just as we regard our reason as the faint type of the infinite reason, so we regard our intuitions of things as a faint type of the absolute intuition; and so also we regard the harmonies of sensibility and feeling as the faintest echoes of the absolute sensibility, stray notes wandering off from the source of feeling and life and beauty.”[232] [232] Bowne:Metaphysics, pp. 201, 202.

034. IV. Modes Of Divine Moral Sensibility.

IV. Modes Of Divine Moral Sensibility. As there are distinctions of divine sensibility in the general or comprehensive sense of the term, so there are distinctions of moral sensibility. Moral feeling in God respects profoundly different subjects, and reveals itself in distinctions of mode answering to that difference of subjects. We may reach the clearer view by studying the question in the light of these several modes. However, there is a truth of moral feeling in God which is deeper than the more definite distinctions of mode—the moral feeling which is intrinsic to the holiness of the divine nature. This is the first truth to be noticed.

1. Holiness.—The Scriptures witness to the holiness of God with the deepest intensities of expression. A few passages may be cited for exemplification. “Who is like unto thee, Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders” (Exodus 15:11)? The glory of the divine holiness appears in its manifestation, but the manifestation leads the thought to its plenitude in the divine nature. “Holy and reverend is his name” (Psalms 111:9). The perfection of holiness in God is the reason for the holy reverence in which all should worship and serve him. “Holy Father,” and “O righteous Father” (John 17:11; John 17:25), express in the words of Christ the deep truth of divine holiness. “Who shall not fear thee, Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy” (Revelation 15:4). These words are responsive to words previously cited: “Who is like thee, glorious in holiness? “In the deepest, divinest sense, God only is holy. The seraphim before the heavenly throne cry one to another, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts;” “and they rest not day and night, saying. Holy, holy, holy. Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come” (Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8). The holiness of God is not to be regarded simply as a quality of his nature or a quiescent mental state, but as intensely active in his personal agency, particularly in his moral government. In this view holiness is often called righteousness. Hence the righteousness of God is expressed with the same intensity as his holiness. The precepts of moral duty and the judgment and reward of moral conduct spring from his holiness and fulfill its requirements. Through all the forms of instrumental agency he ever works for the prevention or restraint of the evil and the promotion of the good. In every form and in the deepest sense God is righteous. Abraham apprehended this truth in his profound question, “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right” (Genesis 18:25)? There was a special case in question; but there is no sense of a local or temporary limitation in the meaning of the words. There is a universal and eternal righteousness of the divine agency. “He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he” (Deuteronomy 32:4). “Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth” (Psalms 119:142). These texts express the same deep sense of an ever-present holiness in the divine moral government. “The law of the Lord is perfect” (Psalms 19:7)—“perfect as the expression of the divine holiness; perfect therefore as the standard of right; perfect in its requirements; perfect in its sanctions. All this is summed into one sentence by St. Paul: ‘The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good’ (Romans 7:12). Returning back, however, to the attribute of the Lawgiver, we are bound to believe that all ordinances are righteous: first, with regard to the constitution and nature

of his subjects; and, secondly, as answering strictly to his own divine aim."[233] The means and the ministries of his moral government are ever in accord with his holy law; and, however his righteousness may for the present be obscured or hidden even, it shall yet be made manifest, and receive a common confession.

[233]Pope:Christian Theology, vol. i, p. 336.

God will place his providences in the clear, full light. These ideas of a present obscurity and a future manifestation are in the Scriptures. "Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne." "Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments" (Psalms 97:2; Revelation 16:7).

It should be specially noted here that in the holiness of God as operative in moral government there is the activity of moral feeling. This is the distinctive fact of his moral agency. If the plan of God had terminated with the creation of a mere physical universe there would still have been a great sphere for the activities of intelligence and will, and also for the rational and esthetic sensibilities, but no place for moral feeling. Such a feeling could have no office in a mere physical universe. God would still be the same in his holy nature, with the possible or actual activity of moral sensibility in the conception and purposed creation of moral personalities, with the known possibility of ethically good and ethically evil action. On this supposition, however, there is a reaching of the divine plan far beyond a mere physical universe, and, therefore, it remains true that an original limitation to such a universe would require no activity of moral feeling in its creation and government. There was no such original limitation. In the building of the world, even from the beginning, man was the divinely destined occupant, just as other moral intelligences were destined for the occupancy of other worlds. Creation, therefore, was from the beginning the work of God in his complete personality. There was the activity of his moral sensibility, just as of his intelligence and will. It is specially this truth which discredits the distinction of the attributes into the natural and moral. As we thus find the ultimate purpose and completion of the creation in the existence of free and responsible personalities, so we find a moral realm as really as a physical one. Certainly in the moral God rules in his complete personality, and no more really through the agency of his intelligence and will than in the activities of his moral feeling. There is as absolute a requirement for the latter as for the former. A holy love of the ethically good and a holy hatred of the ethically evil are intrinsic to the divine agency in moral government. We cannot think them apart. To separate them in thought would require us to think God apathetically indifferent as between righteousness and sin. So to think God would be to think him not God. Holiness of action is impossible, even in God, without the proper element of moral feeling. An act may formally square with the law, but can be righteous only through the feeling from which it springs or the motive which it fulfills. The sense of moral feeling in God, as active in his regards of human conduct and in the ministries of his providence, is a practical necessity to the common religious consciousness. It is only the sense of an emotional displeasure in God that can effectively restrain the wayward tendencies to evil; only the sense of an affectionate love that can inspire the filial trust which may become the strength of a loving obedience. There is great practical force in the commands, "Be ye holy; for I am holy," and "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father is merciful" (1 Peter 1:16; Luke 6:36), but only with the sense of true feeling in his holiness and mercy. Divest them of true feeling, and let them stand to the religious consciousness simply as pure thought, emotionless intellections, and they become practically forceless. In the divine holiness there is the

intensity of holy feeling.

2. Justice.—The more appropriate place for the treatment of justice is in the discussion of atonement. For the present, the treatment is specially in reference to the reality of an element of holy feeling in the divine justice. Justice itself is broadly operative within the realm of moral government, so that the discussion of its offices therein must include much more than belongs to it simply as a question of the divine attributes. The office of justice is the maintenance of moral government in the highest attainable excellence. The aim is the prevention or restraint of sin, the protection of rights, the defense of innocence against injury or wrong, the vindication of the government and the honor of the divine Ruler. Divine legislation is for the attainment of these great ends. But however great and imperative the ends, they cannot justify any arbitrariness of judicial measures for their attainment. Justice has no license of departure from the requirements of the divine holiness and righteousness. Indeed, justice itself is but a mode of the divine holiness. In legislation justice must respect the nature and condition of subjects. Laws must be within their power of fulfillment, whether that power be a native possession or a provision of the redemption in Christ. The sanctions of law in the form of reward and penalty must have respect to the ethical character of subjects. Emphasis should be placed upon this principle in respect of penalty, specially for the reason, first, that the demerit of sin is more manifest than the merit of righteousness, and, secondly, because penalty without demerit or beyond its measure would be more manifestly an injustice than any reward above the merit of righteousness. In the study of the Hebraic theocracy we must admit the presence of measures of expediency, and not only in ritualistic forms, but also in administrative discipline—as in the entailment of both good and evil upon children in consequence of the moral conduct of their parents. Such entailments, however, were not the ministries of distributive justice, but the measures of economical expediency for the attainment of the great ends of the theocracy. Like measures often appear in human governments. In terms of law the high crimes of parents are visited in certain alienations or disadvantages upon their children; certainly not, however, that they are reckoned guilty and punishable in any proper sense of distributive justice, but that the highest good of the government may be attained. That the Hebraic government was a theocracy did not change the character of the people as its subjects. They were still men, with all the tendencies of men under the forms of human government. It was expedient, therefore, that God should use the necessary policies of human governments for the attainment of the great ends of the theocracy. In this mode the entailments of parental conduct upon the children took their place as measures of economical expediency, and not as the ministries of distributive justice, which must ever have respect to the grounds of personal conduct.

Distributive justice is divine justice in the judicial ministries of moral government. It regards men in their personal character, or as ethically good or evil, and rewards or punishes them according to the same. Any departure from this law must require an elimination of all that is distinctive and essential in distributive justice. Nothing vital can remain by which to characterize or differentiate it. We have previously said that the demerit of sin is more manifest than the merit of righteousness. The former reveals itself in the moral and religious consciousness in a clearer and intenser form than the latter. Still the rewardableness of righteousness approves itself in that consciousness. Also, the fact of rewardableness is thoroughly scriptural. Further, it is both clear and scriptural that rewards must have respect to personal righteousness. There may be other blessings, and of large measure, but they cannot be personal rewards, and therefore cannot be accounted the ministry of

distributive justice. But sin has intrinsic demerit, and on its own account deserves the penalties legislated against it. Demerit is the only ground of just punishment. There are great ends of penalty in the requirements of moral government, but, however great and urgent, they could justify no punishment except on the ground of demerit. The demerit must be personal to the subject of the punishment. Penalties are therefore in the strictest sense the ministry of distributive justice.

Reward and penalty thus fall in with the judicial or rectoral office of justice, which is the conservation of moral government in the highest attainable excellence. They are means to this high end; just means because of the rewardableness of righteousness and the demerit of sin; and proper means because of fitness for their end.

Distributive justice which thus deals with men on the ground of personal conduct is no abstract principle or law, but a concrete reality in the divine personality. Justice has its seat in the moral being of God, and apart from him is but an ideal conception. The law of moral duty is the transcript of his mind; the sanctions of the law the expression of his judgment of the rewardable excellence of righteousness and the punitive demerit of sin. This judgment is not a mere apathetic mental conception, but includes the intense activity of moral feeling. God lovingly approves the righteousness which he rewards with eternal blessedness, and reprobates with infinite displeasure the sin upon which he visits the fearful penalty of his law. The Scriptures are replete with utterances which express or imply these truths. There is a discriminative judgment of men according to their character: “For there is no respect of persons with God” (Romans 2:11). Respecting the divine regard for the righteous, it is said: “For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love” (Hebrews 6:10). Over against these words of an affectionate and faithful friendship may be placed the words of displeasure against the wicked: “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness” (Roman 1:18). In the divine wrath there is an emotional displeasure. This is the terrifying sense of those who would have the rocks and mountains fall on them and hide them “from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb” (Revelation 6:16). “For thou art not a

God that hath pleasure in wickedness . . . thou hatest all workers of iniquity” (Psalms 5:4-5). Just the opposite is the divine regard for the righteous: “For the righteous Lord loveth the righteous; his countenance doth behold the upright” (Psalms 9:7). In the final ministries of distributive justice there are the activities of divine sensibility: in the “Come, ye blessed of my Father,” an emotional love; in the

“Depart from me, ye cursed,” an emotional wrath (Matthew 25:34; Matthew 25:41). It is thus manifest that we find the justice of God only in his personality, and only with an element of moral feeling.

3. Love.—No theistic truth is more deeply emphasized in the Scriptures than love. No truth has a fuller or more grateful recognition in the Christian consciousness, nor, indeed, with any who have a proper conception of the personality of God and the plenitude of his perfections. Neither the apathetic God of deism, nor the unconscious God of pantheism, nor the God of agnosticism, without any law of self-agency either in his own holy personality or in the responsible freedom of his human subjects, is the God of the Scriptures. “God is love” (1 John 4:16). This is the profound truth which they give us. But, while love is so profound a truth in God, it is never disrupted from his

holiness. Indeed, love, as justice itself, is but a mode of his holiness, and in moral administration justice as well as love still has its offices.

Any notion of God without love is empty of the most vital content of the true idea. The very plenitude of other perfections, such as infinite knowledge and power and justice, would, in the absence of love, invest them with most fearful terrors—enough, indeed, to whelm the world in despair. The holiness of God is the implication of love. Neither benevolence nor goodness is possible in any moral sense without love. A deed might confer a great benefit, but could not be ethically beneficent without the impulse and motive of love. In all the benefits which God may lavish upon the universe, he is truly beneficent only with the motive of love. Holy love is the deepest life of all holy action.

It must be admitted that the love of God is for theism, simply in the light of reason, a perplexing question. The perplexity arises in view of the magnitude of physical and moral evil under the providence of an omniscient and omnipotent Creator and Ruler. John Stuart Mill has given the strength of the issue on the side of skepticism.[234] It is easy to point out a false and misleading assumption which underlies his discussion. It h that the question of evil, and of moral as of physical evil, is purely a question of the divine knowledge and power. The holy personality of God and the moral personality of man, both of which must be a law of the divine agency, are thus entirely omitted from the discussion. This omission must vitiate the argument. However, the pointing out of this fallacy comes far short of eliminating all the difficulties of the question. Great perplexity still remains. We have no theodicy of our own; certainly none simply in the light of reason. Nor have we received any through the work of others. Few questions have been more earnestly and persistently discussed. We find the discussion mostly in works on systematic theology, or in treatises on natural theology. Among the authors who have made special endeavor toward the attainment of a theodicy we might name Leibnitz,[235] King, [236]Bledsoe,[237] Whedon,[238] Naville,[239] McCabe.[240] Some of these discussions mostly proceed on the grounds of Arminianism as against the determining principles of Calvinism. But the great problem is still on hand; nor do we think its solution possible simply in the resources of the human mind. Revelation does not give the solution.

[234]Three Essays on Religion.

[235]Théodicée.

[236]The Origin of Evil.

[237]A Theodicy.

[238]Freedom of the Will.

[239]The Problem of Evil.

[240]Divine Nescience of Future Contingencies. The world, with the human race, must have a personal author. The author must possess infinite knowledge and power; for otherwise he could not be a sufficient cause to such dependent existences. He cannot be of malevolent disposition, else the constitution of his creatures would evince a malevolent purpose, and evil be manifold more than it is. That constitution really expresses a benevolent purpose. The provisions for the happiness of animal life above the requirements for mere subsistence are many and manifest. The

happiness of animal life immeasurably exceeds its suffering. The comparatively trivial evils may not be wholly avoidable. They must be a liability in a constitution of life with such provisions for its happiness. Clearly, the constitution might have been such that suffering would have been greatly in excess. The real facts in the case arc a manifestation of the divine goodness.

Human suffering is greater than mere animal suffering, and therefore creates a greater perplexity in the question of the divine goodness. But here other elements appear in the question. In his physical nature man still touches the plane of animal life, but in his rational and moral nature constitutes a higher realm of existence. His life in respect of both good and evil is largely conditioned on his own free and responsible agency. Most of the evil, both physical and moral, that he suffers is from himself, not from his constitution, and might be avoided. So far as one's suffering arises from his own responsible agency, or might be avoided without omission of duty to others, the divine goodness needs no vindication. The assertion of such a need is really the denial of all self-responsibility for one's own condition in life. The assumption is that God should secure the same common well-being to the idle and "wasteful as to the industrious and provident, to the vicious as to the virtuous, to the criminal as to the upright. This neither should be nor can be. The false assumption re-appears that the providential treatment and condition of men is simply a question of the divine power. But God is a moral Euler, and men his free, responsible subjects. Justice, therefore, must have its offices in the divine administration. Otherwise the interests of the virtuous and upright would deeply suffer—just as in the case of a human government which should provide for the idle, the vicious, and the criminal all the immunities and blessings of life usually enjoyed by the upright and deserving. This would violate the common sense of justice, and in the result sacrifice all the rights and interests which the government should sacredly protect. Such a policy would be utterly subversive of any government, human or divine. In the divine it would be a departure from all the laws of life, physical, rational, and moral, and the substitution of a purely supernatural agency, particularly in providing for the well-being of all such as are reckless of these imperative laws. Nothing could be more extravagant or false in the notion of divine providence. God is the rational and moral Ruler of men as rational and moral subjects. This is the only light in which to view his providence. It follows that neither the secular nor the moral well-being of men is possible against their own agency. Much of human suffering thus arises, and for its existence the divine goodness needs no vindication. Nor is any special defense needed in the case of suffering which arises with the fulfillment of duty to others. To assert such a need is to question or even deny the obligation of duty in all such cases. But the truest and the best ever hold this obligation most sacred, and its fulfillment the highest excellence. Not all suffering, however, is avoidable. The interaction of life upon life, inseparable from the providential relations of humanity, is the source of evil to many. But there is also a counterbalancing good to many through the same law. The law of heredity in like manner works both good and evil. The constitution of humanity renders inevitable the results of these laws. The consequence is that the offices of the present life are largely vicarious. The good suffer from the deeds of the evil, and in turn serve them in the ministries of good.[241] Such is the providential state of facts; but the facts are not self-explicative so as to clear the question of perplexity respecting the divine goodness.

[241]Butler:Analogy,part ii, chap. v.

There is no solution of the problem through the solidarity of the race, as this doctrine has been wrought into theology. It is on this ground specially that Naville, previously referred to, attempts to

deal with the problem of evil. This is the common Calvinistic position, whether the solidarity of the race is held on the ground of a realistic or a representative oneness. The position is that all are sinners by participation in the sin of Adam, and that, consequently, the evils of this life are a just retribution on the ground of that common sin. There is no light in this doctrine. The realistic view requires an impossible agency of each individual of the race in the sin of Adam. We did not, and could not, so exist and act in Adam as to be individually responsible for that original sin. The representative view concedes the common personal innocence of that sin, but alleges a common guilt of the sin through immediate imputation on the ground of a divinely instituted federal headship in Adam. There is still no light for our reason. Between the conceded personal innocence of the Adamic sin and the common infliction of punishment there intervenes only the immediate imputation of guilt—that is, the accounting to us the guilt of a sin in the commission of which we had no part. It is the doctrine of a common guilt and punishment, without any personal demerit. Personal demerit is a sufficient explanation of the suffering involved in its just punishment; but the merely imputed guilt of another's sin is no explanation of such suffering. The attempt is often made to reconcile human suffering with the divine goodness on the ground that it is a necessary and valuable discipline of life. That it is a valuable discipline can scarcely be questioned. There are wayward tendencies which it may hold in check or often correct. The graces of gentleness, patience, kindness, and sympathy are nurtured and matured. The fortitude and heroism developed through suffering and peril have been the molding forces in the formation of the best and noblest characters. We have examples in Abraham, and Job, and Moses, and Paul. Neither could have attained the sublime height of his excellence without the discipline of sore trial and suffering. Many of the better and higher graces receive the most effective culture in the necessary and dutiful ministries to the suffering. It is thus plain that in suffering there is a large mixture of good; and the good is of the highest excellence and value. Nor can it be questioned that often the good exceeds the evil. Of course, it is still open for the skeptic to say that, while all this is true, the real difficulty lies in such a providential constitution of human life as to need this severe discipline of suffering. Simply in the light of reason there is strength in this position; but the logical implication is atheistic. Atheism, however, explains nothing, and affords no ground for either faith or hope. An inexplicable mystery of suffering is far more endurable than the hopeless darkness of atheism. There is manifestly great value in the discipline of suffering, but this fact does not clear up the mystery for our reason.

There is light for our faith. The light is in the Gospel. Over against the Adamic fall and moral ruin of the race the Gospel places the redemption of Christ; over against abounding sin, the much more abounding grace of redemption (Romans 5:15; Romans 5:20); over against the suffering of this life, a transcendent eternal blessedness (Romans 8:18; 2 Corinthians 4:17). This blessedness is infallibly sure to all who in simple faith and obedience receive Christ as their Saviour and Lord. Nor shall any fail of it who in sincerity and fidelity live according to the light which they may have (Acts 10:34-35). The condition of this blessedness is most easy, and in its fruition the mystery of suffering will utterly disappear. It is clearly thus with those who through great tribulation have reached the blessedness of heaven (Revelation 7:13-17). Dark as the picture of the world may be for our reason, for oar faith there is light in the Gospel. The darkness is but the background of that picture, while in the light of the forefront the cross is clearly seen. "God so loved the world." "Herein is love." "God is love" (John 3:16; 1 John 4:10; 1 John 4:16). The cross is the very outburst of his infinite love.

4. Mercy.—Mercy is a form of love determined by the state or condition of its objects. Their state is one of suffering and need, while they may be unworthy or ill-deserving. Mercy is at once the disposition of love respecting such, and the kindly ministry of love for their relief. This is the nature of all true love—true in the reality and fullness of benevolence. It is profoundly the nature of the divine love.

There are other terms, kindred in sense with mercy, which are equally expressive of the gracious disposition and kindness of love. We may instance compassion or pity, propitiousness or clemency, forbearance or long-suffering. All true love regards its suffering objects with compassion or pity. This is profoundly true of the divine love. It is exemplified in the compassion of Jesus for the multitudes, faint, and scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd; and for the poor leper whom he touched and healed (Matthew 9:36; Mark 1:41). Such is the compassion of God for the suffering; even for the unworthy and the ill-deserving (Psalms 86:15; Psalms 109:4; Psalms 145:8; Lamentations 3:22). So the Scriptures emphasize the pity of the Lord, which, equally with his compassion, has respect to the suffering and need of man. Pity is expressed in words of pathetic tenderness (Psalms 103:13; James 3:11). Propitiousness or clemency is the divine disposition to the forgiveness and salvation of the sinful and lost (Psalms 78:33; Isaiah 55:7; Hebrews 8:12). The forbearance or long-suffering of God manifests the fullness and tenderness of his clemency. He is reluctant to punish, and waits in patience for the repentance of the sinful, that he may forgive and save them (Exodus 34:6; Romans 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9; 2 Peter 3:15).

Thus the Scriptures emphasize these terms which are kindred in sense with mercy. In numerous texts they are grouped with mercy, so that all are emphasized together. Still mercy receives its own distinct expression, and often, in terms of the deepest intensity. God is the Father of mercies; his tender mercies are over all his works; and his mercy endureth forever (2 Corinthians 1:3; Psalms 145:9; Psalms 118:1).

There is an emotional clement in mercy, and in all kindred forms of the divine disposition. Mercy, pity, clemency, long-suffering—these are not mere forms of divine thought, but intensities of divine feeling, and would be impossible without an emotional nature in God. Divest them of this sense and they become meaningless, and must be powerless for any assurance and help in the exigencies of suffering and need.

5. Truth.—Truth in God may be resolved into veracity and fidelity.

Veracity is the source of truthfulness in expression, whether in the use of words or in other modes. It is deeper than mere intellect; deep as the moral nature. With all true moral natures veracity is felt to be a profound obligation. Veracity is revered, while falsehood, deceit, hypocrisy are abhorred. In the truest, deepest sense of veracity there is profound moral feeling. The divine veracity is more than truthfulness of expression from absolute knowledge; it is truthfulness from holy feeling. As God solemnly enjoins truthfulness upon men, and severely reprehends its violation, in whatever forms of falsehood or deceit, 80 his own words and ways ever fulfill the requirements of the most absolute veracity. This is the guarantee of truthfulness in the divine revelation, though not the requirement of a revelation of all truth. There may be much truth above our present capacity of knowledge; much that does not concern our present duty and interest. Nor does the divine veracity require such a revelation that it can neither be mistaken nor perverted. Certainly we are not competent to the affirmation of such a requirement. Otherwise we might equally pronounce

against all the tests of a probationary life—which is the same as to pronounce against probation itself. “Whether we shall rightly or wrongly interpret the Scriptures in respect to our faith and practice, according to the light and opportunity which we may have, is one of the tests of fidelity to duty in the present probation, and in full consistency with other tests.[242] Errors in respect to moral and religious truth are mostly the fruit of perverting feeling—such feeling as we responsibly indulge, and might correct or replace with a better disposition toward the truth. “With simplicity of mind and a love of the truth we may find in the Scriptures all the lessons of moral and religious duty requisite to a good life and a blessed immortality (Matthew 6:22; John 7:17; John 8:31; John 8:33; Ephesians 1:17-18; James 1:5).

[242]Butler:Analogy, part ii, chap. vi.

Fidelity in God specially respects his promises, and is the guarantee of their fulfillment. There are contingencies of failure in human promises. A promise may be deceitfully given. Unforeseen events may effect a change of disposition respecting fulfillment. With abiding honesty in the promise, new conditions may render fulfillment impossible. These contingencies of failure arise out of the possible dishonesty and the actual limitations of men. No such contingencies can affect the divine fidelity. The holiness of God is the infinite sincerity of his promises, and the plenitude of his perfections the absolute power of fulfillment. The Scriptures emphasize these truths (Numbers 23:19; Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:17-18).

Fidelity in God is thus a truth of priceless value. It is the absolute guarantee of his “exceeding great and precious promises” (2 Peter 1:4). These promises, in the fullness and fitness of their content, are sufficient for all the exigencies of life, and are absolutely sure of fulfillment to all who properly meet their terms. In the faithfulness of God there is an element of holy feeling. A certain measure of fidelity with men may be a matter of conventional pride or personal honor. It is truer and deeper just as it is grounded in moral feeling, and finds its ruling motive in a sense of moral duty. It is the stronger and surer Just in the measure of this moral feeling. Fidelity in God is the more assuring to us with the deeper sense of his holy feeling as its essential element and ruling principle.

035. V. Divine Omnipotence.

V. Divine Omnipotence. As previously noted, we use the term omnipotence in preference to personal will for this attribute, because it better expresses the plenitude of the divine power. However, we shall not thus be led away from the true nature of this attribute.

1. Power of Personal Will.—As God is a purely spiritual being his power must be purely spiritual. This, however, does not deny to him power over physical nature. As he is both a spiritual and personal being his power must be that of a personal will. This is at once the logic of the relative facts and the sense of Scripture. This sense will clearly appear in treating the omnipotence of the divine will.

Nothing is more real in one's consciousness than the exertion of energy. The energizing is of the personal self through the personal will, with power over the mental faculties and the physical organism. How there is a voluntary self-energizing, with power over the physical organism, and through it over exterior physical nature, is for us an insoluble mystery. The facts, however, are most real, and the mystery cannot in the least discredit them. There is an equal mystery in the power of the divine will, but it can no more discredit the reality of this power than in the case of the human will. If for any power over exterior physical nature the human will is now dependent upon a physical organism, this may be simply the result of a present conditioning relation of such an organism to the personal mind, and not an original or intrinsic limitation. Indeed, there must be an intrinsic power of the will, else there could be no voluntary self-energizing with power over the physical organism. There must be an immediate power of the will over the physical organism; or, at most, the contrary is mere assumption so long as we cannot show either the reality or the necessity of any mediation. Even with the necessity of such mediation for the human will, it would not follow that the divine will is so conditioned. Omnipotence is self-sufficient.

2. Modes of Voluntary Agency.—As God is a personal being, he must possess the power and freedom of personal agency. The freedom of personal agency is the freedom of choice. In complete personal agency there must be a distinction between the elective volition in the choice of ends and the executive volition in giving effect to the choices. There must be this distinction in the modes of the divine agency.

If personality and personal agency be realities in God, he must freely choose his own ends and determine his own acts. Any sense of his absoluteness preclusive of specific choices and definite acts in time is contradictory to his personal agency, and therefore to his personality. The assumption that knowledge in God must be causally efficient and immediately creative or executive is utterly groundless. With omniscience as an immediate and eternal knowing in God and immediately creative or executive, there could be no personal agency. The two are in contradictory opposition. With the" truth of the former, all predication of personal agency would be false. For God there could be no rational ends, no eligibility or choice of ends, no purpose or plan. Then the universe must be a necessary evolution, but without divine teleology or one act of divine personal agency. By the supposition of knowledge in God, he might passively know the ongoing of

the evolution, but could have no active part in the process. There could be no divine providence. These inevitable implications are false to reason and the sense of Scripture. As a personal being God must freely elect his own ends and determine his own acts. His personal will completes the power of such agency.

We must also distinguish between the elective and executive agency of the divine will. The choice of an end is not its producing cause. If such a cause, the effect must be instant upon the choice. In this case there could be for God no plan or method of his agency, no futurition of his own deeds. But God has chosen ends, and plans for their effectuation through future deeds. This is the requirement of a divine teleology and a divine providence. The truth of such a mode of personal agency is in the Scriptures. Promise and prophecy, so far-reaching in their scope, are full of such facts. The futurities of promise and prophecy, so far as dependent upon the immediate agency of God, must have their future effectuation by the causal energy of his personal will. There is thus determined for the divine will an executive office in distinction from its elective office.

3. Omnipotence of the Divine Will.—Will as a personal attribute is an infinite potency in God. As a voluntary power it is operative at his pleasure. The contradictory or absolutely impossible is in no proper sense contrary to the omnipotence of his will. These statements are in full accord with the Scriptures. God is the Almighty (Genesis 17:1). God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased (Psalms 115:3). His counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure (Isaiah 46:10). He has made the heavens and the earth by his great power, and there is nothing too hard for him (Jeremiah 32:17). He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth (Daniel 4:35). With God all things are possible (Matthew 19:26). The omnipotence of God is manifest in his works of creation and providence. The concentration of all finite forces into a single point of energy would be infinitely insufficient for the creation of a single atom. In the sublime words, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,” there is the agency of an omnipotent personal will. Only such a will is equal to the creation of the universe, and to the divine providence which rules in the universal physical and moral realms.

036. Chapter 4: Divine Predicables Not Distinctively Attributes.

Chapter 4 Divine Predicables Not Distinctively Attributes. As previously noted, classifications mostly include truths respecting God which are not properly attributes. These truths are important and should not be omitted, but we think it far better to treat them separately than in a wrong classification. Their own distinctive sense can thus be more clearly given, while confusion is avoided in the treatment of the attributes.

It is unnecessary to notice all the truths, or all the terms for truths, which have been thus wrongly classed. Some are only a repetition of others in sense. For instance, immensity, as thus used, can add nothing to the sense of infinity or omnipresence, specially as it is usually given. Self-sufficiency, another of these terms, is profoundly true of God, but the whole truth is given in his eternal personality, omniscience, and omnipotence. Other truths, however, are so definite in themselves, or so special in their relation to the attributes, that they should be properly considered. Such are the eternity, unity, omnipresence, and immutability of God.

037. I. Eternity Of God.

I. Eternity Of God.

1. Sense of Divine Eternity.—In its simplest sense, the eternity of God is his existence without beginning or end; in its deepest meaning, his endless existence in absolute unchangeableness of essence or attribute.

Eternity of being must be accepted as a truth, however incomprehensible for thought. The only alternatives are an absolute nihilism or a causeless origination of being in time. Nihilism can never be more than the speculative opinion of a few. Self-consciousness ever gives the reality of self, and is the abiding and effective disproof of nihilism. A causeless origination of being in time is absolutely unthinkable. We must accept the truth of eternal being. Hence the eternity of God encounters no peculiar difficulty; for there is no more perplexity for thought in the eternity of a personal being than in the eternity of matter or physical force. The question arises respecting the relation of God to duration or time. It is really the question whether he exists in duration or in an eternal now. There is no eternal now. The terms are contradictory. The notion of duration is inseparable from the notion of being. Just as the notion of space is inseparable from the notion of body. Being must exist in duration. God is the reality of being, and none the less so because of his personality. The perplexity arises with the divine personality, particularly with the divine omniscience. Can there be mental succession in omniscience? The real question here concerns the personality of God rather than his relation to time. This we have previously considered, with full recognition of its difficulty. We cleave to the reality of personality in God, and could not surrender it for the satisfaction of thought respecting his omniscience, or the consistency of the one with the other. In the previous treatment we could not clear the question of all perplexity, but found no such contrariety between personality and omniscience as to discredit either.

2. Eternity of Original Cause.—Science may find an unbroken succession of physical phenomena, in which each is in turn effect and cause, but it cannot find the initiation of the series in physical causation. In the absence of a personal cause, the only alternatives are an infinite series and an uncaused beginning. Neither is thinkable or possible. Reason requires a sufficient cause for a beginning and for the marvelous aggregate of results. God in personality is the only sufficient cause. He must therefore be an eternal personal existence. This sublime truth is in the opening words of Scripture: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”

3. Truth of the Divine Eternity in Scripture.—The Scriptures give frequent and sublime utterance to the divine eternity. Abraham calls upon the name of the everlasting Lord (Genesis 21:33). God proclaims himself the I AM THAT I AM (Exodus 3:14), which embodies the deep truth of his absolute eternity. The same truth is in the sublime words of the psalmist: “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God” (Psalms 40:2). He is the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity (Isaiah 57:15); the King eternal (1 Timothy 1:17). The eternity of God is simply the absolute duration of his existence, and in no sense a quality or attribute of his being, just as space is no

quality or property of body. We may speak of the spatial properties of matter, but we can only mean such as appear or project in space. But such properties are purely from the nature of matter, and in no sense either constituted or modified by space. Being must exist in duration, because being must abide, and is being only as it abides. But its abiding is purely from its own nature, not from any quality or influence of time. Many forms of existence are temporal, but from their constitution or condition, not from any influence of time. Time is no quality of any existing thing. Eternity is no attribute of God; no quality cither of his essential being or of his personal attributes. His absolute eternity is no less a profound and sublime truth.

038. II. Unity Of God.

II.Unity Of God.

1. Sense of Divine Unity.—Unity does not well express the theistic truth for which it has long been in common use, though it may not be easy to replace it with a better term. Its deficiency arises from its applicability to any thoroughly individuated body, however many its elements or complex its organism. Thus a stone is one, a tree is one, a man is one, God U one in perfect simplicity and unchangeableness of being, one in an absolute, eternal unity. There is still a deeper sense of the divine unity, and one which the term still more signally fails properly to express, A stone, a tree, a man—each is one of a kind. They belong to specifical orders. God is not one of a kind. He is infinitely above all the categories of species. He exists in absolute soleness of essential divinity. This is the deepest sense of his unity. For the expression of this sense we have from Dorner the word solity.

2. Rational Evidence of Divine Unity.—With all the diversities of nature, there are such harmonies as evince a unity of divine original. The more complete the discoveries of science, the fewer and simpler are found to be the laws of physical nature. It is even claimed that the various distinctions of force express simply modes of the one force. Certain it is that the elements of physical nature are so few and in such correlation that a few simple laws determine the cosmic order of the earth and the heavens. If the light of this order reveals a divine Creator, it certainly reveals only one. Organic structures are formed upon such a unity of plan and in such a harmony of orders that there must be one Creator of all. Rational intelligence and moral reason are the same in all men, and the profoundest reason must determine one divine original of all. The three orders of the physical, the animal, and the rational are so diverse that they might seem to point to diverse originals; but they all so blend in man that in the light of this union it is manifest that there is one, and only one, Creator of all.

3. Unity of God in the Scriptures.—The Ten Commandments embody the profound truth of the divine unity (Exodus 20:3-17). This truth is their transcendent moral and religious power. The Lord declares himself God in heaven and earth, besides whom there is no other; and on this ground claims the reverent and unreserved obedience of his people (Deuteronomy 4:39-40). The Lord our God is one Lord. Therefore we must love him with the whole heart (Deuteronomy 6:4-5). With slight variations of expression, this same truth of the unity of God is often declared. The Lord says, “I, even I, am he, and there is no God with me” (Deuteronomy 32:39) “Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God” (Isaiah 44:6). “We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one” (1 Corinthians 8:4). Thus is given the Scripture sense of the divine unity. There is only one God, Creator, and moral Ruler. He only must be worshiped, because he only is God. In perfect agreement with these truths is the sublime monotheism of St. Paul (Acts 17:22-31).

4. No Requirement for Plurality.—Polytheism is the result of a vicious perversion of the intuitive and rational notion of God. This is the account of it given by St. Paul (Romans 1:21-25). It is also in

complete accord with the moral grounds upon which he had just based the responsibility of the Gentile world (Romans 1:18-20). Polytheism can have no co-existence in any mind with the true notion of God. If there are any facts which seem contrary to this view, it is only in appearance, not in reality. No other God can be admitted to the faith and worship of the soul while in possession of the unperverted notion of the true God. There is no demand for another. The one true God satisfies the most searching logic of the question, the clearest intuitions of the reason, and the profoundest religious feeling. In the clear vision of the true God there is no place for another.

Unity is not in any sense determinative of what God is in himself. Just the reverse is the truth. God is the deepest unity because he only is absolute spirit, existing in eternal personality, with the infinite perfection of personal attributes. This deepest unity is, therefore, in no sense constitutive or determinative of what God is in himself, but is purely consequent to the infinite perfections which are his sole possession. Unity is therefore in no proper sense an attribute of God.

039. III. Omnipresence Of God.

III. Omnipresence Of God.

1. Notion of an Infinite Essence.—The omnipresence of God, however sure in its reality, has been regarded as very difficult for speculative thought. Much of this perplexity, however, arises from a misconception of the question; particularly from the rather common theological opinion that an essential omnipresence of God is the necessary ground of his omniscience and the potency of his will. This will appear as we proceed. The doctrine of an infinite essence of being should be carefully guarded in both thought and expression. Otherwise it may become the foundation of pantheism. In all true theism the divine essence is pure, absolute spirit. All sense of magnitude or spatial extension is alien to such a nature, and should be excluded from our notion of the divine ubiquity. Much of our experience is a hindrance to this exclusion. As so many existences known to us in sense-perception appear in the form of magnitude or spatial extension, it is the more difficult for us to dissociate the notion of such extension from any form of essential being. Thus if we think of God as essentially present in all worlds we tend to think of his essence as a magnitude reaching all in a mode of extension, and as filling all the interspaces. The notion is utterly inconsistent with pure spirituality of being. If, however, we still assert the essential ubiquity of God, but hold our thought rigidly to the notion of pure spiritual being, we must at once be conscious of an utter incapacity to form any conception of the manner in which he is thus omnipresent. Shall we deny the essential ubiquity because of its mystery, or hold fast to it notwithstanding the mystery? We shall find that the question of such a presence of God possesses very little interest when we attain the real truth of his ubiquity. The real truth is not in the sense of a ubiquitous divine essence. In such a view the essence is considered simply in itself, without the personal attributes. As such, it cannot exercise the agency which must ever be a reality of the divine presence. Indeed, personal agency is for us the only vital reality of this presence. A mere essential presence is not only without agency, but must be without any distinction with respect to places or existences: must be the same with forms of physical nature as with morally constituted personalities; the same with the ethically evil as with the ethically good; the same in the empty space as in the living Church; the same in hell as in heaven. Nothing could be more aberrant from any rational or scriptural sense of the divine ubiquity. The notion of an omnipresent divine essence as the necessary ground of omniscience and omnipotence involves insuperable difficulty. Omniscience and omnipotence are purely personal attributes. Hence the necessity of an essential ubiquity to these attributes can be asserted only on the assumption that God can have knowledge and exert energy only where he is locally present. If this be true, then personality in God must itself be so broadened in extension as to be omnipresent. Nothing could be more inconceivable or more contradictory to the nature of personality. In the light of reason and consciousness, as in the nature of its constitutive facts, personality is self-centered and above all spatial quality or relation. Neither knowledge nor the energy of will can have any dependence on so alien a quality as extension in spiritual essence and personality. The truth of the divine ubiquity must lift it above all spatial quality and relation and hold it as a purely personal reality.

2. Omnipresence through Personal Perfections.—We have previously stated that the personal agency of God is the vital reality of his presence. This truth is so obvious that it requires neither elucidation nor proof. There is an infinite plenitude of personal agency in the omniscience and omnipotence of God. His omniscience embraces the universe of realities, and all are subject to his omnipotence, according to his wisdom and pleasure. In the plenitude and perfection of these personal attributes God is omnipresent in the truest, deepest sense of the term. This doctrine obviates the insuperable difficulties of an extensive or spatial ubiquity, and, instead of grounding omniscience and omnipotence in the omnipresence of God, finds the reality of his omnipresence in the plenitude of those attributes.[243]

[243] Martensen:Christian Dogmatics, pp. 93, 94; Venema:System of Theology, p. 193; Van Oosterzee:Christian Dogmatics, vol. i, 258; Dorner:Christian Doctrine, vol. i, pp. 340, 341 ; Bowne:Metaphysics, p. 208. This doctrine easily adjusts itself to the divine agency, which is operative in all the realms of existence, and in modes answering to their distinctions. While operating in all, it is in no pantheistic sense of a monistic infinite necessarily developing in mere phenomenal forms, but in the manner of a personal agency which secures the transcendence of God above all the realms of created existence. Such an agency adjusts itself to the profoundest distinction of the physical and moral realms, and equally to the profoundest ethical distinctions of the moral.

3. The True Sense of Scripture.—The Scriptures repeat the sublime utterances of the divine ubiquity. These utterances are the expression of a personal ubiquity through the perfection of knowledge and the plenitude of power. “Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence” (Psalms 89:7)? These words are the center of a long passage which expresses the omnipresence of God in terms of the deepest intensity. In these terms we find the reality and the absoluteness of this omnipresence in the omniscience of God and the omnipotence of his will. While God dwells in heaven, he also dwells with the contrite and humble in spirit to revive and comfort them (Isaiah 57:15). These are purely personal ministries, and, therefore, signify a presence of God with the contrite and humble in his personal agency. “Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool” (Isaiah 66:1). Here is first the expression of the greatness and majesty of God; then the expression of his kingly government. He is enthroned in heaven and rules over all the realms of existence. In the representation God is personally local, but his personal agency is every-where operative. Thus he is present in all the universe in the comprehension of his knowledge and the infinite potency of his will. “Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord” (Jeremiah 23:23-24). There is no interpretation of the omnipresence of God as here expressed except through the infinite perfection of his personal attributes. “For in him we live, and move, and have our being” (Acts 17:28). This text is central in St. Paul’s sublime expression of the being and providence of God. He is Creator and Ruler of all—Lord of heaven and earth. He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things. The sense of the broader and more detailed statements centers in the words cited. How is it that we live, and move, and have our being in God? Only through his personal agency. Any departure from this sense may run into the extravagance of mysticism, on the one hand, or into the bleakness of pantheism, on the other. There is no hylozoism. in the theism of the Scriptures. The agency of God, in whatever realm, is purely and solely a personal agency. The immanence of God in the

universe must leave his personal transcendence complete. Through the infinite efficiencies of his personal agency all systems of worlds and all orders of rational and moral intelligences were created; through the same agency all are preserved. God is present with all—omnipresent in his personal agency. The omnipresence of God is a great truth: but as it is solely through the perfection of his personal attributes and in efficiencies of his personal agency, it cannot itself in any distinctive sense be classed as an attribute.

040. IV. Immutability Of God.

IV. Immutability Of God.

1. The Truth in Scripture.—This great truth also receives its intensely forceful expression in the Scriptures. “I AM THAT I AM” (Exodus 3:14) is at once the truth of the divine eternity and of the divine immutability, and of the latter in as profound a sense as of the former. “The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations” (Psalms 33:11). Here the thought rises from God in himself to the principles of his providence and asserts his immutability therein. The very heavens, seemingly so changeless and eternally permanent, are, in comparison with God, but as a fading, perishing garment, while he is eternally the same (Psalms 102:25-27). “I am the Lord, I change not” (Malachi 3:6): a truth of his providence, as of his being and attributes. God is ‘‘the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (James 1:17). These words express a lofty conception of the divine immutability.

2. Immutability of Personal Perfections.—We previously pointed out the truth of immutability in the essential being of God. It is the truth of his eternal absolute identity of being. He is immutable in the plenitude and perfection of his personal attributes. His omniscience, holiness, justice, love, considered simply as attributes, are forever the same. Definite and varying acts of personal agency, and new facts of consciousness, such as must arise with the personal energizing of will in his creative and providential work, are entirely consistent with such immutability. The earth and the heavens, as temporal forms of existence, are ever in a process of change; but even this ceaseless change arises from changeless laws, which point to an unchangeable divine original. In the perfection of his personal attributes God is forever the same.

3. Immutability of Moral Principles.—Sacred history discloses a changing frame-work of expediency in the older dispensations of revealed religion, and a great change from the elaborate ceremonials of Judaism into the simple forms of Christianity, but the same moral principles abide through all these economies. Change within the sphere of expediency is entirely consistent with the unchangeableness of God, while the changeless moral principles are a profound reality of his immutability. That ho regards the same person now with reprehensive displeasure, and again with approving love, is not only consistent with his immutability, but a requirement of it in view of the moral change in the object of his changed regards. The immutability of God is a great truth in the Scriptures, and a truth vital to morality and religion ; but as it arises from the perfection of his personal attributes, and is equally a reality of each, it is not itself an attribute in any distinctive sense.[244]

[244] Works on theism more or less discuss the questions of the nature, personality, and attributes of God ; hence, much of the literature given in connection with theism is appropriate for present reference.

Systems of theology very uniformly discuss these same questions. Works of the kind are so well known that no detailed reference is necessary. It will suffice that we name a few authors: Knapp;

Nitzsch; Watson; Hodge; Pope; Breckinridge; Raymond; Martensen; Shedd; Van Oosterzee; Corner; Smith; Strong.

Special reference.—Samuel Clarke: Being and Attributes of God, Boyle Lecture, vol. ii; Charnock: The Existence and Attributes of God; Bates: Harmony of the Divine Attributes; Pearson: Exposition of the Creed, article i; Barrow: Works, vol. ii, “The Apostles’ Creed,” sermons x-xii ; Saurin: Sermons, “The Divine Attributes,” sermons ii-xi ; Christlieb: Modern Doubt and Christian Belief, lects, iii, iv; Howe:Works, “Oracles of God,” lects. xi, xii, xvii-xxv; Macculloch: Proofs and Illustrations of the Attributes of God; Robert Hall: Spirituality of the Divine Nature, Works, vol. iii, pp. 295-310; Dwight: Theology, vol. i, sermons iv-xiii; Harris: The Self-Revelation of God, part iii; Muller: Christian Doctrine of Sin, vol. ii, pp. 13-39; Smith: Existence and Nature of God; Thompson: Christian Theism, book iv.

041. Chapter 5: God In Trinity.

Chapter 5

God In Trinity. In the doctrine of the Trinity there are questions of fact, and also a question of harmony in the facts. The latter is the chief question in the construction of the doctrine. It is a very difficult question. We do not think it open to full explication in human thought. It is not wise to attempt more than is attainable. Yet the manifest prudence of this law has often been violated in strivings after an unattainable solution of this doctrine. We shall not repeat the error. Still, the divine Trinity is so manifestly a truth of Scripture, and so cardinal in Christian theology, that the question cannot be omitted. If a full solution cannot be attained, the facts may be so presented as not to appear in contradictory opposition. With this attainment, nothing hinders the credibility of the doctrine on the ground of Scripture.

It is proper to open the discussion with a distinct statement of the constituent elements of the doctrine. Following this, the doctrine itself, as held in the faith of the Church, should be so far treated as to present it in its proper formulation. Then before the completion of the discussion the essential divinity of the Son of God, and the personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit, must receive distinct and special treatment. This treatment is necessary because these questions involve essential elements of the doctrine.

042. I. Questions Of The Trinity.

I. Questions Of The Trinity.

1. The Unity of God.—This is the first question of fact, but really a question not in issue. Trinitarianism is not tritheism; nor are trinitarians less pronounced on the unity of God than unitarians. The sense of this unity is embodied in the term designative of the personal distinctions in the Godhead. It follows that the unity of God is the basal truth in the doctrine of the Trinity. But as this question is not in issue as between trinitarianism and unitarianism, and especially as we have previously considered it in its distinctive application to God, it requires no further treatment here.

2. Trinal Distinction of Divine Persons.—The doctrine of the Trinity asserts the personal distinctions of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and the essential divinity of each. Of course, there is no issue respecting the Father. “With all theists his personality and divinity are above question. However, the real sense of the divine Fatherhood must be determined by the doctrine of the Son. If the Son is only human in his nature, then, however rich his endowments, the relation of God to the human gives the fullest sense of his Fatherhood. Arianism may raise this sense to a higher significance, but the plenitude of its meaning can be given only with the essential divinity of the Son. Only this can give the full meaning of the Father’s love of the Son (Matthew 3:17; John 17:24); the full sense in which he is the only begotten Son” (John 1:14; John 1:18); the infinite significance of the Father’s love in the redemption of the world (John 3:16; Romans 8:32; 1 John 4:10).The sublimest theistic truth of the Scriptures is embodied in this definite reality of the divine Fatherhood. For the religious consciousness it possesses a fullness of truth and grace far above all the creative work of God. His fatherly relation to man and to all intelligences is a great and grateful truth; but the truth of his Fatherhood most replete with benedictions is given only with the divine Sonship of the Saviour. The doctrine of the Trinity encounters little issue respecting the personality of the Son. Even Sabellianism and Swedenborgianism, which hold a mere modal Trinity, admit his personality, though both deny to him any personal distinction from the Father. It is in this that both depart from the true doctrine of the Trinity. The antagonism to the divinity of the Son, as posited in the doctrine of the Trinity, represents different grades of doctrine respecting his nature, ranging all the way from Semi-Arianism down to the mere human Christ of Socinianism. The issue against the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, as embodied in the doctrine of the Trinity, is in the denial of both his personality and divinity, but mostly the former. But if the Spirit is not a person, neither can he be divine in any sense necessary to the doctrine of the Trinity. The forms of this antagonism may be more conveniently brought into view, so far as necessary to this discussion, when treating the doctrine of the Spirit in its relation to the Trinity. Enough has already been stated to show that the questions respecting both the Son and the Spirit are vital to this doctrine. Without the personal distinction of the Son and the Spirit from the Father, and the essential divinity of each, there is for theology no question of the Trinity.

3. Union of the Three in Divine Unity.—This is the question of harmony in the constituent facts of the Trinity, and, as previously noted, the very difficult question of the doctrine. It is the point which the adversary mostly assails. The defense is not in a clear philosophy of the doctrine, for there is no such a philosophy. For our reason the unity of God in Trinity is a mystery. There is, however, a profound difference between a mystery and a contradiction. The latter is utterly incredible, while the former may be thoroughly credible, as many mysteries are. The strength of the doctrine for Christian faith lies in its sure Scripture ground, and not simply in the completeness of its constituent facts as therein given, but especially in its complete articulation with the cardinal truths of Christianity. With the strength of this ground, we simply require such a statement of the facts as shall at once be sufficient for the doctrine and yet place them above all contradictory opposition. With this attainment, the assaults of the adversary are futile.

It is not assumed that such a statement is easily made. The difficulties are serious, though we do not think them insuperable. For speculative thought the ground seems narrow between unitarianism, on the one hand, and tritheism, on the other. This is the real difficulty. In the treatment of the question there are not wanting instances in which this middle ground is lost, sometimes on the one side, and sometimes on the other. The predication of both unity and plurality in exactly the same view of God is a contradiction, and there must be error respecting either the unity or the plurality. God cannot be one person and three persons in the same definite sense of personality. Hence there must be a ground of unity below the trinal distinction of persons, or personality in this distinction must be held in a qualified sense. If we find a ground of unity below personality we must still confront the question whether such ground will answer for the unity of God as given in the Scriptures. Whatever the qualification in the sense of personality, it must still remain sufficient for the trinal distinction of persons, while the unity and the trinality must not be in contradictory opposition. Otherwise there is no question of the Trinity. The necessary elements of the doctrine disappear, with the result of either unitarianism or tritheism. It may thus be seen that we have not disguised the difficulties of the question.

043. II. Treatment Of The Trinity.

II. Treatment Of The Trinity.

1. Incipiency of the Doctrine.—In speaking of this incipiency we distinguish between a doctrine as formally wrought out in Christian thought and the elements of the doctrine which are given in Scripture, but given simply as elements, not in doctrinal synthesis. The cardinal doctrines of Christian theology are mostly the construction of Church councils—councils less or more general in their representation. But the incipiency of a doctrine ever anticipates the work of a council. Certainly this is true respecting all the leading doctrines of Christian theology. As the elements of such a doctrine are given in the Scriptures they must be taken up into the thought of the religious teachers, and through their ministry become the thought of the Church. There are always minds of such philosophic cast that they will study the elemental truths in their scientific relation, and seek to combine them in doctrinal form. Thus it is that leading doctrines of theology have ever taken form more or less definite in individual minds. Such is specially the case respecting the doctrine of the Trinity. The Scriptures are replete with truths respecting the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These truths are specially central to the salvation in Christ and the life in the Spirit, and must therefore have been in the daily thought of the Church. Thus through the vital interest of its elemental truths the doctrine of the Trinity soon began to take form, especially in leading minds. Such a process is always hastened, and was specially in this instance, by the incitement of dissident opinions which are regarded as harmful errings from the truth. There was such a preparation for the work of the great council which constructed the doctrine of the Trinity. Indeed, in this case the groundwork had received a definiteness of form, as in the Apostles' Creed, which scarcely appears in the preparation for any other leading doctrine.

2. The Great Trinitarian Creeds.—There are three creeds which may properly be designated as great: the Apostles', the Nicene, the Athanasian. Formulations of the same doctrine follow in the symbols of different Churches, but mostly they are cast in the molds of these earlier creeds, which have continued to shape the doctrinal thought of the Church upon this great question. Yet only one of these creeds has a clear historic position in respect to its original formation. The Apostles' is not an apostolic production, and must be dated from a later period. The Athanasian is later than the time of Athanasius, but doubtless received much of its inspiration and cast from his teaching on this great question. It is mostly an amplification of the Nicene Creed, in the formation of which Athanasius had so large a part, and was probably a work of the school of Augustine. This is the more prevalent opinion.[245]

[245] Pearson:Exposition of the Creed; Schaff:Creeds of Christendom, vols, i, pp. 14-41, ii, pp. 45-71; Shedd:History of Doctrines, vol. i, pp. 306-375.

3. Content of the Creeds.—The position of these creeds in the history of doctrines, and their determinative work in this central truth of Christian theology, may justify a very free citation, particularly from the Nicene and Athanasian. In no other way can we place the doctrine of the Trinity more clearly before us. The Apostles' Creed is so familiar that citations may be omitted,

particularly as it contains nothing which is not equally or more fully expressed in the others. The Nicene: “We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible.

“And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made.

“And in the Holy Ghost.” The mere declaration of faith in the Holy Ghost made no advance beyond the Apostles’ Creed, and was quite insufficient for a doctrine of the Spirit either in the full sense of the Scriptures or as required for a doctrine of the Trinity. The question was thus left in a very unsatisfactory state. It was too great a question, and too intimately related to the doctrine of the Trinity, for the indifference of the Church. Agitation followed. Opposing views were advocated. Error flourished. The truth was not so definitely formulated or placed in such commanding position that the better thought of the Church might crystallize around it. It was needful, therefore, that a doctrine of the Spirit should be formulated for its own sake, and also for the completion of the doctrine of the Trinity. The Council of Constantinople was convened, A. D. 381, for this purpose. Some additions were made to the doctrine of the Son, which, however, it is not important here to note. The doctrine of the Spirit is given thus:

“And [we believe] in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father, and with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spake by the prophets.” This addition was held to complete the doctrine of the Trinity, and is often viewed simply as a part of the Nicene Creed. The Athanasian Creed, while not the formation of any Church council and of unknown authorship, has yet been quite as influential and authoritative on the doctrine of the Trinity as any other. Hence it is proper to cite from this creed also.

“And the Catholic faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance. For there is one Person of the Father; another of the Son; and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one; the Glory equal, the Majesty co-eternal. . . . So the Father is God: the Son is God: and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet there are not three Gods: but one God. . . . The Father is made of none: neither created, nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone: not made, nor created: but begotten. The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son: neither made, nor created, nor begotten: but proceeding. . . . And in this Trinity none is afore, or after another: none is greater, or less than another. But the whole three Persons are co-eternal, and co-equal. So that in all things, as aforesaid: the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity, is to be worshiped.”

It would be easy to cite many highly appreciative views of this creed. Hagenbach says: “The doctrine of the Church concerning the Trinity appears most fully developed and expressed in its most perfect symbolical form in what is called the Symbolum quicunque (commonly, but erroneously, called the Creed of St. Athanasius). It originated in the school of Augustine, and is ascribed by some to Vigilius Tapsensis, by others to Vincentius Lerinensis, and by some again to others. By the repetition of positive and negative propositions the mysterious doctrine is presented to the understanding in so hieroglyphical a form as to make man feel his own weakness. The consequence was that all further endeavors of human ingenuity to solve its apparent contradictions by philosophical arguments must dash against this bulwark of faith, on which salvation was made to depend, as the waves against an impregnable rock.”[246] [246] History of

Doctrines, vol. i, pp. 288, 289.

These great creeds give their own doctrinal contents. It would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to find words more definite or explicit for the expression of the same truths. The history of doctrinal expression on this great question confirms this view. Few subjects have more deeply engaged the thought of the Church. Not only have great synods profoundly studied and carefully formulated the doctrine, but all along the Christian centuries the most learned and gifted theologians have given to the subject the highest powers of discussion and expression which they could command. The success has been in the measure of accordance with the great creeds. Any thing less must lose some element of the doctrine; any thing more must bring the constituent truths into discord.

4. The Doctrinal Result.—The creeds are simply a careful statement and combination of the elements of truth which constitute the doctrine of the Trinity. There is no solution of the doctrine for our reason. This was not attempted, and could not have been attained. The human mind to which the whole subject of the Trinity seems clear surely does not see it at all. Difficulties must arise with any close study of the doctrine, and the more as the study is the profounder. We should no more disguise or deny them than attempt a philosophy of the Trinity. We previously pointed out the central difficulty of the question. It is in finding between unitarianism and tritheism sure and sufficient ground for the doctrine of the Trinity. However sure the several truths of the doctrine as given in the Scriptures, it must yet be admitted that for speculative thought this middle ground is seemingly but narrow and not very real. If we posit for the Trinity one intelligence, one consciousness, one will, seemingly we are very close upon unitarianism. If, on the other hand, we assume for each personal distinction all that constitutes personality as directly known to us, we seem equally close upon tritheism. The real difficulty is in finding the whole truth of the Trinity between these extremes ; and we have again brought it into notice, not for any solution, but rather as a caution against attempting a philosophy of the doctrine.

Such perplexities were present to the minds most active in the formation of the great creeds. This is manifest in the careful selection and use of terms for the expression of the truths combined in the doctrine of the Trinity; particularly in the qualified sense of personality, that it might be at the same time consistent with the unity of God, on the one hand, clear of tritheism, on the other, and yet sufficient for the trinal distinction of persons in the sense of the doctrine. This was their high aim; which, however, is far short of a philosophy of the doctrine. They sought to avoid contradictory statements; and to this they did attain. They neither denied the unity of God nor asserted three Gods, but did most explicitly deny the latter and assert the former. The trinal distinction of persons implies no division in the essential being of God. The unity of his being is guarded and preserved in most explicit terms. There is in the doctrine no distinct nature for each person of the Trinity. The distinction is of three personal subsistences in the unitary being of God.

“What then is this doctrine? It is that God is one being in such a modified and extended sense of the language as to include three persons in such a modified and restricted sense of the terms that he is qualified in a corresponding restricted sense, for three distinct divine personal forms of phenomenal action. Now what presumption is furnished by this doctrine against its truth? Does it assert that one God is three Gods, or that there are more Gods than one? It admits of no such construction, for it expressly affirms that there is but one God, and that the three persons, as persons, are not three beings or three Gods. Does the doctrine then exclude from the conception

of God the ordinary, necessary phenomenal conception of a being? So far from it, that in asserting that God is one being, it includes this conception. Does the doctrine then include more in the conception of God as one being than is comprised in the ordinary, necessary phenomenal conception of being ? But allowing this, what presumption does it afford against the truth of the doctrine? What shadow of evidence can the mind of man discover that the eternal, self-existent God should not subsist in a mode peculiar to himself, and quite diverse from that of creatures? Rather, what evidence can man possess that nothing more enters into the full and true conception which is formed by his own infinite mind of himself than is comprised in the ordinary, phenomenal, and very limited conception which man forms of the same being? What evidence has man, or can he have, that this limited phenomenal conception of his own being comprises all that is true, and all that God, who made him, conceives and knows to be true? If there is nothing like evidence to his mind that more is not, in this respect, true of himself, what presumption can there be that more is not true of the self-existent God, even that which constitutes three persons in one God ?"[247] We have not cited this passage as an explication of the doctrine in the light of reason. This is not really its aim, though the author had more faith in such a possibility than we have. The passage is admirable as a defense against much of the hostile criticism which the doctrine encounters, and it is for this reason that we have cited it. It not only successfully defends the doctrine against the accusation of contradictory opposition in the facts which constitute it, but clearly points out the extravagant pretension to a knowledge of being, even of the divine Being, necessary on the part of any one who denies the possibility of the divine Trinity.

[247]Taylor:Revealed Theology, pp. 54, 55. With this effective defense against hostile criticism, difficulties for our reason still remain. In the lesson of these difficulties we may still learn the unwisdom of attempting a philosophy of the Trinity. The chief resource of thought and Christian thought and faith is in a close adherence to the several truths of the Trinity as given in the Scriptures. The constituent elements of the doctrine are clearly given therein, but simply as truths, not with any explication. The incomprehensibility of the doctrine is only one of many incomprehensibilities in God. In the trinal distinction of persons in the Trinity, personality itself must not be interpreted too rigidly after the notion of our own. In this notion personality is an instance of the purest unity, and a distinction of persons is simply a distinction of such unities, with complete individuality in each. But while we are created in the image of God, we are not individually the measure of his Being. Hence a trinality which might well seem contradictory to unity in man may yet be consistent with unity in the plenitude of God. Any warranted denial of such a possibility as much transcends our reason as a philosophy of the Trinity, because only a comprehensive knowledge of the being of God could warrant such a denial on rational ground.[248]

[248] Schaff:Creeds of Christendom, vol. i, chap, ii; Harvey:History and Theology of the Three Creeds; Shed:History of Christian Doctrine, book iii; Cunningham:Historical Theology, vol. i, chaps, iii, ix; Hagenbach:History of Doctrines, vol. i, pp. 258-290; Sir Peter King:The Apostles' Creed; Forbes:The Nicene Creed; Waterland:The Athanasian Creed, Works, vol. iii.

044. Chapter 6: The Son Of God.

Chapter 6 The Son Of God. As previously noted, the essential divinity of the Son is a necessary element in the doctrine of the Trinity. Hence this doctrine is vitally concerned in the question of the Sonship, and requires for it a ground in the divine nature. If the full sense of filiation is given in the miraculous conception of Christ, or in his Messianic offices, there is no truth of the Sonship sufficient for the doctrine of the Trinity. If, on the other hand, filiation respects the personality of the Son in a higher nature than the human, it must include the sense of an essentially divine Sonship. The indefiniteness of Semi-Arianism respecting the higher nature of the Son may properly rule it out of any issue on this question. As Arianism holds the Son to be a creation of God, it allows no true sense of filiation respecting his higher nature. Creation is not a mode of the truest filiation. Certainly Arianism cannot give the filiation of the Son in the sense of the Scriptures. It follows that the issue of this question, as it respects the nature of the Son, is solely between the divine sense of the Nicene Creed and the mere human sense of Socinianism. If there be a filiation of the Son in a higher sense than the latter, it must be in the full sense of the former. It thus appears that the filiation of the Son so vitally concerns the doctrine of the Trinity as to justify its treatment separately from the more direct question of his divinity. If, however, the Scriptures clearly give the higher sense of the former, so far they affirm the latter.

045. I. Doctrine Of The Sonship.

I. Doctrine Of The Sonship.

1. Fatherhood and Sonship.—The divine Fatherhood is in its deepest sense purely correlative with the filiation of the Son; though in a lower sense it is vastly broader. God is “the Father of spirits” (Hebrews 12:9), and in a sense inclusive of all intelligences. This broader relation, however, is simply from creation, and its real meaning is the loving care of God for his rational creatures, such as a father cherishes for his children (Psalms 103:13).There is still the profound distinction between a Fatherhood through generation, as in relation to the Son, and a Fatherhood on the ground of creation, as in relation to men and angels. Christian sonship through regeneration, or being ‘‘born of God” (John 1:12-13), rests on the deeper ground, and signifies the fullness of the Father’s love for his spiritual children. The divine Fatherhood, even in relation to the divine Son, should have a special depth of meaning for us through the fatherly and filial relations in our own life. The Fatherhood of God in relation to the Son is so frequently expressed in the Scriptures, and must so fully appear in the treatment of the Sonship, that it requires no separate statement.

2. Lower Sense of Filiation.—A lower and a higher sense is a very common fact in the use of words. It appears in such cardinal terms of theology as redemption and atonement. In no such case, however, does cither sense exclude the other, unless they be in contradictory opposition. Hence the Nicene doctrine of the Sonship has no dialectic interest in denying a lower sense of filiation. If a proper exegesis gives such a sense of Scripture, it is simply a result to be accepted; and if such an exegesis gives the higher sense, it is none the less true on account of the lower, because the two are in no opposition. The filiation of the Son as expressed in Scripture is not always in the exclusive sense of his divinity.[249] Sometimes the more direct reference is to a lower ground. Such is the case in the salutation of the angel to Mary (Luke 1:31-35). Here is the announcement of the miraculous conception and birth of a holy child who should be called “the Son of God.” We would not even here deny to this formula the sense of essential divinity. The profound truth of the incarnation forbids it. But in this instance the Son of God is the Son incarnate, and the filiation must include the human nature with the divine; and, while the meaning transcends the human, the more direct reference is still to a filiation through the miraculous conception of Christ. It thus seems clear that the filiation of the Son is not always in the exclusive sense of his divine nature.

[249]Pearson:On the Creed, art. ii.

Sometimes the Sonship has more direct reference to the Messianic and kingly offices of Christ (Psalms 2:7-12). The sense of a divine filiation may be present even here; but as the Son fulfills these offices through his incarnation and exaltation in our nature, the filiation must include this lower element. This psalm is clearly the seed of other passages of like import. In one it is declared that the promise of God unto the fathers was fulfilled unto their children in the resurrection of Christ (Acts 13:32-33). Reference is made to the second psalm, with a citation of the words, “Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.” The resurrection of Christ may here mean his advent as the

Messiah. But if taken in the ordinary sense, the filiation of Christ simply through his resurrection would give a very narrow sense of the text; but oven if the true one, it would have no doctrinal consequence against the higher sense of filiation, which, without any contradiction to the lower, would still securely stand in other texts of Scripture. In a truer view, the resurrection of Christ is not in itself a filiative fact, but a central fact in proof of his Messiahship and kingly power (Romans 1:4), and thus represents a filiation inclusive of these elements. This is the same sense of filiation as given in the second psalm.

“For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?” “So also Christ glorified not himself to be made a high-priest; But he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee” (Hebrews 1:5; Hebrews 5:5). The sense of Sonship in these texts is much the same as in the second psalm, from which they are informal citations. The mere citation, however, does not determine the sameness of the meaning. The sense of this day or to-day, which relates to the filiation, may not be easily determined. It must be either indefinite or definite in meaning. If the former, it has no time-limit and means an eternal filiation; if the latter, as first uttered it must have been prophetic of some future fact or facts which contain the lower sense of filiation. If the exegesis of these texts should hold us rigidly to the sense of a temporal filiation, fulfilled in the kingly and priestly offices of Christ, it would simply place them in accord with texts previously noticed, and without in the least affecting the truth of an eternal Sonship as given in others. In the coming of the end, or in the consummation, the Son shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father, and shall himself be subject to the Father, that God may be all in all (1 Corinthians 15:24-28). There is a relative subordination of the Son in the doctrine of the Nicene Creed; but there is here a surrender of functions and a subjection of the Son which find their fulfillment only in connection with Messianic or kingly offices. Powers of government were vested in Christ, the incarnate and redeeming Son. All power in heaven and in earth was given to him (Matthew 27:18). To him was committed the office of judgment; and he shall finally judge all men (John 5:2; Acts 17:31; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 2 Timothy 4:1). He was exalted in Headship over the Church, and in Lordship over the angels; and it was the Son incarnate, the Christ in our nature, in whom such powers of government were invested (Ephesians 1:20-23; Php 2:9-11; 1 Peter 3:22). In the consummation the Son will deliver up the kingdom and be subject to the Father with respect to these powers of his mediatorial office, which will then have been fulfilled. Thus all that appears as temporal in respect to the Son appertains to his mediatorial office, and is without any contrary opposition to his own eternal Sonship.

3. A Divine Sonship.—A full treatment of the divine Sonship would anticipate much that properly belongs to the more direct question of the divinity of Christ. But as the proof of the latter must confirm the truth of the former, there is the less occasion for its full treatment as a separate question.

“The Son,” as this name is placed in the formula of baptism, must be both a personal and a divine being (Matthew 28:19). His association with the Father m this sacrament can mean nothing less. To deny the personality of the Son is to preclude all rational account of baptism in his name. To deny his divinity is equally preclusive of any rational interpretation. We have previously shown that Arianism allows no ground of filiation in Christ higher than his human nature. Hence if we deny a divine filiation of the Son as the sense of the baptismal formula, there remains no higher ground of Sonship than the human nature of Christ. “We are brought down to the low ground of Socinianism.

Can such a doctrine explain the association of the Son with the Father in the sacrament of baptism? Can it give any sufficient reason for the baptism in the name of the Son? Baptism signifies the remission of sins, the regeneration of the moral nature, and the initiation of the soul into the kingdom of grace. Hence when the risen Lord, invested with all power in the kingdom of God, charged his apostles with the great commission, “Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,” his words must mean a personal agency of the Son, as of the Father, in the great works which the baptism signifies, and an agency to which only divinity itself is equal. Hence the filiation of the Son must be in the sense of essential divinity. The true doctrine of the Sonship appears in a conversation of Christ with the Jews, in which he defends himself against the charge of violating the Sabbath by a miracle of mercy wrought upon that sacred day (John 5:16-23). For his vindication he claims for himself a perpetual work of providence in co-operation with the Father: “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” There was a definite work of creation from which the Father rested, but his providential agency in the maintenance of the universe ever continues. In this agency the Son ever works with the Father. With these words the Jews were intensely offended. In their minds Christ had not only broken the Sabbath, but had said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God. In this crimination they might have emphasized the association of himself with the Father in the work of his providence, which clearly implies an equality with God. The Jews were not authorities in the interpretation of the words of Christ. However, they could express their own sense of his meaning; and this is all that concerns ns here. With this fact the noteworthy point is, that in no sense does Christ question or correct their inference, that the Sonship which he asserted for himself implied an equality with God. The rather do his further words confirm their interpretation. We may specially note the conclusion. “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.” “Whatever form that honor may take, be it thought, or language, or outward act, or devotion of the affections, or submission of the will, or the union of thought and heart and will into one complex act of self-prostration before infinite Greatness, which we of the present day usually mean by the term adoration, such honor is due to the Son no less than to the Father. How fearful is such a claim if the Son be only human; how natural, how moderate, how just, if he is in very deed divine.”[250] The filiation of the Son as set forth by himself in this self-vindication must contain the sense of essential divinity.

[250]Liddon:Our Lord’s Divinity, p. 182. The creative work of the Son is conclusive of a divine filiation. The Word by whom all things were made (John 1:1-3) is not the reason or creative energy of God in a mere attributive sense, and personified in the work of creation, but a divine person. The personality is clearly given in the identification of the Word with the incarnate Son: “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). “The only begotten of the Father” ever means the Son of God. The Son is the Word. The Word is personally and essentially divine. This is the truth of a divine Sonship. A revelation of the same truth through the creative work of the Son is given with equal clearness and fullness in other texts of Scripture. The Son through whose blood we have redemption and remission of sins is the Creator of all things (Colossians 1:13-17). Hence the Sonship must antedate the incarnation and the Messiahship of Christ. In the text under notice it is declared to antedate all created existences. Again, it is declared that the Son by whom God has spoken unto men in the times subsequent to the prophets is the Maker of worlds and the

Upholder of all things (Hebrews 1:2-3). In the sense of these texts there is a divine Sonship. The filiation of the Son is not in its deepest sense through the supernatural generation of his human nature, nor on the ground of his Messianic offices, nor by the creative act of God, but by an eternal generation in consubstantiality with the Father.

4. Generation of the Son.—There are repeated utterances of Scripture which express or imply the generation of the Son. He is “the only begotten of the Father;” “the only begotten Son;” “the only begotten Son of God” (John 1:14; John 1:18; John 3:16; John 3:18; 1 John 4:9). On the ground of these words of Scripture, generation is in proper theological use for the expression of a fact distinctive of the Son in the doctrine of the Trinity. It requires no forced interpretation to read out of the words of St. Paul, “Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature” (Colossians 1:15), the same distinctive fact of generation respecting the Son. “As the ε■κ■ν, Christ is the πρωτ■τοκς παζης κτισεως: that is to say, not the first in rank among created beings, hut begotten before any created beings. That this is a true sense of the expression is etymologically certain; but it is also the only sense which is in real harmony with the relation in which, according to the context, Christ is said to stand to the created universe” (Liddon: Our Lord’s Divinity, p. 318). The distinction of the Son from the created universe is profound. His existence is, not by creation, but by generation, and before all created existences. Not only is he distinguished from all creatures in the mode of his own existence, but is himself the Author of all creation (Colossians 1:16-17). With these determining facts of distinction, “the firstborn of every creature”—πρωτ■τοκς παζης κτισεως —cannot be classed with created existences either as first in the order of time or as highest in the order of rank. The Son is born or begotten of God before creation and time. The fact of generation is peculiar to the Son in the personal distinctions of the Trinity. There is no sense of generation respecting either the Father or the Holy Spirit. The ground of the fact as distinctive of the Son is given in the Scriptures, but without any explanation. But as the Scriptures give the distinctive fact they warrant the use of generation as a theological term. The use of the term, however, is rather for doctrinal expression than for any explication of the doctrine. The creeds state the fact of generation very much as the Scriptures do, and without any advance toward an explanation. The words of the Nicene Creed are: “The only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father;” of the Athanasian: “The Son is of the Father alone: not made, nor created: but begotten . . . of the substance of the Father; begotten before the worlds.”

If the generation of the Son is for us an insoluble mystery, still it may be guarded against erroneous interpretation. This is necessary to preserve its consistency with other elements in the doctrine of the Trinity. Two or three points may be specially, though briefly, noted. The generation of the Son must exclusively respect his personality, and in no sense his nature. The communication of the divine nature, and of the whole divine nature, to the Son, as also to the Holy Spirit, is a form of expression very current in the Trinitarian discussion subsequent to the Nicene Council, and still continues in substance, if not so much in more exact form. The aim was at once to guard the unity of the divine nature and yet to assert in the fullest sense the divinity of the Son. The aim was according to truth, and therefore good. Still the method of the aim may be questionable. The communication of the divine nature to the Son naturally implies his previous personal existence without this nature, and that his divinity is the result of the communication. Yet

this was not the intentional meaning, and it would be entirely false to the doctrine of the Trinity. The seeming error is avoided by holding the generation of the Son simply and exclusively in relation to his personality. In the progress of the Trinitarian discussion this came to be the definite view of the question. As a personal subsistence in the divine nature, and in possession of divine attributes, the Son is divine in the deepest sense of divinity.

Generation must not be interpreted in any close analogical sense. As the Sonship is eternal, it cannot be the result of any definite divine act, such as a creative or providential act. Such an act must be in time, and its product of temporal origin. We should thus determine for the Son an origin in time. Further, such a personal divine act must in the nature of it be optional, and hence might not be at all. Therefore the Son might never have been. These implications are utterly contradictory to the divine predicables of the Son, and therefore a temporal and optional generation cannot be the truth. In this profound mystery we can account the generation of the Son only to an eternal and necessary activity of the divine nature.

5. Consubstantiality with the Father.—The sense of consubstantiality is that the essential being of the Son is neither different in kind nor numerically other than the substance of the Father, but the very same. This doctrine was formally decreed by the Council of Chalcedon: “We, then, following the holy fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son . . . ■μοο■σιον τῳ παρ■ κατα τ■ν θε■τητα—consubstantial with the Father according to the Godhead.”[251] The definition was intended to be most exact. The council used ■μοο■σιος in sharp discrimination from ■μοιοσιος, which means a distinct substance, and may mean a substance lower in kind. Both Arianism and Semi-Arianism were thus excluded, while the true and essential divinity of the Son was affirmed.

[251]Schaff:Creeds of Christendom, vol. ii, p. 63.

6. Doctrine of Subordination.—In the divine economies of religion, particularly in the work of redemption, there is a subordination of the Son to the Father. There is, indeed, this same idea of subordination in the creative and providential works of the Son. However, the fullness of this idea is in the work of redemption. The Father gives the Son, sends the Son, delivers up the Son, prepares a body for his incarnation, and in filial obedience the Son fulfills the pleasure of the Father, even unto his crucifixion (John 3:16-17; Romans 8:32; Psalms 40:6-8; Hebrews 10:5-7; Php 2:8). The ground of this subordination is purely in his filiation, not in any distinction of essential divinity.

046. II. Divinity Of The Son.

II. Divinity Of The Son. This is a question of revelation. The faith of the Church even from the beginning affirms its truth. But we must go back of this faith, and back of all formulations and creeds of councils, to the Scriptures themselves as the only authority in Christian doctrine. An exposition of all the texts, or even most of the texts, which concern the divinity of our Lord would require an elaboration running into a volume. This method is entirely proper in a separate or monographic treatment of the question, but is neither the usual nor the better method in a course of doctrinal discussions. Nor is it necessary to a conclusive argument for the divinity of Christ. A summary grouping and application of Scripture proofs may give the argument in a conclusive form, and with a strength against which the fallacies of logic and the perversions of exegesis are powerless. The principle in which this argument may be grounded underlies all science. Every thing is for science what its own qualities determine it to be. This law must rule the classifications of science in all realms of existence. Otherwise no science is possible. In the crudest forms of matter, in the spheres of chemistry, botany, zoology, in the realms of intellectual and moral life, every thing must be for science what its own distinctive qualities determine it to be. The same principle is equally valid for theology. It must be valid for theology, because it is the necessary and universal ground of rational and cognitive thinking. Hence, if it is not true in all spheres that existences are what their distinctive facts determine them to be, it cannot be true in any. With such a result, mind would sink far below skepticism into the starkest nescience. As, on this necessary and universal law, gold is gold by virtue of its determining facts, so God is God by virtue of the essential and distinctive facts of divinity. There is for thought no other law of differentiation between the Unite and the Infinite, or between things and God. The principle is equally valid in the question of the divinity of Christ. If the Scriptures in an unqualified sense attribute the essential facts of divinity to the Son, then on the ground of their authority and in the deepest sense of the term he is divine.

It may thus be seen that the strength of the argument for the divinity of Christ may be given without any great elaboration. Proceeding on the principle which we have laid down, all that is required is a grouping of the essential and distinctive facts of divinity as clearly attributed to Christ in the Scriptures. These facts may be classed under four heads: titles, attributes, works, worshipfulness. There is nothing novel in this division or grouping of these facts. It is so simple and advantageous that it has been very customary, and in this sense is the prescriptive method.

1. Divine Titles.—There are titles which in their primary or full sense are expressive of divinity and belong only to God. Yet such titles are given in the same sense to the Son.

God is such a title. It is at once expressive and distinctive of divinity. This is none the less true because it is not always used in this higher sense. Even in the Scriptures the term is often applied to idols (Exodus 22:20; Judges 11:24). It is not necessary to multiply references. This name is given also to princes, magistrates, and judges (Exodus 22:28; Psalms 82:1; Psalms 82:6). In this lower sense Moses was a god: “And the Lord said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god unto

Pharaoh" (Exodus 7:1). Even Satan himself is called god—"the god of this world" (2 Corinthians 4:4). In all these instances, however, the partial or figurative use of the term is open and clear. Idols are gods as representing the objects of heathen worship. Princes, magistrates, judges are gods as the ministers of God in government, or as exercising functions in some likeness to the divine agency. Moses was a god to Pharaoh as the minister and representative of God himself. Satan is a god as exercising a ruling power over the world. Such a qualified use of terms is very common, and without any effect upon the primary or full meaning. In this higher sense God is still the expressive and distinctive title of divinity. As in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth (Genesis 1:1); as God is great and doeth wondrous things, and he only is God (Psalms 86:10); as God is the only object of supreme worship (Matthew 4:10; Revelation 12:9), so is the term expressive and distinctive of divinity. In this higher sense Christ is God, and therefore divine. It may suffice to adduce a few instances. "And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God" (Luke 1:16). This is the mission fulfilled by John as the forerunner of Christ. Unto him the hearts of many were turned; and he it is who is called "the Lord their God." This application is confirmed by the words immediately following: "And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." There is no restricted or qualified sense of the divine name in this use of it. Any issue would be joined, not against the deepest sense of the term, but against its application to Christ. Such an issue, however, must concede the fullest sense, because there is no other possible reason for denying its application to him. With this concession, we need but point again to the clear and full proof of this application. It is thus true that Christ is God in the deepest sense of divinity. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). In the fourteenth verse of this chapter the Word is identified with the personal Son in the incarnation. The Son is the Word, and the Word is God. There is no limitation of the term in this application to the Son. There is no reason in the connection for any limitation, but conclusive reasons for its deepest sense. The eternity and creative work of the Son, as here clearly given, justify his designation as God and require its deepest sense for the expression of his nature.

"And Thomas answered and said unto him. My Lord and my God" (John 20:28). Thomas not only refused faith in the resurrection of Christ simply on the testimony of his brother-disciples, but demanded the sight of his own eyes and the touch of his own fingers in a definitely specified manner (John 20:25). Christ freely offered him all that ho required. Then it was, as Christ stood before him in living form and with all the required tokens of his identity, that Thomas addressed him in these words of adoring faith: "My Lord and my God." It is easy to declare these words a mere ejaculation, addressed to God the Father, if to any one. If addressed to no one, they must have been profane, and therefore could in no sense have received the approval of Christ. A mere ejaculatory rendering is not consistent with the temper of Thomas. Besides, the words themselves are definite respecting the person addressed: "And Thomas answered and said unto him"—unto Jesus —"My Lord and my God." Eliminate from these words the sense of adoring worship, and they become profane. They were not profane, for Thomas received the approval and blessing of Christ in their use. So sure is it that he is God in the deepest sense of the term.

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts

20:28). So Paul addressed the elders of the church in Ephesus, whom he met at Miletus. We know that some dispute the genuineness of Θεον in this text, and would replace it with Κυριου; but the preponderance of critical authority is strongly in favor of the former. As Christ is frequently called God in the Scriptures, and often by St. Paul himself, such an application of Θεον is nothing against its genuineness in this text. In all fairness, it must stand with the preponderance of critical authority. It is an instance in which, in the deepest sense of the term, Christ is called God. "Whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen" (Romans 9:5). St. Paul had just been enumerating the great privileges of Israel. "To these privileges he subjoins a climax. The Israelites were they, ■ξ ■ν ■ Χριστος τ■ κατ■ σ■ρκα, ■ ■ν ■π■ π■ντων Θε■ς ε■λογητ■ς ε■ς το■ς α■■νας. It was from the blood of Israel that the true Christ had sprung, so far as his human nature was concerned; but Christ's Israelitic descent is, in the apostle's eyes, so consummate a glory of Israel, because Christ is much more than one of the sons of men, because by reason of his higher pre-existent nature he is 'over all, God blessed forever,' This is the natural sense of the passage. If the passage occurred in a profane author and there were no antitheological interest to be promoted, few critics would think of overlooking the antithesis between Χριτ■ς τ■ κατ■ σ■ρκα and Θε■ς ε■λογητ■ς. Still less possible would it be to destroy this antithesis outright, and to impoverish the climax of the whole passage, by cutting off the doxology from the clause which precedes it, and so erecting it into an independent ascription of praise to God the Father. If we should admit that the doctrine of Christ's Godhead is not stated in this precise form elsewhere in St. Paul's writings, that admission cannot be held to justify us in violently breaking up the passage, in order to escape from its natural meaning, unless we are prepared to deny that St. Paul could possibly have employed an ■παξ λεγ■μεν. Nor in point of fact does St. Paul say more in this famous text than when in writing to Titus he describes Christians as 'looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us' (Titus 2:13-14). Here the grammar apparently, and the context certainly, oblige us to recognize the identity of 'our Saviour Jesus Christ' and 'our great God.' As a matter of fact, Christians are not waiting for any manifestation of the Father. And he who gave himself for us can be none other than our Lord Jesus Christ."[252] This citation, while addressed more directly to the proof of Christ's divinity, is conclusive of our specific point in proof of the same truth, that in the profoundest sense he is called God.

[252]Liddon:Our Lord's Divinity, pp. 313-315.

"But unto the Son, he saith, Thy throne, God, is forever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom" (Hebrews 1:8). In this connection the subject is the greatness of the Son, and the particular view, his greatness above the angels. He has a higher inheritance and name than they. No one of them is ever styled, as the Son himself, the begotten Son of the Father. The Son is their Creator and Euler, and the object of their supreme worship. They are servants and ministering spirits, while the Son is enthroned in the supremacy of government. He is God. The facts call into thought the words of the prophet: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). When the incarnate Son is thus called God, it must be in the sense of his divinity.

Jehovah is a distinctive name of the Deity. It is also a Scripture appellation of the Son, and therefore a proof of his divinity. God made known this name to Moses in a manner which

emphasizes its profound meaning. “And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am Jehovah: and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty; but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them” (Exodus 6:2-3). It is restrictively the name of God: “That men may know that thou, whose name alone is Jehovah, art the Most High over all the earth” (Psalms 83:18). It is the expression of an infinite perfection and inalienable glory: “I am the Lord [Jehovah]; that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images” (Isaiah 42:8). In the plenitude of its meaning this name signifies the eternal and immutable being of the Deity.

There is nothing in the combination of this name with terms of finite import which contradicts or even modifies its profound meaning. Hence it is groundless to object, “that it is sometimes given to places. It is so; but only in composition with some other word, and not surely as indicative of any quality in the places themselves, but as memorials of the acts and goodness of Jehovah himself, as manifested in those localities. So ‘Jehovah-jireh, in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen,’ or, ‘the Lord will provide,’ referred to His interposition to save Isaac, or, probably, to the provision of the future sacrifice of Christ”[253]. There is no use of this term in combination with others which restricts or modifies its profound meaning as the distinctive and expressive name of the Deity.

[253]Watson:Theological Institutes, vol. i, p. 506. This name is given to the Son, and in the fullness of its meaning as a divine title. The Scriptures open with the name of God in plural form. These terms may have in themselves but little force for the proof of the Trinity; but as seen in the light of a fuller revelation of God they properly anticipate the personal distinctions in the theophanies of a later period. In these theophanies there are the personal designations of Jehovah and the Angel of Jehovah. The same person appears, sometimes with the one title, sometimes with the other, and in some instances with both, and with the distinctive facts of divinity. A few references will verify these statements (Genesis 16:7-13; Genesis 17:1-22; Genesis 18:1-33; Genesis 22:1-18; Genesis 28:10-22; Genesis 32:24-30, with Hosea 12:3-5; Exodus 3:2-15). The Angel of Jehovah, as revealed in these theophanies, is a divine person. The powers which he exercises and the prerogatives which he asserts are distinctive of the Deity. Yet when styled Jehovah it is clearly with personal distinction from the Father. He cannot be the Angel of Jehovah and Jehovah the Father at the same time; though he can be Jehovah the Son and the Angel of the Father, This is the sense of these theophanies as we read them in the light of later revelations, especially in the clear light of the New Testament. The Angel of Jehovah, the Jehovah of these theophanies, is the Son of God. “The angel, who appeared to Hagar, to Abraham, to Moses, to Joshua, to Gideon, and to Manoah, who was called Jehovah and worshiped as Adonai, who claimed divine homage and exercised divine power, whom the psalmists and prophets set forth as the Son of God, as the Counselor, the Prince of Peace, the mighty God, and whom they predicted was to be born of a virgin, and to whom every knee should bow and every tongue should confess, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, is none other than lie whom we now recognize and worship as our God and Saviour Jesus Christ. It was the Γογος ■σαρκος whom the Israelites worshiped and obeyed; and it is the Γογος ■νσαρκος whom we acknowledge as our Lord and God.”[254] This is the summation after a full review of the relative facts; and the facts fully warrant the conclusion.

[254]Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. i, p. 490

“From all that has been said, it is now manifest on how great authority the ancient doctors of the Church affirmed that it was the Son of God who in former times, under the Old Testament, appeared to holy men, distinguished by the name of Jehovah, and honored by them with divine worship. . . .He who appeared and spoke to Moses in the burning bush and on Mount Sinai, who manifested himself to Abraham, etc., was the Word, or Son, of God. It is, however, certain that he who appeared is called Jehovah, I am, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, etc., titles which clearly are not applicable to any created being, but are peculiar to the true God. And this is the very reasoning which the fathers all employ to prove that in such manifestations it was not a mere created angel, but the Son of God, who was present; that the name of Jehovah, namely, and divine worship are given to him who appeared; but that these are not communicable to any creature, and belong to the true God alone; whence it follows that they all believed that the Son was very God.”[255] This is the conclusion of the learned author from a thorough treatment of the appropriate texts, and after a thorough review of the Antenicene fathers, with free citations from their writings.

[255]Bishop Bull:Defense of the Nicene Creed, book i, chap, i, 30.

It is clear that the argument for the divinity of Christ, as thus constructed, goes far beyond the fact that he is called Jehovah in its deepest sense as a title of the Deity. In the divine manifestations of Jehovah, the Son, in the earlier revelations of God, he appears in the possession of divine attributes and prerogatives, performs divine works, and receives supreme worship, He is called Jehovah in the deepest sense of the term, and this fact is in itself the proof of his divinity. That he is thus called Jehovah is clear in the texts of the theophanies, previously given by reference.

2. Divine Attributes.—The more exact analysis and classification of the attributes, as previously treated, may here be omitted. Such a method would prove a hinderance to the simplicity of the argument, without adding any thing to its strength. Certain divine predicables which we treated as true of God and distinctive of divinity are equally true of the Son, and as conclusive of his divinity as the possession of the divine attributes which are distinctively such. As the words, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (Genesis 1:1), infold the truth of his absolute eternity, so the words, “In the beginning was the Word. . . . All things were made by him” (John 1:1-3), infold the truth of the absolute eternity of the Son. There are more explicit utterances of the same truth. The Son is Alpha and Omega, which is, and which was, and which is to come; the first and the last; the beginning and the end (Revelation 1:8; Revelation 1:17; Revelation 22:13). In these predicates of the Son we have an informal citation from Isaiah: “Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God” (Isaiah 44:6). No proper interpretation is possible in either case without the absolute eternity of the subject of such predication. The Son by an immediate insight knew all men, even their most secret thoughts and deeds (John 2:24-25); searches the reins and the heart of men (Revelation 2:23). A close and keen observer may acquire a pretty clear insight into the character of one with whom he is in daily intercourse. Yet even in this case the interior active life, the thoughts, desires, aspirations are hidden from the sharpest gaze. The knowledge of Christ infinitely transcends all the possibilities of such knowledge. It has no limitation to such facts as are in some mode expressed, but apprehends the most secret life. Nor is it in the least conditioned on any personal acquaintance or special study, but is an immediate and perfect insight into the most secret facts of the life; and not only of one man, or of a few familiar friends, but equally of all men.

“Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee” (John 21:17), is the witnessing of Peter to his immediate knowledge of the inmost life of men. “Now we are sure that thou knowest all things” (John 16:30), is the testimony of the disciples to his omniscience. The same truth receives the very strongest expression in the words of our Lord himself: “As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father” (John 10:15). The infinite depth of such a knowledge of the Father is possible only with omniscience. This may suffice for the present, as the same truth must re-appear in treating the final judgment of all men as the work of Christ.

However, we must not entirely omit an objection which is ever at hand with those who dispute the divinity of our Lord. This objection is based on his own words—whether respecting the destruction of Jerusalem or the final judgment concerns not the present question: “But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, nor the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father” (Mark 13:32). In the discussion respecting the divinity of Christ these words have been much in issue. This appears in the repeated and persistent efforts of the fathers to bring the text into harmony with that doctrine, or, at least, to obviate all disproof of it. All along the Christian centuries the champions of the Nicene Creed have taken up the question for the same purpose. In his masterly work on the divinity of our Lord, Canon Liddon renews the endeavor with all the resources of his rare ability and learning. Seemingly, little remains to be added on this side of the question. Indeed, this has been the case for a long time. The genuineness of the text has been questioned, or, at least, the question has been raised, but that genuineness has not been discredited. It has been attempted to obviate the difficulty by rendering the words as relating to the Son, in the sense of not making known, instead of not knowing. This, however, is purely arbitrary, and inadmissible. Man, the angels, and the Son, as disjunctively placed in the text, stand in precisely the same relation to the one verb, ο■δεν. If, with the negative term, we render this verb in the sense of nescience in relation to man and the angels, and then abruptly change to the sense of not making known in relation to the Son, the transition is so arbitrary that laws of interpretation must forbid it. Further, if ο■δε ■ υ■■ς (ο■δεν) means that the Son doth not reveal or make known, then ε■ μ■ ■ πατ■ρ (ο■δεν)—words which immediately follow—should mean that the Father doth make known. This, however, would contradict the plain sense of the text. The only escape from this contradiction would require another abrupt transition back to the sense of the verb in its relation to man and the angels. There is no light in this view.

Mostly, a solution of the question has been attempted on the ground of a distinction between the divine and the human consciousness of Christ. On this ground it is assumed that, while as God he knew the time of the judgment, as man he did not know it. This is the method of Athanasius himself, and for it he claims the consensus of the fathers. The great defenders of the Nicene Creed are mostly in his following. Canon Liddon joins them.[256] We specially refer to him because he is among the most recent and most able upon this question, as also upon the whole question of the divinity of Christ. Of course, the assumed distinction between the divine and the human consciousness of Christ is open to the pointed criticism that it is inconsistent with the unity of his personality in the union of his divine and human natures. In the terse putting of Stier, “Such knowing and not knowing at the same time severs the unity of the God-human person, and is impossible in the Son of man, who is the Son indeed, but emptied of his glory.”[257] Seemingly, such a distinction involves the doctrinal consequence of Nestorianism, in which the human nature of Christ is a distinct human person, in only sympathetic union with the divine Son. It is a rather

curious fact that, for the explication of a perplexing text, so many truly orthodox in creed should make a distinction in the consciousness of Christ which seems like a surrender to the Nestorian heresy. Of course, this is not intended. There are, indeed, many facts in the life of Christ which seemingly belong to a purely human consciousness; but if they are made the ground of a distinct human consciousness the same Nestorian consequence follows. Such facts lie within the mystery of the incarnation, where they unite with the facts of divinity manifest in Christ. The personality of Christ must be determined, not from any one class of facts, whether human or divine, but from a view of both classes as clearly ascribed to him in the Scriptures.

[256]Our Lord's Divinity, pp. 458-464.

[257]The Words of the Lord Jesus, vol. iii, p. 296.

What is the result? The perplexity arising from this text is not obviated by any of the methods previously noticed. Nor is there any method by which this result can be attained. Any inference from this fact that Christ is not divine would be hasty and unwarranted. The many conclusive proofs of his divinity still remain in the Scriptures. The subordination of these many proofs to one seemingly adverse text would, for its method, be against all the logic of science and all the laws of biblical exegesis. That text must remain as a perplexity for our exegesis, and may remain without any weakening of our faith in the divinity of our Lord. As this attribute must be clearly manifest in treating the works of Christ, a very brief statement may suffice here. He has absolute power over nature. This is manifest in many of his miracles. In the feeding of thousands to satiety with a few loaves and fishes, in giving sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf, in raising the dead, in calming the storm, we see the efficiencies of omnipotence in its absoluteness over all the forces of nature. By his mighty power he is able to subdue all things to himself (Php 3:21). He upholds all things by the word of his power (Hebrews 1:3). He is the Almighty (Revelation 1:8.). Such attributions of power and agency can be true of Christ only on the ground of his true and essential omnipotence.

Respecting the attributes of Christ, one truth is given in another truth. The truth of his omnipresence is given in the truth of his universal providence, which has already appeared in the fact of his upholding all things by the word of his power, and will further be shown in a more direct treatment. The providence of Christ is through his personal agency, in all the realms of nature. That personal agency is the reality of his omnipresence in its truest, deepest sense—an omnipresence in the infinitude of his knowledge and power. We may cite two promises of Christ, which can receive no proper interpretation without the truth of his omnipresence. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20). These words are in the form of assertion, as of a fact, but with the sense and grace of a promise. The fact is of his presence with all who meet in his name, wherever and whenever it may be. As a promise of grace, his presence means a personal agency for the spiritual benediction of his worshiping disciples. Again, when he commissioned his apostles for the evangelization of all nations, he said, "Lo, lam with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:20). Again the words in form assert the fact of his presence, but in the sense and grace of a promise. The fact of his presence is for all his ministers, in all the world and for all time, as for his chosen apostles whom he immediately commissioned to the work of evangelization. As a promise of grace, it is for all true ministers of Christ, as for the apostles, an assurance of his helpful agency. He seals this

assurance with his own “Amen.” Only an omnipresent Being—omnipresent with the infinite efficiencies of a personal agency could truthfully assert such facts and give such promises.

Mutations of estate with the divine 8on are the profoundest. He was rich, and became poor (2 Corinthians 8:9); in the form of God, with an equal glory of estate, but divested himself of this glory and assumed instead the form of a servant in the likeness of men, and humbled himself even to the death of the cross; and again he was exalted of the Father in Lordship over all intelligences (Php 2:6-11) still, there is the deep truth of his immutability. “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8); immutable in divine personality through all his mutations of estate. As pointed out in treating the immutability of God, its strongest and sublimest expression is given in the words of the psalmist (Psalms 102:25-27). Yet these very words, without any variation affecting their sense, or any qualification, are applied to the Son: “And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest: and they shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail” (Hebrews 1:10-12). If the reality of immutability is expressible in words, it is expressed in these words. Then the Son of God is immutable. The possession of the attributes of eternity, omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, and immutability, as thus grounded in the truth of Scripture, concludes the divinity of Christ.

3. Divine Works.—There are works of such a character that they must be as expressive of divinity in the personal agency which achieves them as the possession of its essential and distinctive attributes. Does Christ perform such works? This question we must carry into the Scriptures. They will not leave us in any reasonable doubt as to the truth in the case. The Scriptures open with the creative work of God. With simplicity of words, the lofty tone at once lifts our thoughts to the infinite perfections of his being. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God said. Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven; let the earth bring forth grass and herb and fruit-tree, and let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life: and it was so (Genesis 1:1-20). Verily God is God. Creation is his work; the expression of his infinite perfections. The same truth runs through all the Scriptures. The heavens declare his glory, and the firmament showeth his handiwork (Psalms 19:1). God who made the world and all things therein, he is Lord of heaven and earth (Acts 17:24). His works of creation reveal his eternal power and Godhead (Romans 1:20).

Creation is the work of Christ. A few texts may suffice for this truth. ‘‘All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made” (John 1:3). Word who was in the beginning with God, and was God, and is in the fourteenth verse of this chapter identified with the incarnate Son, he it is who created all things. Futile is the attempt to resolve this work of creation into a moral renovation of the world. The words of John are go much like the opening words of creation in Genesis, to which one’s thought is immediately carried, that only an original creation will answer for their full meaning. “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him” (Colossians 1:16). It is the Son of God, as the connection determines, who is thus declared the Creator of all things. No admissible interpretation can eliminate from this text the idea of an original creation—a creation of all things in the sense in which the Scriptures ascribe their creation to God. The notion of setting things in order, or of a

moral renovation, is utterly precluded by the amplification of the text. If the former sense were admissible, very little would be gained even for an Arian Christology; nothing certainly for the Socinian. A setting of all things in order could mean nothing less than the reduction of chaotic materials into cosmic forms, and the collocation of worlds so as to secure the order of systems and the harmonies of the universe. God only is equal to such a work. There is the same inevitable implication, if with the text we carry up the thought to all higher intelligences, even to thrones and dominions, principalities and powers. Any limitation to an institutional ordering, as in the Christian economy, is senseless for this text. The amplification includes in the creative work of Christ all things in earth and heaven, visible and invisible, material and rational, all the ranks and orders of celestial intelligences. This is infinitely too broad and high for any institutional work of a merely human Christ. In the deepest meaning of the term, and with limitless comprehension, the Son is the creator of all things. The words of Bishop Bull are not too strong for this sense of the text: “But if these words of the apostle do not speak of a creation, properly so called, I should believe that Holy Scripture labored under inexplicable difficulty, and that no certain conclusion could be deduced from its words, however express they might seem to be.”[258] We add a single text, without comment: “And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thine hand” (Hebrews 1:10).

[258]Defense of the Nicene Creed, book i, chap, i, 15.

These three texts prove the creative work of Christ. “If God the Father were here substituted for Christ, no man would ever think of denying that the work of creation is attributed to him in the most proper sense.”[259] The creative work of Christ is conclusive of his divinity.

[259]Wood: Works, vol. i, p. 351. The question of a divine providence is not here to be treated any farther than in application to the present argument. There is a providence of God which is conservative of all existences, material and rational. “Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number; he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth” (Isaiah 40:26). The preservation of all worlds in their orderly existence is thus revealed as the work of a divine providence, and classed with the work of their creation. In the monotheism which St. Paul preached to the men of Athens on Mars’ Hill there is the same creative work of God, only with broader comprehension, and the same providence in the preservation and government of his works (Acts 17:22-28). Here again the work of providence is classed with the work of creation. God only can preserve and rule the works of his hands.

Such a work of providence is ascribed to the Son. After that remarkable passage, previously cited, in which the creation of all things is attributed to him, it is added: “And he is before all things, and by him all things consist” (Colossians 1:17). Here the providence of the Son in the preservation of all things is classed with his work in their creation, just as in the texts previously noticed the preserving providence of God is classed with his creative work. “Upholding all things by the word of his power” (Hebrews 1:3) strongly expresses the providence of the Son. He sustains all things, and rules them in an orderly manner. “By the word of his power” signifies a personal agency of infinite efficiency. In a like manner the personal agency of God in creation and providence is expressed (Genesis 1:3; Psalms 33:6; Psalms 33:9). So by the word of his power, his immediate, omnipotent personal agency, the Son upholds all things, and rules them in an orderly manner. In

the providential work of the Son there is the truth of his divinity.

It is the clear sense of Scripture, and the common unperverted moral judgment, that God only can forgive sin, in its strictly ethical sense. Yet Christ forgave sin in the deepest sense of divine forgiveness (Luke 5:20-24). This is decisive proof of his divinity. The theory of the resurrection does not concern the present argument. There is in the Scriptures the doctrine of a final, general resurrection of the dead. This is a great work of the future—so great as to suggest a doubt of its possibility. The sacred writers neither deny its greatness nor attempt to modify the sense of the resurrection, so as to obviate the objection. Instead of this, they make answer simply by appealing the question to the infinite power of God (Matthew 22:29; Acts 26:8). The resurrection is a great work to which God only is equal; but he is equal to its achievement. This is their only answer. Yet it is the explicit truth of Scripture that Christ by his own power shall raise the dead (John 5:28-29; Php 3:21). If God only can accomplish this work, Christ, who shall accomplish it, must possess the infinite efficiencies of God, and, therefore, must be divine. The final judgment must be perfectly righteous both in its decisions and rewards. It must be such respecting every person judged, and respecting every moral deed of every person. For such a judgment, a perfect knowledge of every life, even in its every moral deed, is absolutely necessary. Every life in its constitutional tendency and exterior condition, in all its susceptibilities and allurements, in its most hidden thoughts and feelings, motives and aims, must be perfectly known. There must be such knowledge of each individual life, and of every life of all the generations of men. There is such knowledge only in omniscience. If we might compare works, each of which requires an infinite agency, the final judgment is a greater one than the general resurrection. Not all the divine teleology in the construction of the universe requires a more absolute omniscience. Yet that final judgment is the work of the Son. This is an explicit truth of the Scriptures (Matthew 25:31-46; John 5:22; 2 Corinthians 5:10). We have given only a few references out of many. What we have given are of themselves sufficient for the truth which they so clearly express. The Son of God who shall finally judge all men must be omniscient, and, therefore, truly and essentially divine.

Each of the works of Christ, live in number, which we have brought into the argument is conclusive of his divinity. In their combination the argument is irresistible.

4. Divine Worshipfulness.—God only is supremely worshipful. Such worship consciously rendered to any lower being is idolatry. Many texts of Scripture witness to these truths. Reference to a few may suffice (Exodus 20:3-5; Isaiah 42:8; Matthew 4:10; Revelation 19:10).

Christ claims and receives supreme worship. It is divinely commanded. The Scriptures witness to these truths, as a few texts may show.

“The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son: that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which sent him” (John 5:22-23). In the connection Christ speaks of God as his Father in a sense expressive of his own divinity. So the Jews understood him. He offers no correction, but proceeds with words replete with the same truth. He is co-operative with the Father in the perpetual work of his providence, and ever doeth the same things which the Father doeth. Such words lead up to the rightful claim of a supreme worshipfulness with the Father, as expressed in the words which we have cited. Men honor the Father only as they supremely worship him. Yet it is made the duty of all men to honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. “And again, when he

bringeth the first begotten into the world, he saith. And let all the angels of God worship him" (Hebrews 1:6). Only a supreme worship of the incarnate Son can fulfill the requirement of this command. In many instances of prayer and forms of religious service supreme worship is rendered to Christ. In filling the place in the apostolate made vacant by the treason of Judas the apostles "prayed, and said. Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all, show whether of these two thou hast chosen" (Acts 1:24). Stephen in the hour of his martyrdom prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," and also prayed for his murderers, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:59-60). Thrice did Paul beseech the Lord for the removal of that thorn in the flesh, that buffeting messenger of Satan (2 Corinthians 12:7-8). The connection shows that it was the Lord Jesus to whom he thus devoutly and persistently prayed. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13:14). This benediction is the devout prayer of Paul for the divine gift of the largest spiritual blessings to the members of this Church. For these blessings he prays to the Lord Jesus, just as he prays to God the Father. Only a divine being could bestow such blessings. No other could be associated with the Father in such a supplication by one so fully enlightened in Christian truth as St. Paul. No such prayer could be truly offered except in a spirit of devout and supreme worship. Thus did Paul worship the Lord Jesus in this prayer. In two given instances he prays in like manner for the church in Thessalonica (1 Thessalonians 3:11-13; 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17). As Paul thus prayed, so did the other apostles pray, and so did the saints in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus (1 Corinthians 1:3). To deny them the spirit of a devout and supreme worship of Christ in these prayers is to accuse them of superstition or idolatry.

Christ is exalted and enthroned in supreme lordship and worshipfulness over saints and angels. He is seated on the right hand of God, far above all principalities and powers, while all are made subject to him (Ephesians 1:20-23). To him is given a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue should confess that he is Lord (Php 2:9-11). There shall thus be rendered to him the supreme homage which God in most solemn form claims of all (Isaiah 45:22-23). As this homage is claimed of God, and due to him only because he is God, Christ must be truly divine; for else it could not be claimed for him. Yet, even angels and authorities and powers are made subject to him, and must render him supreme homage (1 Peter 3:22). If Christ is not supremely worshipful, Christianity becomes a vast system of idolatry for both earth and heaven. He is supremely worshiped. There is such worship in the grateful and joyous doxology: "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (Revelation 1:5-6). He is supremely worshiped in heaven. Even the angelic hosts join in this worship, saying, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. "The strain is prolonged: "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever" (Revelation 5:12-13). If in this adoring service the Father is supremely worshiped, so is the Son. His supreme worshipfulness is the proof of his divinity. The unqualified ascription of the distinctively divine titles, attributes, works, and worshipfulness to the Son is conclusive of his true and essential divinity, as the sense and doctrine of the Holy Scriptures. The proof is in the highest degree cumulative and conclusive.

General reference.—Athanasius: On the Incarnation; Burton: Testimonies of the Antenicene Fathers to the Divinity of Christ; Pearson Exposition of the Creed, article ii Waterland: Defense of the Divinity of Christ; A Second Defense of Christ's Divinity, Works, vol. ii; Princeton Essays, essay ii, "The Sonship of Christ;" Whitelaw: Is Christ Divine? Perowne: The Godhead of Jesus, Hulsean Lectures, 1866; Liddon:Our Lord's Divinity, Bampton Lectures, 1866.

047. Chapter 7: The Holy Spirit.

Chapter 7 The Holy Spirit. The questions requiring special attention in the present discussion are the personality and the divinity of the Holy Spirit. Both questions involve necessary elements in the doctrine of the Trinity. Both must have sure ground in the Scriptures, or this doctrine cannot be maintained. The history of doctrines shows a persistent disputation of both; yet their Scripture ground remains clear and sure. After the conclusive proof of the personality and divinity of the Son, objections to the personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit have the less weight. The two questions are so one in their deepest ground that mere rational objections must be the same against both. Hence, as all such have spent their force and proved themselves powerless against the former, they are already proved groundless against the latter. In a word, the conclusive proof of the distinct personality and essential divinity of the Son clears the way for the Scripture proof of the distinct personality and essential divinity of the Holy Spirit. However, in this case particularly, the two questions of personality and divinity require separate treatment.

048. I. Personality Of The Spirit.

I. Personality Of The Spirit.

1. Determining Facts of Personality.—These facts were sufficiently given in our discussion of the divine personality. As in all instances the same facts are necessary to personality, and in all determinative of personality, a reference to the previous discussion may here suffice.

2. The Holy Spirit a Person.—The Scriptures are replete with references to the Spirit, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, and the Holy Spirit. This reference is in the first chapter of the Bible and in the last. But it is not necessary, nor would it be judicious or wise, to assume in every such instance a personal distinction of the Spirit in the sense of Trinitarianism. It suffices for the doctrine that there are sufficiently numerous texts which give the sense of this distinction, and which cannot be rationally interpreted without it. There are enough such; even many above the need. The clearer texts are in the New Testament, but there are many in the Old which, especially as read in the light of the New, give the same meaning. In the brooding of the Spirit upon the face of the waters, bringing cosmic forms out of the chaotic mass (Genesis 1:2); in the striving of the Spirit with men (Genesis 6:3); in his gift of wisdom to Bezaleel and Aholiab, and to other artisans of special skill (Exodus 31:2-6); in his illumination and guidance of Othniel, the son of Kenaz, in the leadership and government of Israel, securing to them the conquest of their enemies, and rest for forty years (Judges 3:9-11); in giving a pattern of the temple to David—a pattern which he gave to Solomon (1 Chronicles 28:11-12); in the gracious baptism of Christ, as foretold in prophecy and fulfilled in the Gospel (Isaiah 41:1-3; Luke 4:18-21),—in all these operations, as in many others like them, there are forms and qualities of agency which clearly signify the personality of the Spirit. The association of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son in the form of baptism gives the sense of his own personality (Matthew 28:19). The personality of neither the Father nor the Son can be questioned, so far as the meaning of these words is concerned. Any such denial respecting the Spirit is utterly arbitrary and groundless. If it be not so, then the Holy Spirit must signify some nameless impersonal energy of the Father. In this case, baptism would be in the name of the Father, and in the name of some indefinite form of his personal energy. So irrational a sense cannot be read into these words of Christ. The Father must here mean the plenitude of his Deity. Hence baptism in his name must be in the full sense of this plenitude. No impersonal somewhat can remain, in the name of which baptism may be solemnly performed, just as though it stood in the same infinite plenitude of divinity with the Father himself. In the form of apostolic benediction there is a like association of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 13:14). For like reasons we must here find the personality of the Spirit. This benediction is not a mere form of words, but an earnest prayer, an outbreathing of the soul in supplication for the richest spiritual blessings. These blessings can be conferred only through personal divine agency. This love of God the Father is the personal bestowment of the gifts of his love. This grace of Christ is the personal gift of the benefits of his redemptive work. Hence this communion of the Spirit must signify his personal agency in our spiritual life. The personality of the Spirit is as real as that of the Father and of the Son.

There are many words of Christ respecting the offices of the Spirit which can have no rational interpretation without the sense of his personality. The disciples were taught that, when arraigned before magistrates, they need not be anxious respecting their answer, for the Holy Spirit would teach them in the same hour what they should say, and in this manner answer for them (Mark 13:11). Again, Christ promised the mission of the Spirit as another Comforter, who should abide with the disciples, teach them in all things, reprove the world of sin, guide the disciples into all truth, and glorify the Son (John 14:16-17; John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:8; John 16:13-14). These are strange forms of expression if the Spirit is not a person. Strictly personal terms are used, with pronouns just as usual in other instances of personal antecedents. The agency of the Spirit in the several forms of its expression is strictly personal—such as only a person can exercise. There can be no mere personification. The facts of this agency preclude it. The personality of the Spirit is given in these facts. The diverse gifts of the Spirit, as expressed by St. Paul, are conclusive of his personality. The Spirit gives wisdom, knowledge, faith, the power of healing and working miracles, of prophesying, discerning of spirits, speaking with divers tongues, and interpreting tongues (1 Corinthians 12:4-11). Here again is the use of strictly personal terms, and the expression of a strictly personal agency. These diverse gifts signify the diverse forms of this agency: “But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.” Nowhere has St. Paul expressed himself in so strange a personification as this would be. The meaning of his words cannot admit such a mode. We must give them a strictly personal sense, and with that sense the personality of the Spirit.

We may group a few significant and decisive facts. The Holy Spirit suffers blasphemy (Luke 12:10); witnesses to our gracious adoption, and helps us in our prayers (Romans 8:16; Romans 8:26); is lied to, and resisted (Acts 5:3; Acts 7:51); is grieved (Ephesians 4:30); is despited (Hebrews 10:29); searches and knows all things (1 Corinthians 2:10-11); chooses ends and orders the means of their attainment (Acts 13:2-4). These facts are distinctive of personality, and thus prove the personality of the Holy Spirit. There is significance for the present question in the very common qualitative appellation. Holy Spirit, or Holy Ghost. This appellation occurs so frequently in the New Testament, and is so familiar, that references are quite needless. We find it also in the Psalms and in Isaiah (Psalms 51:11; Isaiah 63:10). If, instead of a personal title, we find with this appellation only a personification, we are brought back to some indefinite energy of God. Why should such an energy be thus specially qualified? Holiness is distinctively a personal quality. Deeds may be holy, but only as the deeds of a person in holy action. Even a subjective holiness can be such only as its tendencies are to holy personal action. Holy, as a qualitative term in the appellation of the Spirit, must signify the personality of the Spirit.

3. Procession of the Spirit.—With the distinction between generation in respect to the Son and procession in relation to the Spirit, each of which is a mystery for our thought, the treatment of the latter is much the same as that of the former. Procession respects purely the personality of the Spirit, and as the generation of the Son, is designated as eternal. Procession is not from an optional act of the Father, for this would place the origin of the Spirit in time, which is contradictory to his true and essential divinity. An optional act of the Father as original to the existence of the Spirit will answer for Arianism or Semi-Arianism, but will not answer for the true doctrine of the Trinity. It only remains to say that the procession of the Spirit is from a necessary and eternal activity of the Godhead. Like other truths of the Trinity, it is inexplicable for human thought. The

procession of the Spirit from the Father is a definite truth of Scripture. This truth, while omitted in the Apostles' Creed, was distinctly affirmed in the Nicene. So far there was no reason for disputation among those who accepted this Creed. All could agree in its affirmation that the Spirit proceedeth from the Father, as this is so definitely a truth of Scripture. It might still be questioned whether this gave the whole truth in the case. Such a question did arise. Soon after the Nicene Council it came to be hotly disputed whether the procession of the Spirit was from the Father only, or from the Father and the Son. The former view prevailed in the East; the latter in the West. A provincial Council, convened at Toledo, A. D. 589, and representing the Western view, added to the Nicene Creed the notable Filioque, so that the procession of the Spirit should be expressed as from the Father and the Son. The friends of this addition thought it a logical requirement of the true and essential divinity of the Son; that if the Son is ■μοο■σιος τ■ πατρ■—of one substance with the Father—The procession of the Spirit must be from the Son as from the Father. The question is thus carried into a sphere of speculation which seems too subtle for any very positive assertion of doctrine. However, this issue respecting the procession of the Spirit was a chief influence which led to the separation between the East and the West, or to the division of the Church into the Greek and the Roman. Evangelical Churches hold the Filioque. The procession of the Spirit from the Father is, as we have stated, explicitly scriptural: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me" (John 15:26). The procession from the Son is not an explicit truth of Scripture; yet it is held to be derived from the Scriptures, but only in an inferential mode. This mode is legitimate; and a doctrine thus obtained may be as validly scriptural as if explicitly given. Many leading doctrines are so derived; notably, the doctrine of the Trinity, and the doctrine of the person of Christ. The only question is whether the grounds are at once thoroughly scriptural and conclusive of the inference. This is the vital question concerning the procession of the Spirit from the Son.

There are certain relationships between the Father and the Spirit which imply, and, for their full truth, require, the procession of the Spirit from the Father. But the same relations exist between the Son and the Spirit, which, therefore, prove the procession of the Spirit from the Son. For the proof of this procession, these facts of relationship must be presented. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the Son, just as he is the Spirit of the Father (Romans 8:9; Galatians 4:6; 1 Peter 1:11). This fact of a common relationship seems clearly stated, without any qualification or reserve. If it be true, as maintained in this argument, that the Spirit is the Spirit of the Father on the specific ground of procession, and that this is the only ground of the relation, he must be the Spirit of the Son on the same ground. Therefore the procession of the Spirit is from the Son, as from the Father. This is one Scripture proof of the Filioque. Again, the mission of the Holy Spirit in the economy of redemption is from the Son, just as it is from the Father (John 14:16; John 14:26; John 16:7; Acts 2:33). Here also is a fact of common relationship, clearly expressed, and without any distinction. But the mission of the Spirit from the Father implies a subordination, the only ground of which is in his procession from the Father. Therefore his mission from the Son implies a subordination which must have its ground in a procession from the Son. This is the second argument. The two give, in substance, the more direct Scripture proof of the Filioque, or of the procession of the Spirit from the Son.

049. II. Divinity Of The Spirit.

II. Divinity Of The Spirit. The argument in this case is much the same as for the divinity of the Son. It is grounded in the same principle, which underlies all science, that every thing is what it is by virtue of its essential and distinctive qualities. As on this principle we found the proof of the divinity of the Son in his possession of the distinctive facts of divinity, so in the same method we prove the true and essential divinity of the Spirit.

1. Attributes of Divinity.—These attributes are not so fully ascribed to the Spirit as to the Son; yet the ascription is entirely sufficient for the argument. If only one were so ascribed, all must be included; for they cannot be separated. More than one is in the ascription. The eternity of the Spirit must be manifest in his creative agency, which will be separately treated. It may here suffice that the Spirit is plainly declared eternal (Hebrews 9:14). The attribute of omniscience must be manifest in the offices which the Spirit fulfills. In the declaration of his knowledge of God there is a profound expression of his omniscience: “For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God” (1 Corinthians 2:10-11). No man can know the secret things in the mind of other men, but the Spirit searcheth and knoweth all things. The deepest emphasis is in the fact that he searcheth and knoweth the mind of God. The searching is the absolutest knowing. This is the sense of ■ρευν■, as the term is used in other texts (Romans 8:27; Revelation 2:23). There is no stronger expression of an absolute omniscience in the Scriptures. This is the omniscience of the Holy Spirit.

“Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?” (Psalms 139:7) is a central question in a long passage, which, in the strongest sense, expresses the absolute omnipresence of God. That omnipresence is as strongly expressed by interrogation as by affirmation. The question respecting the Spirit is in the affirmative sense of his absolute omnipresence. The same truth will appear in the works of the Spirit.

2. Works of Divinity.—The works of the Spirit are manifold, and of such a character that they can be possible to his agency only on the ground of his essential divinity. The moving of the Spirit upon the face of the waters (Genesis 1:2) signifies a creative agency, which brought order out of chaos, clothed the world with light, and produced the forms of organic life.[260] The symbolical inbreathing of God into the nostrils of Adam, as yet a lifeless bodily form, signifies an agency of the Spirit in quickening him into life. The action of God, as figuratively expressed, was in this case as the action of the risen Lord and Saviour, when he breathed on his disciples, as a sign of the gift and power of the Holy Spirit (John 20:22). As in this case the sign-act of the Saviour signified the agency of the Spirit as the source of their spiritual life and the power of their ministry, so that sign-act of God meant the agency of the Spirit as the original of life in Adam. There are other expressions of the work of the Spirit in creation. The garnishing of the heavens is his work (Job 26:13). This carries one’s thought back to the beginning, when, as we saw, the Spirit transformed the chaotic mass into a cosmos. So he clothes the heavens in their light and beauty. In respect to

this world, the Spirit is ever and every-where operative as the source of life (Psalms 104:30). This may suffice for the creative work of the Spirit.[261] Such works are conclusive of his divinity.

[260]Lewis:Six Days of Creation, pp. 63-67.

[261]Morgan:Scripture Testimonies to the Holy Spirit, pp. 5-8. The Spirit is the source of prophetic inspiration: “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Peter 1:21). In a more specific application, the prophecies respecting the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow were the utterance of the Spirit (1 Peter 1:10-11). Many of his sufferings, long foretold, sprang from free causalities in the volitions of men. Were these the only prophecies of the Spirit, they would prove his absolute prescience. Only an omniscient mind could unerringly predict such events. The vastly broader scope of prophecy, comprehending all the predictive utterances of the Spirit, deeply emphasizes the requirement and the proof of his omniscience.

Christianity is replete with the agency of the Spirit. The Gospel, in distinction from the law, is designated “the ministration of the Spirit” (2 Corinthians 3:8). This accords with the prophecy of Joel and the promise of Christ respecting the fuller presence and power of the Spirit 9Joel 2:28; Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-5). Fulfillment of both the prophecy and the promise began on that memorable day of Pentecost—only began, because this was the initiation of a fuller ministry of the Spirit permanently distinctive of the Gospel. The outward signs which attended this manifestation, with some extraordinary gifts, might cease, but the presence and power of the Spirit must abide. The life of the Church and the saving efficiency of the Gospel are in his presence and power. Hence the agency of the Spirit in the many forms of his operation is fully expressed in the Kew Testament. This agency is conclusive of his divinity. We may group a few facts for the illustration and proof of our statements. The saving efficiency of the Gospel is in the power of the Spirit. This truth is in the promise of Christ to endow his disciples with power for their work of evangelization (Luke 24:49); and this truth they ever recognized and exemplified (Acts 4:31; 1 Thessalonians 1:5). It is definitely the office of the Spirit to make the truth a convincing power in the conscience of men (John 16:8-11). Regeneration, that mighty transformation of the soul out of a state of depravity into a true spiritual life, is the work of the Spirit (John 3:5-6). Also, the Spirit is an assuring witness to the gracious adoption and sonship attained through regeneration (Romans 8:16). All the graces of the new spiritual life arc the fruitage of his renewing power and abiding agency in the soul (Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 5:9). Through the power of the Spirit we are transformed into the image of Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18). He is a Helper and Intercessor in all truly earnest and availing prayer (Romans 8:26-27); the source of all strength in the inner spiritual life (Ephesians 3:16); the necessary helping agency in all gracious access to the Father (Ephesians 2:18). The union of believers, the unity of the Church, is through the gracious work of the Spirit (2 Corinthians 12:13).

These manifold and great works require an infinitude of personal perfections. Giving efficiency to the ministry of the Gospel, applying the truth with convincing power to the conscience of men, renewing depraved souls in true holiness after the image of God, sustaining the life of the Church through a quickening influence in the mind and heart of believers individually—these are works which God only can perform. In this agency the Spirit must be operative through the whole Church, in the mind of every believer. Indeed, the sphere of his agency is vastly broader; for he is a light

and influence in every mind of the race. His personal agency must therefore be every-where operative. This is conclusive of his omniscience and omnipotence; for it is only through such attributes that a personal agency can be omnipresent. Hence, in every view of the work of the Spirit in the economies of religion, and especially in Christianity, he is truly and essentially divine.

3. Supreme Worshipfulness.—The worship of the Holy Spirit is not so fully revealed as that of the Son. It is neither so explicitly enjoined as a duty nor so frequently exemplified in instances of worship. Yet there are facts of Scripture which clearly give the sense of his supreme worshipfulness. Such is the fact that he may be the subject of the deepest blasphemy (Matthew 12:31). Blasphemy is the use of reproachful or impious terms respecting God or against God. Its specially deep impiety arises from the infinite perfections of God and his supreme claim upon our devout homage. When, therefore, we find in the Scriptures a blasphemy against the Holy Ghost of the very deepest turpitude and demerit the fact must mean his supreme claim upon the reverence and worship of men. The sanctity and responsibility of an oath arise from the perfections of God, in whose name alone it must be taken, and ever with reverence (Deuteronomy 6:13; Matthew 5:33-36). Otherwise an oath is profane and impious. Yet there is an asseveration of Paul in the presence of the Holy Spirit which is of the very essence of an oath: “I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost” (Romans 9:1). “This being an appeal to Christ and to the Holy Ghost, as knowing the apostle’s heart, is of the nature of an oath.”[262] “This is one of the most solemn oaths any man can take. He appeals to Christ as the Searcher of hearts that he tells the truth; asserts that his conscience was free from guile in the matter, and that the Holy Ghost bore him testimony that what he said was true.”[263] The best commentators are agreed that this is a form of solemn protestation partaking of the nature of an oath. . . . The full sense of the words is: ‘I protest by Christ that I speak the truth. I take the Holy Spirit, who knoweth my heart, to witness that I lie not.’”[264] Thus did Paul asseverate in the name and presence of the Holy Spirit, with all that constitutes the substance and solemnity of an oath, just as elsewhere he more formally made oath in the name of God (2 Corinthians 1:23). Such an oath is utterly irreconcilable with the religious faith and life of Paul, except with devout reverence for the Holy Spirit, such as is central to the supreme worship of God.

[262]Macknight:On the Epistles, in loc.

[263]Clarke:Commentary, in loc.

[264]Bloomfield:Greek Testament, in loc. The Holy Spirit occupies the same position in the form of baptism as the Father and the Son (Matthew 28:19). This sacrament has a profound religious significance, and its administration is a very real religious service. In this service the faith of the Church embraces the central truths of the Gospel, and her prayers are poured forth for the great spiritual blessings which the baptism signifies. Truly there is profound worship in this service. In the light of Scripture, as in the deepest consciousness of the Church, even from the beginning, these great blessings come more immediately from the Holy Spirit. Did our Lord in the institution of this sacrament mean that the Holy Spirit should be omitted from the supreme worship in its proper administration? Surely not. Else, he has very strangely enjoined the administration in the name of the Holy Spirit, just as in the name of the Father and of the Son. What is true of the form of baptism is equally true of the apostolic benediction. This benediction is an invocation of blessings from the Holy Spirit, just as from the Father and the Son (2 Corinthians 13:14). It is an invocation,

with adoration of the Spirit, just as of the Father and the Son. The divine attributes, divine works, and supreme worshipfulness of the Holy Spirit are conclusive of his divinity.

4. Relative Subordination.—The Spirit is of one and the same substance with the Father and the Son. Any divergence from this doctrine must be either tritheistic, or Arian, or purely Unitarian. Yet the Church early accepted, and still holds, the doctrine of an economical or relative subordination of the Spirit to the Father. This subordination appears in the offices which the Spirit fulfills in the divine economies of religion, particularly in Christianity. After the adoption of the Filioque, the procession of the Spirit from the Son also, there was for the Western Church the same sense of subordination to the Son. There is a mission of the Spirit from both the Father and the Son, and in this mission appears the subordination of the Spirit. The subordination, however, is purely on the ground of procession, not from any distinction in true and essential divinity.

General reference.—Owen: Discourses on the Holy Spirit; Pearson: Exposition of the Creed, article viii; Smeaton: On the Holy Spirit; Morgan: Scripture Testimony to the Holy Spirit; Walker: Doctrine of the Holy Spirit; Hare: The Mission of the Comforter; Parker: The Paraclete, Essays on the Personality and Ministry of the Holy Spirit; Heber: Personality and Office of the Comforter, Bampton Lectures, 1816; Buchanan: Office and Work of the Holy Spirit; Daunt: Person and Offices of the Holy Spirit, Donnell Lectures, 1879; Cardinal Manning: Internal Work of the Holy Ghost; Stowell: The Work of the Spirit, Congregational Lectures, 1849; Moberly: Administration of the Holy Spirit in the Body of Christ, Bampton Lectures, 1868.

050. Chapter 8: Truth Of The Trinity.

Chapter 8 Truth Of The Trinity. The doctrine of the Trinity, as formulated in Christian theology, is exclusively a question of revelation. Hence the ground of question of its truth has respect simply to the reality the doctrine and sufficiency of its Scripture ground. The Scriptures neither formulate the doctrine nor directly express it. The one text most nearly approaching such an expression is no longer accredited as genuine, and therefore is dismissed from the discussion (John 5:7). The Scriptures clearly give the elements of the doctrine. These elements in proper combination truly constitute the doctrine. Therefore the doctrine itself is a truth of the Scriptures. This is the method of proof. It will thus readily appear that but little remains for our discussion. We have sufficiently treated the primary questions of the Trinity, and it only remains so to bring the results together as to render clear and conclusive the Scripture proofs of the doctrine.

051. I. Proofs Of The Trinity.

I. Proofs Of The Trinity.

1. Omission of Questionable Proofs.—The argument for the Trinity from the Scriptures is so full and clear that there is no need of questionable proofs. Yet some long in use may be so classed. We may instance the plural form of the divine name; the threefold priestly benediction; the tersanctus or trinal ascription of holiness to God; the manifestation of Father, Son, and Spirit at the baptism of Christ. These facts were pressed into the argument for the Trinity by leading fathers of the Church, and have continued to be so used by very eminent divines. Yet others, not inferior either in the exegesis of the Scriptures or in reaching their doctrinal content, fail to find any direct proof of this doctrine in these facts. With this opposition of views between the friends of the doctrine the facts in question can hardly be of any use in a polemic with its opponents. The plural divine name, ■■■■—Elohim—occurs in many places. Only an overstrained definition, however, could give it the sense of a trinal distinction of persons in the Godhead. Elohim is placed in apposition with ■■■■ (Deuteronomy 4:35; 1 Kings 18:21)—Jehovah—and in such instances a plural sense of the former would be inconsistent with the latter. Therefore Elohim has no fixed plural sense which can give the personal distinctions of the Trinity. There is a threefold priestly benediction in the one divine name, Jehovah (Numbers 6:24-27).With those who use the fact for the proof of the Trinity, stress is laid upon the definite trinal form of benediction and the distinction of blessings, as at once indicating and distinguishing the three persons of the Trinity, It is only as the text is read in the light of later and fuller revelations that any such meaning appears. Hence this form of priestly benediction is not in itself any proof of the Trinity. There is in the Scriptures a thrice-holy predicate of God (Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8). But, as in the previous case, it is only as we read thisTrisagion in the light of a fuller revelation of the Trinity that we find in it any suggestion of the doctrine. It is therefore in itself without proof of the doctrine. Fathers of the Church were wont to say: “Go to the Jordan and you shall see the Trinity.” They had in view the manifestation of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit at the baptism of Christ (Matthew 3:16-17). In the clear light of the New Testament, and with the doctrine constructed out of the truths which it reveals, we do recognize the three persons of the Trinity in this divine manifestation. But apart from this fuller revelation very little truth of the Trinity is given; for these manifestations, simply in themselves, might stand with the Arian or Semi-Arian heresy.

2. Verity of the Constituent Facts.—The unity of God, the personal distinctions of Father, Son, and Spirit, the divinity of the Son, and the personality and divinity of the Spirit we have found to be clear and sure truths of Scripture. The result is not tritheism, but a triunity of persons in the Godhead—the doctrine of the Trinity.

3. The Facts Determinative of the Doctrine.—The argument for the Trinity centers in the requirement of the doctrine for the interpretation and harmony of the Scripture facts. It is in the method of science, which accepts as a principle or law whatever will interpret and unite the relative facts; and the more when such principle or law is the only means of explaining and uniting them.

Such a result is the inductive verification of the principle or law. The Trinity is the only doctrine which can interpret and harmonize the trinal distinction of divine persons in the unity of God. It is therefore the doctrine of Scripture. We proceed in precisely the same method in Christology, so far as it respects the person of Christ. While the Scriptures reveal him as one person, they freely ascribe to him both human and divine facts. The facts are interpreted and harmony attained through a union of the human and divine natures in the unity of his personality. This doctrine of his personality is thus inductively verified as a truth of Scripture. In the same method we have maintained the doctrine of the Trinity. The method is legitimate and the proof conclusive. The doctrine is a truth of the Scriptures.

052. II. Mystery Of The Trinity.

II. Mystery Of The Trinity.

1. Above our Reason.—The Scriptures give the facts of the Trinity, but without any doctrinal combination, and without any explanation of their seeming contrariety. There is no solution of the mystery for our reason. Whoever attempts an explication of the doctrine must treat it either superficially or in a fruitless speculation. The highest attainment is in a scriptural and accordant statement of the constituent facts, with the doctrinal result.

2. Without Analogies.—The mystery of the doctrine naturally incites an outlooking for illustrations which may bring it into the apprehension of thought. In the literature of the question we find the results of such incitement. Attempts at illustration began with the early Christian fathers and have continued to the present time. Joseph Cook, following the example of so long a line of predecessors, gives an illustration in his own impressive mode of thought and expression.[265] Christlieb, also recent in the treatment of the doctrine, is elaborate in the use of analogies.[266] Our criticism of such illustrations, whether of ancient or modern use, is that they are without sufficient basis in analogy, and therefore useless for both reason and faith. The notice of a few instances may suffice for the force of this criticism.

[265]Boston Monday Lectures, “Orthodoxy,” pp. 62, 68 [266]Modern Doubt and Christian Belief, pp. 275-278. The triple facts of intellect, sensibility, and will unite in the personality of mind. True; but no ground remains for any personal distinctions either in the mind or in the powers which constitute its personality. No possible distinction between personal mind and its constitutive powers or between these powers can have any analogy to the personal distinctions of the Trinity. Thesis, antithesis, and synthesis are so related in thought as to constitute a trinity in unity. Perhaps not. For such a result the three must completely co-exist in thought, and the possibility of such a co-existence is far from sure. Further, analysis holds as closely with these forms of thought as they do with each other. With this fact, the four might combine in as complete a unity of ‘thought as the three. All analogy of the three with the Trinity is thus shown to be fallacious. Besides, modes of thought can have no analogy to the personal subsistences of the Trinity. There is a trinity of dimensions in the unity of space, and a trinal distinction of past, present, and future in the unity of time. These dimensions and distinctions, however, are purely relative, and without any reality in the absolute unities of space and time. Even if realities, they still could have no likeness to the Trinity. We think in propositions, and cannot else think at all. A proposition is a trinity of subject, predicate, and copula. All this is true; but the distinction of parts in a proposition has no analogy to the distinction of persons in the Trinity, and for the obvious reason that in the former case there are no personal qualities as in the latter. Man in personality is a trinity of body, soul, and spirit. This trichotomic anthropology is not settled as a truth. If it were, the instance would still be useless. Body and soul, as apart from mind, have no personal quality. Hence the distinction of natures in the unity of man can have no analogy to the distinction of persons in the unity of God. Luminosity, color, and heat combine in the unity of light. But light is no such a unity as personality. Nor have its

properties any personal quality. There is no analogy to the Trinity. Such illustrations are really useless for both reason and faith, and we think it better to omit them.

There is a widely prevalent trinitarianism in pagan philosophy and religions, but it is valueless for the Christian doctrine, except as an indication that trinitarianism is rather attractive than repulsive to speculative thought. It is valueless because so very different in its contents. The doctrine of the Platonic philosophy, and of Brahmanism and Zoroastrianism, so far as representing a trinal distinction of divine persons, is rather tritheistic than trinitarian. There is in neither a union of the divine persons in the unity of God. The doctrine of emanation, so prevalent in these systems, carries with it the sense of inferiority or a lower grade in the emanations. Hence, so far as in these systems we find a trinal distinction of divine persons, they are neither truly and essentially divine, nor yet a trinity in any proper sense of the Christian doctrine.[267] This doctrine, without any antecedent in philosophy, or in the speculations of pagan religions, has its sure and only ground in the Scriptures.

[267]Knapp:Christian Theology, p. 145; Shedd:History of Christian Doctrine, vol. i, pp. 243-245.

3. A Credible Truth.—The objection most commonly urged against the doctrine of the Trinity is its mystery; whereas this is in itself no valid objection. If all mysteries were in credible, the sphere of truth would be infinitely narrowed. The world within us and without us is replete with mystery. The facts of nature which are combined in the many forms of science are open to observation, but the laws of nature, without which there is no true science, are realities only for rational thought, and in themselves a profound mystery. What do we know of cohesive attraction? or of the forces of chemical affinity? or of gravitation, acting, across the measureless spaces that separate the stars, and binding all systems in the harmony of the heavens? or of life in the manifold forms of its working? or of the power of the will, which in all voluntary agency reveals itself in our own consciousness? We know forces in their phenomena, and in the laws of their action, but forces themselves are for us an utter mystery. If we must dismiss all mysteries, the higher truths of science and philosophy must go with the higher truths of religion as no longer truths for us. But mystery is no limit of credibility. The principle is as valid for the doctrine of the Trinity as for science and philosophy. Were the constituent facts of the doctrine m contradictory opposition, it would be incredible, but for that reason, and not because of its mystery. Unitarianism may assert their contradictory opposition, and even make a plausible case, but only on such a modified statement of the facts as violates polemical justice. The facts as posited by Trinitarians are not contradictory. Hence, the doctrine, however profound a mystery, is properly accepted as a truth of the Scriptures. It has the credibility of the Scriptures themselves.

4. A Vital Truth of Christianity.—The doctrine of the Trinity is no speculative abstraction, but a central truth of the Gospel, and closely articulated with all that is evangelical in Christian theology. Without it the religion of Christ falls away into a mere moral system. The divine Fatherhood is largely the theology of professedly Christian Unitarianism, however rationalistic it may be. Its frequent utterance is m a tone of fondness and assurance. Reference to expressions of Christ cannot be omitted, even though all that is supernatural be denied him. No other ever put such meaning into the words, “The Father,” “Your Father,” ‘‘My Father,” ‘‘Our Father.” Unitarianism may pervert their meaning, but cannot overstate their plenitude of truth and grace. As we previously pointed out, the divine Fatherhood is given only through the divine Sonship. Our own existence is

through the creative work of God; and we are his offspring only in a figurative sense. No higher sense of his Fatherhood is given simply through our creation. The divine Fatherhood, with its plenitude of grace and love, is given only through the divine filiation of the Son. It cannot be given in any form of professedly Christian Unitarianism or Rationalism. It was not given in the older Socinianism, though it held so strongly the miraculous conception of Christ; for in any rational sense of this fact the divine agency was operative simply in a creative mode. Arianism has no other mode of the Son's existence. Semi-Arianism,homoiousian as to the nature of the Son, is too indefinite respecting both his nature and mode of existence to give any true sense of the divine Fatherhood in correlation with the divine Sonship. These deepest truths are given only with the doctrine of the Trinity. The divine Fatlierhood is at once real and revealed through the divine filiation of the Son. Christianity could not part with this truth without infinite loss. Our religious consciousness needs it, and the more with the truer sense of sin and the deeper exigencies of our moral and spiritual life. In the intensest expressions of God's love emphasis is placed on the Sonship of Christ, through whose mediation he achieved our redemption (John 3:16; Romans 8:32; 1 John 4:10). The divine Fatherhood as revealed in the divine Sonship is the only sufficient pledge of his grace and love. Hence for this pledge we are carried into the central truths of the Trinity. The atonement is bound up with the doctrine of the Trinity, as It is groundless without the true and essential divinity of the Son. It is not meant that Arianism formally rejected the atonement, but that, with such a Christology, it was illogically retained. It is true that Arianism represents the Son as very great—so great as to be the Creator of all things. If, however, as this doctrine holds, the Son was himself a created being, he could not create the heavens and the earth, nor any part of them; and this representation of his greatness must be an extreme exaggeration. A created being cannot create other existences. His powers, however great, must still be finite, and therefore infinitely short of creative energy. Neither could a created being, and therefore finite and dependent, redeem a sinful race. Only the divine Son could make an atonement for sin. It is noteworthy that the sacred writers present the infinite greatness of Christ in connection with his redeeming work, as though the former were a necessary assurance of his sufficiency for the latter. It was the Word, who was God, and maker of all things, who was incarnated in our nature for the purpose of our redemption (John 1:1-3; John 1:14). The Son, through whose blood we have redemption and remission of sins,, created all things in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, thrones, dominions, principalities, powers—all things (Colossians 1:14-16). There is significance in such association of these truths. The divinity of the Son is to be understood as the necessary ground of his atonement and the assurance of its sufficiency. Without his divinity there is no atonement for sin. But his divinity is a central and determining truth of the Trinity; so that the atonement is indeed bound up with this doctrine. It is therefore a vital doctrine in Christianity. The offices of the Holy Spirit in the economies of religion, and particularly in Christianity, as previously pointed out, are manifold and profound. It must follow that the character of Christianity as a religion is largely involved in the question of his personality and divinity. Without these truths the agency of the Spirit cannot stand in the same light as with them. Neither can the fruits of his agency stand in the same light. Conviction for sin, regeneration, assurance of a gracious sonship through the witness of the Spirit, the help of the Spirit in the duties of life and his consolations in its sorrows, the graces of the Christian life as the fruits of the Spirit—these cannot have the same meaning without their source in the personal agency of the divine Spirit. There is a falling away of Christianity into a mere moral system. Christ is a wise teacher and a good example, but not a

divine Saviour. The personal agency of the Spirit in the Christian life lapses into the motives of the Gospel and the moral culture of one's self. So vital is the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and with it the doctrine of the Trinity in Christianity. The sacrament of baptism, so significant of our moral and spiritual need, and so assuring of all needed help from the baptism and Father, and the Son, and the Spirit, in whose name we are baptized, would be quite meaningless without the truths which we combine in the doctrine of the Trinity. The apostolic benediction, which invokes for Christians the love of God, and the grace of Christ, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, would be equally meaningless. The formula of baptism and the invocation of the benediction are not meaningless, but profoundly significant of the deepest truths of Christianity. With these truths the doctrine of the Trinity is given. The vital offices of the Son and the Spirit in the economy of redemption and in the salvation which the Gospel reveals may be further emphasized by a brief but significant text: For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (Ephesians 2:18). This one great privilege is for both Jews and Gentiles. The privilege is great because there is salvation for us only in this access to the Father. It is attainable only through the redemptive mediation of the Son for us, and the gracious work of the Spirit within us. Each office requires a personal divine agency, and both the Son and the Spirit must be divine persons. These truths are simply central to the all-pervasive sense of Scripture respecting the offices of the Son and the Spirit in our salvation. In their combination we have the doctrine of the Trinity. It follows that the rejection of this doctrine is the rejection of these vital truths. The doctrine of the Trinity deeply concerns the Christian life. Bishop Butler clearly points out the obligations of duty arising from the relations in which the Son and the Holy Spirit stand to us in the economy of redemption and salvation. These duties arise from moral grounds, just as the duties which arise with the relations in which we stand to each other and to God. As related to others, we are under the obligations of justice, truth, kindness, charity; as related to God, we are under the obligations of reverence, obedience, and love: so, as related to the Son and Spirit, we are under obligations of reverence, honor, love, trust, gratitude, fear, hope. In what external manner this worship is to be expressed is a matter of pure revealed command ; as perhaps the external manner in which God the Father is to be worshiped may be more so than we are ready to think. But the worship, the internal worship itself, to the Son and Holy Ghost, is no further matter of pure revealed command than as the relations they stand in to us are matter of pure revelation; for the relations being known, the obligations to such internal worship are obligations of reason, arising out of those relations themselves. In short, the history of the Gospel as immediately shows us the reason of these obligations as it shows ns the meaning of the words Son and Holy Spirit."[268] [268] Analogy, part ii, chap, i, sec. 2. As the duties of the Christian life are thus concerned with the doctrine of the Trinity, so, with this doctrine, there are the weightier truths for our faith and experience, and indeed for the whole practical life of religion. "Whether in comparison with pure Unitarianism or even the highest form of Arianism, there is an infinite fullness and depth of truth in the true and essential divinity of the Son and the Spirit, with the incarnation and atonement of the one, and the vital agency of the other in our spiritual life. These distinctive truths of the Trinity embody the weightiest motives of the Gospel, and thus give to the faith which truly embraces them the greatest practical efficiency, while at the same time they deepen and intensify the experiences and practical forces of the inner Christian life. Hence it is that in the history of the Church we find with the doctrine of the Trinity the most spiritual, practical, and evangelistic type of Christianity. Trinitarians may fall short, and far short, of their faith in both the inner and outer life. Still for them there are the highest possibilities of both. There are not such

possibilities with any anti-trinitarian creed. As the religious faith departs from the doctrine of the Trinity it must in a like measure lose the significance of the mediation of Christ and the agency of the Holy Spirit in the religious life. By so much does Christianity fall away from its true evangelical form toward a mere moral system. In pure Unitarianism this fall is quite complete. From this ground no evangelical development of Christianity is possible. It is an open truth that the deepest and most earnest Christian life of the present, whether as an inner experience and practical force, or as an outward endeavor toward the evangelization of the world, is with the Trinitarian Churches.

We have attempted no philosophy of the Trinity. There is for us no present solution of the doctrine. There is, however, a philosophy of its profound significance for the spiritual and practical Christian life. This philosophy we have clearly indicated. God in Christianity is God in Trinity. This doctrine underlies the most vital forces of the Gospel, and on the ground of Scripture we hold it in a sure faith, whatever its mystery for our thought. “That which remains a cross for our thinking is thus at the same time the crown of the Christian conception of God.”[269] [269] Van Oosterzee:Christian Dogmatics, vol. i, p. 293.

General reference.—Hooker: Ecclesiastical Polity, book v, secs. 51-56; Usher: Body of Divinity, chap, iv; Cudworth: Intellectual System, chap, iv; Waterland: Importance of the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity, Works, vol. iii; Burton: Antenicene Testimonies to the Doctrine of the Trinity; Howe: The Oracles of God, lects. xiii-xvi; Bull: Defense of the Nicene Creed; Owen: God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost;Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity, Works (Goold’s), vol. li; Edwards: Observations on the Trinity; Bickersteth: The Rock of Ages; Cook: Boston Monday Lectures, “ rthodoxy;” Taylor: Revealed Theology, The Trinity; Graves: Select Proofs of the Trinity, Works, vol. iii; Christlieb: Modern Doubt and Christian Belief, lect. iv; Kidd: On the Trinity; Treffrey: The Trinity; Dorner: Doctrine of the Person of Christ, Nicene Trinity, vol. ii, pp. 181-346.

Unitarian view.—Clark: Orthodoxy, chap. xvi; Norton: Statement of Reasons; Wilson: Unitarian Principles; Eliot: Unity of God; Forrest: On the Trinity.

053. Chapter 9: God In Creation.

Chapter 9 God In Creation. In opening this question certain points should be noted, certain distinctions made, as preliminary to the main discussion. This is necessary to clearness, for the reason that the question concerns several spheres of creative work. The distinctions between matter simply as being, matter in its orderly physical forms, and matter in its organic forms, give rise to different questions respecting the work of creation. Then there is the distinction between material and spiritual existences. This distinction is so profound that the creation of matter and the creation of mind are two separate questions. We have thus indicated the points which must be more formally discriminated in their discussion.

054. I. The Question Of Creation.

I. The Question Of Creation.

1. Several Spheres of Creative Work.—There can be no actual separation between matter as substance and its primary qualities, though there is a real distinction for abstract thought. But there is no such inseparable connection between matter and its orderly forms. The latter we may think entirely away from the former. They are actually separable. The fact is manifest in many instances. Cohesive attraction loosens its grip and solid bodies disintegrate and dissolve. Chemical compounds are resolved into their discrete elements. Organic forms decay and fall again into dust. The earth was once a chaos, formless and void. This is a truth of Scripture (Genesis 1:2), and a truth of science as well. It was the same in substance then, as now with its plenitude of orderly forms. But while the substance may exist without these forms it must ever be present in them. Idealism may speculatively question or even deny the reality of substantial being in the cosmos, but must ever practically confess it. Positivism may ignore this reality, but, with its confessed agnosticism, retains no right to dispute it. But as matter and its orderly forms stand apart in the manner stated, they constitute distinct spheres respecting the question of creation. The reality of being is given us through its properties as apprehended in sense-perception, or through its activities as apprehended in consciousness. That which is extended in space and divisible into parts, which has form and color, is more than its properties, is indeed substantial being as the necessary ground of such properties. That which thinks and feels, which reasons and constructs the sciences and philosophies, which is creative in aesthetic spheres, which is personally active in a moral and religious life, is more than its faculties, more than its manifold forms of thought and feeling, of rational and moral agency, is indeed the reality of being as the necessary ground of these multiform powers and activities. There is equally the reality of being under both the properties of body and the activities of mind. But as these properties and activities unerringly point to the reality of being, so they equally point to an essential distinction of being. The two classes of properties and activities, the one of body and the other of mind, have nothing in common. The cognition of them is in totally different modes. With these profound distinctions, there must be an essential difference between material and spiritual being. Hence the eternity of the former could be no proof of the eternal existence of the latter. Even if both have their original in the creative work of God, it must be through distinct energizings of his will. It thus more fully appears that the distinction between material and spiritual being deeply concerns the question of the creative work of God.

2. Question of Creation Threefold.—All that is here required is to bring together the distinctions previously made, and to point out the result respecting the work of creation. The question whether matter is eternal or a creation is distinct and complete in itself. The question respecting the creation of the orderly forms of matter, as they stand in the cosmos, is equally distinct and complete in itself. Further, if the eternity of matter were conclusively proved, neither the eternity of the cosmos nor its naturalistic origination could follow as a consequence. Finally, the essential distinction of mind from matter, and of its faculties and activities from the properties and orderly

forms of matter, separates the question of its creation from that of both the others. Neither the eternity of matter nor the naturalistic evolution of the world in all its lower orderly forms could give any account of the existence of personal mind. Thus the question of the creative work of God has respect to three distinct spheres. We might still make a further distinction inclusive of all living forms of existence below man, which would raise the three to four.

These distinctions are so real and obvious, and the separation of the question respecting matter itself from the other spheres of creation so complete, that a sweeping contrary may well be thought strange. Yet there is such a contrary. “If the first cause is limited, and there consequently lies something outside of it, this something must have no first cause—must be uncaused. But if we admit that there can be something uncaused, there is no reason to assume a cause for any thing.”[270] Dr. Cocker takes the same position. Indeed, he indorses the view of Spencer, or, rather, he indorses his own with that of Spencer. “With what reason can we admit that some things do exist that never were created, but others cannot so exist? If substances are eternal, why not attributes? If matter is self-existent, why not force? If space is independent, why not form? And if we concede the eternity of matter and force, why not admit the eternity of law —that is, uniformity of relations? And if so much is granted, why not also grant that a consequent order of the universe is also eternal?”[271] In speaking of “things” supposed to exist without having been created, there is reference to space, and time, and number, as well as to matter; and the position is that an admission of the eternity of any one “tends to the invalidation of every proof of the existence of God.” Neither space, nor time, nor number is a creatable entity in any proper sense of the term. Nor could their eternity in any sense or measure invalidate the proofs of theism. The existence of space and the existence of orderly forms in space are entirely separate questions. Law has no ontological existence, but is simply an expression of the order of things. Hence to speak of an eternal law is to assume an eternal order of existences. Whether the universe as an orderly existence is eternal or of time-origin is a question of fact, and one the decision of which is in no sense contingent upon the creation of matter. The time-origin of the universe is a truth of science as well as of Scripture. There is no surer truth of science. As an origination in time, it is dependent, and must have a sufficient cause. God only is such a cause. Therefore God is. The eternity of matter could not invalidate this proof.

[270]Spencer:First Principles, p. 37.

[271]Theistic Conception of the World, pp. 67, 68.

055. II. Concerning The Creation Of Matter.

II.Concerning The Creation Of Matter. For the present discussion this question is still on hand. We have not, certainly not intentionally, intimated any doubt that matter is a creation in the sense of a divine origination. So far, we have simply aimed to discriminate the spheres of God's creative work, and for two ends: that we might attain a clearer view of his work: and that the proofs of theism, while not here to be repeated, might remain secure on their distinctive grounds, and especially that they might not illogically be made contingent upon the most difficult question respecting the creation of matter. That we hold this creation as a fact does not commit us to all the proofs alleged.

1. The Question on A Priori Ground.—The position is often taken that the eternity of matter is contradictory to the absoluteness of God. Hence its origination in his creative agency is an immediate datum of his absoluteness. "The doctrine of creation flows from the infinite perfection of God. There can be but one infinite being. If any thing exists independent of his will, God is thereby limited."[272] "However perplexing the thought of a properly so-called creation from nothing may be, yet it flows with absolute necessity from belief in an absolutely almighty Creator. Nay, matter without any form cannot be conceived of ; an eternal matter must also be an independent matter, another God; of which it would be hard to explain why it ought or should need to yield to the will of an almighty Fashioner."[273] "If we admit that any thing besides God is self-existent, that any thing exists independent of God as 'the condition of the divine agency and manifestation,' then God is not the unconditioned absolute Being."[274] These citations are given as instances of this position, and as examples of its expression. There is a false sense of the Infinite and the Absolute, such as we previously considered, which would have the consequences here alleged. That sense, however, neither of these authors admits. With the true sense, which they fully hold, the logic of their position is overstrained.

[272]Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. i, p. 561.

[273]Van Oosterzee:Christian Dogmatics, vol. i, p. 302.

[274]Cocker:Theistic Conception of the World, p. 68.

Common as the notion is in philosophic thought, it is not an a priori truth that "there can be but one infinite being." With the false sense of a quantitative, space-filling infinite, there could be but one. God is not infinite in such a sense, but infinite in the plenitude of his personal perfections; nor would he be less infinite, though another existed. Moreover, if matter is eternal, it is not therefore an infinite being. The eternal existence of matter as finite is just as conceivable as the eternal existence of God as infinite. If matter is eternal, it is independent of the creative and preserving agency of God; but he is not thereby limited. His perfections and sovereignty would be just the same as with the origination of matter in his creative agency. It is true that "matter without any form cannot be conceived of," but it can be conceived without any orderly or cosmical form. Whether created or eternal, this is the primordial state of matter in the view of both Scripture and science.

Hence the eternity of matter neither concludes the eternity of the cosmos nor the power of its naturalistic evolution. When it is said that “an eternal matter must also be an independent matter, another God,” logic is strained even to breaking. It would be independent of God’s creative agency, but might else be as completely subject to his will as though his own creation. If he could have created matter as it is, so could he annihilate it and replace it with another, and none the less so on the supposition of its eternity. Hence, even on this supposition, there is no independence of matter in contradiction to the true infinity and absoluteness of God. The utmost extreme is reached in the assumption that, if matter is eternal, “it must be another God.” Why another God because eternal? Plainly, it is not God in any sense, whether created or eternal. Duration itself has no determining influence upon the quality of any being. If we assume that matter, if eternal, must be another God, we assume that the eternity of its existence determines its quality as divine. Such an assumption, however, is excluded as utterly groundless. As that which is eternal has no cause of existence, neither has it any determining cause of its quality. It simply is what it is. There is no a priori necessity that an eternal being must be a divine being. God is God in what lie is, and from no determinate consequence of his eternity. If matter were eternal, it would simply be what it is, without any determining cause. The explanation of “why it ought or should need to yield to the will of an almighty Fashioner” is sufficiently given in his almightiness. Nor could the admission “that any thing besides God is self-existent” involve the consequences that he “is not the Absolute Being,” unless such thing should be of a nature to limit or condition him. As we have previously explained, matter itself could exert no such power. In the further assumption that if “any thing exists independent of God as the condition of the divine agency and manifestation, then God is not the unconditioned Absolute Being,” there may be truth; indeed, we might say there must be truth, as the members of the proposition are identical. It is a truth, however, which has no weight against the eternity of space, and time, and number, for in no sense can these condition the divine agency. It is equally invalid against the eternity of matter.

We think it clear, as the result of the previous criticism, that there is no a priori proof of the creation of matter. Certainly that proof does not appear in the arguments which we have reviewed. We know not any of greater strength.

2. On Cosmological Ground.—A necessary link in the cosmological argument for theism is the dependence of the cosmos. The proof of this dependence centers in the manifest fact of its time-origin. This time-origin, however, has respect simply to the orderly forms of the cosmos, and leaves open the question respecting matter itself. To prove the creation of matter by the logic of the cosmological argument, it would be necessary to prove its dependence or time-origin. This is the vital point of the question. It is mainly a question of physical science. While great progress has been made in physics, and rapidly in recent years, it is not yet a completed science. Its diverse schools are conclusive of its incompleteness. “Many scientists of to-day are of the opinion expressed by Grove,[275] that ‘probably man will never know the ultimate structure of matter.’”[276] Others may look for such knowledge, but no one claims its attainment. If there are as yet no data of the science conclusive of the time-origin of matter, neither are there any conclusive against it. It is hardly in the nature of the science that there ever should be such, while the former, if not yet sufficient, may be attainments of the future.

[275]Correlation of Physical Forces, p. 187.

[276]Cocker:Theistic Conception of the World, p. 132.

Some scientists claim the present attainment and possession of facts sufficient to prove the time-origin and creation of matter. “Chemical analysis most certainly points to an origin, and effectually destroys the idea of an external self-existent matter, by giving to each of its atoms the essential character, at once, of a manufactured article and a subordinate agent.”[277] “None of the processes of nature, since the time when nature began, have produced the slightest difference in the properties of any molecule. We are therefore unable to ascribe either the existence of the molecules or the identity of their properties to the operation of any of the causes which we call natural. On the other hand, the exact equality of each molecule to all others of the same kind gives it the essential character of a manufactured article, and precludes the idea of its being eternal and self-existent.”[278] Respecting the more direct point, the only difference between Herschel and Maxwell is that what the former alleges of the atoms the latter alleges of the molecules.

[277]Sir John Herschel:Dissertations on the Study of Natural Philosophy, sec. 28.

[278]Professor Clerk Maxwell:Nature, vol. viii, p. 411; these citations in Cocker:Theistic Conception of the World, pp. 125, 126.

3. On Teleological Ground.—The central and necessary fact in the teleological argument for theism is the manifestation of rational intelligence in the conception of ends and the adjustment of means for their attainment. With the cosmos as an end, there is the use of matter in its formation. There can be no question of a marvelous adaptation of matter to this end. Does this adaptation lead us certainly to its creation for this end? The answer little concerns the question of a divine teleology in the cosmos. With a negative answer, such teleology would still have sure ground and ample room. The mechanical use of a machine may so determine the material for its construction as to allow but little skill in its selection. The material of a locomotive is not only well suited to its mechanical use, but a practical necessity. Hence the sphere of skill in its selection is very narrow; yet the rational teleology in the conception of its use, and in its construction for that use, is not thereby diminished. In like manner, even if matter were an eternal existence, the conception of the cosmos as an end and the constructive use of mutter in its formation would still be conclusive of a divine teleology.

Whether the ground of teleology can carry us any further depends upon the scientific discovery of an inner constitution of matter which evinces its origin in time, and its creation for cosmical uses. Some claim such a discovery, as we have recently seen, but without any decisive concurrence of scientific authority. Such opinion, therefore, cannot be conclusive of the creation of matter. Further, as previously noted, the facts which mark the molecules or even the atoms as “manufactured articles” may not be primordial with matter itself, but a product of the divine agency in its preparation for cosmical uses. The molecules are not the ultimates of matter, and therefore not necessarily original with it. Even if matter itself is eternal, it is easily conceivable that God in the process of his creative agency should cast it in its molecular forms, or even endow its atoms with affinities and potencies not originally theirs. The conclusion is that the creation of matter is no a priori truth, and that, while nothing appears in the light of science as contradictory to its creation, neither does any thing yet appear as conclusive of it.

4. In the Light of Scripture.—Here the question may be studied either in the more specific terms of creation or in the informing idea of passages which beyond a mere verbal sense express the work of creation. The more specific terms in the Hebrew are ■■■■■■■■■. The second and third have rarely been given the definitive sense of immediate or originative creation of matter. There is nothing in the root-sense or biblical use of the words to warrant such a definition. The same is true of the first. “The best critics under stand them as so nearly synonymous that, at least in regard to the idea of making out of nothing, little or no foundation for that doctrine can be obtained from the use of the first of these words. They are used indifferently and interchangeably in many passages ; as, for example, in Isaiah 43:7, where they all three occur applied to the same divine act. The Septuagint renders ■■■ indifferently by ποιε■ν and κτ■ξειν. But especially in the account of the creation in Genesis 1, the verbs are used irrespectively in verses 7, 16, 21, 25, etc.; and in comparing Genesis 1:27; Genesis 2:7, man is said to have been created, yet he is also said to have been formed out of the ground. Again, in the decalogue (Exodus 20:11) the verb is ■■■,made, not created.”[279] “The Hebrew word ■■■, rendered create, has nothing abstract or metaphysical about it. It is as clearly phenomenal as any word in the language. Its primary meaning is to cut, hence toshave, shape, form, or fashion.”[280] The result is, not that the primitive act of creation was not originative of matter itself, but that there is no conclusive proof of such origination on purely philological ground.

[279]Kitto:Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature, “Creation.”

[280]Lewis:The Six Days of Creation, p. 48. The result is the same in the mere verbal study of κτ■ξειν and ποιε■ν, the terms of creation in the New Testament, and in common use in the Septuagint for the rendering of the Hebrew words previously considered. Κτ■ξειν, “literally, to make habitable, to build, to plant a colony. . . . Then, in general, to set up, to establish, to effect any thing. In the Septuagint it answers mainly to the Hebrew ■■■, though this word in Genesis is always rendered by ποιε■ν, and afterward by either ποιε■ν or κτ■ξειν, and, indeed, more rarely by ποιε■ν, but not (as has been said) exclusively by κτ■ξειν.”[281] An originative creation of matterdoes not appear in the mere verbal sense of these words. It could not have been an original sense, because such a creation had no place in the Greek mind which originated and used these terms. It does not follow that the sense of an originative creation of matter is not in the Scriptures. All exegesis is not purely philological. There are other laws of interpretation, and must be, for the reason that philology alone cannot always give the full meaning or even the true meaning of an author. Any such etymological restriction would deny to the words of the Hebrew Scriptures the reception of any new or varied meaning in the advancement of revelation, and equally to Christianity the introduction of any new ideas into the Greek of the New Testament. Nothing in either case could be more false to the facts. While, therefore, an originative creation of matter cannot be determined from the Scriptures on purely verbal grounds, such a sense of creation may be clearly given through other laws of interpretation.

[281]Cremer:Biblico-Theological Lexicon.

It is an obvious principle of interpretation that often the connections of a word, rather than its etymology, determine its meaning. By such a law we may find in the first biblical use of ■■■ the sense of an originative creation of matter. This is really the method of interpretation and the chief resource of such as claim for the word itself the sense of such a creation. We may notice a few

instances; not so much for exemplification, however, as for the proof thus given of the creation of matter. On Genesis 1:1, as containing this sense of creation: “This is also shown in the connection between our verse and the one which follows: ‘And the earth was without form, and void;’ not before, but when, or after, God created it. From this it is evident that the void and formless state of the earth was not uncreated or without a beginning. At the same time it is evident from the creative acts which follow (verses 3-18) that the heaven and earth, as God created them in the beginning, were not the well-ordered universe, but the world in its elementary form; just as Euripides applies the expression ο■ρανος κα■ γα■α to the undivided mass (μορφ■ μ■α) which was afterward formed into heaven and earth.”[282] “But whatever weight may be due to the usage of the term, it is to be noted that the question turns not so much on the sense of the verb, taken alone and apart from the context, as on the way in which it is to be viewed in such a peculiar collocation as, ‘In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.’ Granted, that in itself the term does not absolutely deny or affirm the presence of pre-existing matter, and that this can be inferred only from the context or subject treated of, the question comes to be. What can be the meaning of the term here? The expression, ‘In the beginning,’ evidently refers to the beginning of created existence, in contradistinction to the eternal being of the Creator, and is thus an absolute beginning in and with time.”[283] There is still another or further decisive connection of this verb. It lies in the conjunctive transition to the state of the earth. “Verse 2 begins, ‘And the earth,’ etc.; but no history can begin with the Hebrew vav, whether taken in the sense of but or and.”[284] It follows that verse 2 is an historic continuation of verse 1; and hence, that the meaning must be the creation of the earth as a void and formless mass. With this result, the meaning must be an originative creation of matter. The void and formless state of the product precludes the sense of a cosmical formation and leaves only the sense of origination.

[282]Keil and Delitzsch:On the Pentateuch, pp. 47, 48.

[283]Macdonald:Creation and the Fall, pp. 64, 65.

[284]Ibid., p. 245. The following words are treated by some as the most direct Scripture testimony to the creation of matter: “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear” (Hebrews 11:3). The former part of the text seems rather to give the sense of a formative creation of worlds. This is the more natural sense of the words, “the worlds were framed by the word of God”—κατηρτ■σθαι το■ς α■■ναι ρ■ματι θεο■. Special account is made, however, of the latter part: “So that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear”—ε■ς τ■ μ■ ■κ φαινομ■νων τ■ βλεπ■μενα γεγον■ναι. There may be a question respecting the construction of these words. Such a question is raised, but it is one which does not materially affect the sense. Bloomfield, after treating the construction, says: “Thus the sense is that ‘the world we see was not made out of apparent materials, from matter which had existed from eternity, but out of nothing; so that, at His fiat, the material creation was brought into existence, and formed into the things we see.”[285] Dr. Hodge holds much the same view. After a review of the construction, he concludes: “Whatever is real is phenomenal; that is, every substance, every thing which really exists, manifests itself somewhere and somehow. The proper antithesis, therefore, to φαινομ■νον is ο■κ ■ντων. ‘The worlds were not made out of any thing which reveals itself as existing even in the sight of God, but out of nothing.’”[286] There is another text classed with this one as at once illustrative and affirmative of the same sense of creation: “God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things

which be not as though they were" (Romans 4:17). His calling things which are not as though they were may be taken in the sense of his divine fiat which causes or can cause them to exist and serve his purpose. "God calls τ■ μ■ ■ντα just as he does τ■ ■ντα; things that do not now exist are at his disposal as really and truly as things that do exist —that is, they can be made to exist and to subserve his purpose, in the same manner as things do which now already exist. If any one still feels a difficulty, he may solve the sentence in this simple way, namely, καλο■ντος τ■ μ■ ■ντα ■ς [■καλεσεν] ■υτα—that is, calling into existence (Genesis 1:2; Psalms 33:6) things that are not, as [he called into existence] things that are. The sense would be for substance the same."[287] "For example, the centurion says to his servant, . . . Do this; but God says to the light, whilst it is not in existence, just as if it were, Come forth, γενο■, come into existence. Think of that often-recurring and wonderful ■■■, Genesis 1; it expresses the transition from non-existence to existence, which is produced by God calling."[288] [285] Greek Testament, in loc.

[286]Systematic Theology, vol, i, p. 560.

[287]Stuart:On Romans, in loc.

[288]Bengel:Gnomon of the New Testament, in loc. This interpretation cannot claim decisive authority, and for the reason that some able expositors do not find in the words the sense of an originative creation. Still, there is nothing forced or Inconsistent in the interpretation, and the text may fairly be claimed in support of the creation of matter.

There is another significant fact. There are in the Scriptures many references to the creative work of God: many sublime descriptions of the greatness of that work, and of the greatness of God in its achievement; much of detail in these descriptions; lofty expressions of his majesty and the absoluteness of his power, of his eternity in distinction from the temporariness of all other existences; but in all this there is not the slightest reference to any eternally existing matter which he used in framing the heavens. This total omission is out of all consistency with such an existence. In other spheres of existence, particularly in those of life and mind, the proof of an originative creation is clear and full. Science can give no account of the origin of either life or mind. In the light of reason, as in the light of revelation, both originated in the creative agency of God. With this clear truth, there is the less reason to question the creation of matter; or, rather, the former facts of an originative creation should be accepted as quite decisive of the latter.

056. III. Several Spheres Of Creation.

III. Several Spheres Of Creation. Our discussion of Theism unavoidably anticipated much that might properly be treated under the present heading. Hence little more is here required than to present the several questions in the light of Scripture. This limitation will avoid unnecessary repetition.

1. The Physical Cosmos.—Out of a primordial chaos came orderly worlds and systems. The transformation was the work of God in a formative creation. This is the sense of the Scriptures in many passages. They open with the account of such a creation (Genesis 1:1-8). God spreadeth out the heavens; maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south (Job 9:8-9). The heavens declare the glory of their Creator, and the firmament showeth his handiwork (Psalms 19:1). By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the word of his mouth (Psalms 33:6). Of old he laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the work of his hands (Psalms 102:25). He stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in; and as we lift our eyes to the heavens we behold the worlds which he created (Isaiah 40:22; Isaiah 40:26). He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion (Jeremiah 10:12). The same truth is in the New Testament. The earth and the heavens are the creation of God, and therefore the manifestation of his perfections (Romans 1:20). We have given the substance of a brief selection of texts which present the creative work of God in the orderly constitution of the earth and the heavens. “What we have given may suffice, especially as the same truth must appear in other texts of creation which include the living orders of existence. After the creation of matter, the work of God within the physical realm is simply formative in its mode. The discrete and confused elements are set in order; chaos is transformed into a cosmos. In this there is no originative creation, but only a constitution of orderly forms.

2. Living Orders of Existence.—The divine creation of these orders is the explicit word of Scripture. “And God said. Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose ‘Seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.” “Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.” “Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so” (Genesis 1:11; Genesis 1:20; Genesis 1:24). “These were successive creative fiats of God; and the living orders were the product of his own divine energizing. “Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein” (Nehemiah 9:6). “Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is” (Acts 4:24). These verses, written in far later periods, are cast in the mold of the Mosaic cosmogony, and clearly express the truth of creation respecting the living orders of existence. In organic structure these forms of existence are profoundly distinct from all crystalline and chemical forms, and constitute a higher order. Life is a profound differentiation. Sentience and instinct still deepen the distinction. They constitute higher orders of existence than

any mere physical forms. It is entirely consistent with these facts that their origin is in distinct and specific acts of creation. The creative work which brought the physical elements out of confusion into order was not in itself the origination of these organic and living orders. This is the sense of Scripture, as manifest in the texts previously given. Only by further and distinct energizings of the divine will did they receive their existence.

Life is a mystery. All concede this. Neither the scientist nor the philosopher has any more insight into its inner nature than the rustic. Its reality, however, is above question. Its energy is great, its activities intense. So effective an agent must be a profound reality. Science gives no account of its origin. Whatever the arrogance of assumption a few years ago, for the present there is little pretension to any merely physical or naturalistic origin. The origin of life is accounted for in the creative agency of God. In the light of reason, as in the light of Scripture, this is its only original. The case is only the stronger with the sentience and marvelous instincts of the animal orders. Hence the divine creation of the living orders of existence was more than a mediate or merely formative creation ; it was an immediate or originative creation, which gave existence to life, with its distinctive facts in the higher orders of animal existence.

3. Man.—The origin of man is in a further distinct act of creation. It is accompanied with forms of expression and action which mark its significance. After the completion of all other works, the sacred record is: “And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (Genesis 1:26-27). The separate creation of man is further expressed in the more definite statement of its manner. “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Genesis 2:7). Here are the two modes of creation: one mediate in the formation of the body; the other immediate in the origination of the mind. There are in the Scriptures many references to this distinct creation of man. The sense is really the same whether his origin is referred to the creative agency of God or to his Fatherhood (Numbers 27:16; Ecclesiastes 12:7; Acts 17:29; Hebrews 12:9).

Materialism, in whatever form of evolution, exposes its weakness in any and every endeavor to account for the origin of man and the faculties of mind. It is only by the unwarranted and unscientific assumption of missing links that even his physical evolution from lower orders can be alleged. The difficulties are infinitely greater in respect to mind. The powers of mind go differentiate it from all else in the realm of nature, so elevate it above the plane of all other forms of existence, that its naturalistic evolution is a manifest impossibility. Only the creative agency of God can account for the origin and existence of mind. This question, however, properly belongs to the anthropological argument for theism, where its fuller discussion may be found.

4. Angels.—Science, as such, knows nothing of angels. They have no connection with any sphere which brings them within her observation. The question of their existence and origin, as of their character and rank, is purely one of revelation. It is reasonable to think that the limits of living and rational existences are far wider than this world, which is but a speck among the magnitudes of the physical universe. Spectrum analysis discloses a physical composition of other worlds similar to our own. “With this fact of likeness, it is not to be thought that all those worlds lie forever

waste—without form and void. It is reasonable to think many of them are the homes of living orders; and of the higher as of the lower. The lower forms point to the higher. As in this world man completes the orders of life, and is their rationally necessary culmination, so we must think of rational beings as completing the scale of living existences in other worlds. In a universe originating in the wisdom and power of God the existence of angels, such as appear in the light of revelation, is entirely consistent with the highest rational thought.

All that we know of the angels we learn from the Scriptures. Many interesting facts are given. For the present, however, their creation is the definite point. Their nature and offices, with their distinction as good and evil, will be treated elsewhere.[289]

[289] The deeply interesting facts of Scripture respecting the angels should not be omitted. Yet they neither directly concern any vital doctrine of theology nor claim any place in a logical order of doctrines. The question of the angels is therefore assigned to an appendix to the second volume. On the ground of Scripture, their origin in a divine creation is a manifest truth. Yet of this there is no definite statement. It is, however, a clear implication. As finite existences originating in time, they could have no other origin. Their creation is implied in the fact that they are angels of God, and particularly in the definite and impressive manner in which this fact is expressed in the Scriptures (Genesis 28:12; Luke 15:10; Hebrews 1:6). It is equally implied in their own adoring worship of God as the Creator of all things (Revelation 4:11). The same truth is given in those comprehensive texts which attribute to God the creation of all things in earth and heaven. There is one more direct text: “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and for him” (Colossians 1:16). The creation of the angels is here included in the all things in heaven, and particularly in the all invisible things, which expression discriminates them from the visible forms of existence in this world. It is still more definitely given in the specific terms, thrones, dominions, principalities, powers, which clearly designate angelic orders of existence (Ephesians 1:21; 1 Peter 3:22). When the angels were created is a question on which the Scriptures are silent. If their creation has any place in the cosmogony of Moses, it must be in the first verse of Genesis. To place it there would require the sense of the verse to be so broadened as to include the whole work of creation. This is hardly permissible, because it would break the proper historic connection with the following verses. Neither the time of their creation nor its inclusion in the Mosaic record is in any sense necessary to the interpretation of Scripture. It is neither unscriptural nor unreasonable to think of the angels as created long before the formation of this world. Such a view is not without Scripture ground. It seems no forced interpretation that the morning stars and the sons of God which sang together over the founding of the world were the holy angels (Job 38:4-7).

Whenever the creation of the angels took place, it must have been a creation in the deepest sense of origination. We must not anticipate their nature and qualities beyond the requirement of this particular point; but as they appear in the light of Scripture it is manifest that they are specially spiritual beings, with very lofty intellectual and moral powers. As such, they are not a formation out of existing material, but a divine origination in the very essence of their being.

057. IV. The Mystery Of Creation.

IV. The Mystery Of Creation.

1. Mystery of Immediate Creation.—A mediate or formative creation is so common in the history of civilization, so manifest in its manifold works, and, indeed, so deeply wrought into our experience, that the sense of mystery is mostly precluded. The great achievements in mechanics may often surprise us as to the powers of man, but without perplexity as to the modes of his operation. With this familiarity of a merely formative creation through our own agency, there is the less perplexity for our thought of such an agency in God. Yet for our deeper thought there is still a profound difference in the two cases. We mostly work through mechanical means; whereas God as a purely spiritual being must work by an immediate power of personal will. There is still some light for our thought in the facts of consciousness. We surely know the immediate energizing of our personal will. This energizing is not the less immediate for the reason that the action is first upon our bodily organism, and then through it upon exterior nature. With the simple spiritual essence of mind, we must at some initial point exert an immediate power of will upon the physical organism. To deny this is to assume for all forms of our personal action an absolute mechanical law. Reflective thought, with the facts of personal consciousness in clear view, must ever reject this law. It is true that we thus reach an immediate power of will only upon our own bodily organism, and without the faintest insight into its mode; yet even so much is of value for our thinking of the formative creations of God. With the distinctive fact of a physical organism, we may yet see in the light of our own immediate power of will the reality of an immediate power of the divine will which can so act upon the elements of matter as to set them in their orderly forms. With this power, the formative creations of God are clearly possible. The profound mystery is in the notion of an immediate creation of essential being. If we but think a little, it must appear that any notion of such being as an actual existence is a profound mystery. With the thought of such a reality, the alternatives of an eternal existence or an origination in time inevitably present themselves. Neither is comprehensible in thought. Yet we are shut up to the reality of eternal being. There is no escape either in the extremest idealism or in the baldest positivism. Eternal being is for us an absolute truth. This alternative, however incomprehensible, has ever been accepted in reflective thought. So constant and thorough is this conviction that the possibility of an originative creation never appears in human thought apart from the light of revelation. In all heathen thought, even in its profoundest philosophic forms, matter itself is either eternal or in some inexplicable mode an emanation of the very nature of God. Even with the light of our biblical theism, we need have no reserve in conceding the utter mystery of an originative creation of matter. Objectors, who must admit the utterly incomprehensible reality of eternal being, are in no position to question the possibility of such a creation. The mystery for our thought is no disproof of the possibility.

2. Deeper Mystery of Emanation.—The profound mystery of an originative creation of essential being has induced not a few minds, and even some Christian minds, to accept the notion that things which appear as real and individual existences are an emanation or evolution out of the very nature of God. Sir William Hamilton may represent this view. With him the annihilation of

being is just as inconceivable as its origination: “We are utterly unable to construe it in thought as possible that the complement of existence has been either increased or diminished. We cannot conceive, either, on the one hand, nothing becoming something, or, on the other, something becoming nothing. When God is said to create the universe out of nothing, we think this by supposing that he evolves the universe out of himself; and, in like manner, we conceive annihilation only by conceiving the Creator to withdraw his creation from actuality into power.”[290] All this is grounded in the principle that nothing can come from nothing, and nothing be reduced to nothing—for the forcible expression of which the author cites the words of Lucretius and Persius.[291] [290] Philosophy(Wight’s), pp. 493, 494.

[291]“Nil posse creari De Nihilo, neque quod genitu ‘st ad Nil revocari;” “ Gigni De Nihilo Nihil, in Nihilum Nil posse reverti.” The ancient and familiar formula, ex nihilo nihil fit—from nothing nothing is or can be—is true in its principle, but may be false in its application. It is true in respect to all events and in such application it is thoroughly validated by the law of causation. Whether this law so validates Hamilton’s doctrine of creation is the very question in issue. The creation of the universe out of nothing never can mean, and is never intended to mean, that nothing is in any sense wrought into the material of the new existence. Further, the creation of the universe out of nothing is, in the sense of Christian theism, totally different from the notion of its springing from nothing. In the antecedents for thought there is the infinite difference between an absolute void and the omnipotent God. The notion of an originative creation through his agency is in no violation of the law of causation. The sufficient cause of the new existence is given in the potential plenitude of the Creator. The notion of an absolute complement of being, forever without possible increase or diminution, from which the doctrine is deduced of an emanation or evolution of the universe out of the very nature of God, must be monistic in principle. Otherwise, it must involve an eternal dualism, or even an eternal pluralism of existences, according to the distinctions of essential being. Materialism is monistic, but, as utterly atheistic, it has no part in this question. Monism is the ground-principle of pantheism. Nor is the deduction of a mere phenomenal character of all sensible forms of existence illogical. Hamilton admitted no such an implication of his doctrine of creation, but it is much easier to deny than legitimately to escape such an implication. A doctrine of creation which lies so near the deepest and most determining principle of pantheism cannot give the true sense of the Scriptures respecting the origin of the universe. Further, if this doctrine of an evolutionary creation be true of matter, it must be equally true of mind, whether human or angelic. Mind is thus reduced to a merely phenomenal mode of existence, without any reality of being in itself. For otherwise the very being of God must be divided into many parts. It thus appears that this doctrine lies close to the emanation of souls out of the nature of God as maintained in Brahmanism—entirely too close to be true to the Scriptures. The heading of these paragraphs signifies a deeper mystery of an evolutionary than of an originative creation. With the pure spirituality and infinite personal perfections of God, such must be the fact. True, we cannot think how either matter or mind is originated. Can we think how either can be evolved out of the very nature of God? If we know any thing, we know the reality of our own personal being. “We cannot be such through a mode of evolution except by a division of the divine nature. If matter is an evolution, either it must express the eternal nature of God or be the subject of an essential mutation, which is equivalent to an originative creation. These facts fully justify our heading. As one turns back from the mystery of an originative creation to the evolution of the universe out of the nature of God, he does but plunge into a deeper mystery.

3. Evil Tendency of Emanative Doctrine.—The doctrine of an emanation or evolution of finite existences out of the nature of God is not new to speculative thought. In its deeper principle, as we have seen, it underlies pantheism. In widely prevailing pagan religions, souls are an emanation of God, and destined to a re-absorption into his nature. Such an evolution of matter was deeply wrought into the gnosticism which appeared as a malign heresy in the early history of the Church. There was a long series of emanations, on a scale of degradation, and terminating in matter. Matter was thus viewed as intrinsically evil, and the inevitable source of moral evil. In these latter facts, matter was much the same in the Greek philosophy; in which, however, it was held to be a distinct eternal existence, not an evolution out of the nature of God. The tendency of the doctrine in both was evil, and only evil. In religion, its tendency is to asceticism, but with an easy diversion into a life of vicious indulgence. Apart from religion, the primary tendency is to such a life. With an intrinsically evil nature and a consequent absolute helplessness, there is a ready excuse for the grossest vices; and only the more ready with this evil nature as an emanation of God. With a true Christian theism, of course such consequences are denied. It is hardly thinkable that, with the evolution of finite existences out of the nature of God, such a theism can be maintained or held in any clear view. In any case, the law of moral duty and responsibility may be greatly weakened. If in our whole being, as consisting of soul and body, we are an evolution out of the being of God, and therefore of his very nature, why should not such a nature be the law of our life? The clear view and deep sense of God as revealed in Christianity would reject such an implication; but that view and sense may easily be obscured and weakened; and the direct tendency of such an origin of our nature in God must be toward such obscurity and weakness.

4. Mode of Divine Agency in Creating.—The question thus raised specially concerns the providence of God, but is also properly in place here. Forces, and the power of God as well, are in their deeper nature still secret to our thought, but there are clearly noticeable distinctions in their operation. The mode of agency must in all cases be determined by the nature of the agent. We may thus distinguish between personal agency in man and physical agency in matter. If we cannot reach the secret of physical forces, we yet know their reality in the energy of their operation, and that, on the proper collocation of material elements, they act immediately and necessarily. Such is the law through all the forms of physical force. In distinction from this law, personal agency in man is through an optional energizing of the will. Still, in our present condition there can be no putting forth of power to act upon exterior nature except through our physical organism. There are exigencies of experience when we are deeply conscious of this inability. Such, however, is simply the fact of a present limitation, and it does not follow that in an unbodied state we can have no such power. Much less could such limitation of the divine will thus follow. God is a purely spiritual being, and, hence, whatever power ho puts forth, whether in an originative or in a formative creation, must be purely spiritual, and, therefore, only through the energy of his personal will. Any other sense of creative agency in God is contradictory to both his spirituality and personality, and must sink into some form of pantheism.

Such a mode of the divine agency in the work of creation is widely pervasive of the Scriptures. We read it in the forms of the divine fiat as given in the narrative of creation (Genesis 1:3; Genesis 1:6; Genesis 1:9; Genesis 1:11; Genesis 1:14; Genesis 1:20; Genesis 1:24); in all the texts which attribute the work of creation to the word of God (Psalms 33:6; Psalms 33:9; Hebrews 11:3; 2 Peter 3:5). This view of the divine agency is profoundly important in both a doctrinal and practical

sense. It is the only view which can secure for our faith and religious consciousness the personality of God and his transcendence above the realm of nature.

5. Freedom of God in Creating.—There is observable in both philosophical and theological thought a strong tendency toward the necessitation of God in his creative work. Various grounds are alleged for this necessitation, some of which may properly be noticed. The ground with some is that some form of existence objective to God was necessary to his personal consciousness. God could not come to the knowledge of himself except in this mode. Therefore creation was for him a necessity. This assumption is beyond any warrant of our reason. Personal consciousness in man may be conditioned on some distinct and objective existence. If it be true, as mostly accepted, that the inception of our own consciousness is in sensation, seemingly an objective existence, as the condition of sensation, is necessary to our consciousness. This, however, may be a requirement only for our present embodied state. We cannot affirm it as a law for all intelligences. Much less can we affirm it as a necessary law for the divine consciousness. The difference between the finite and the infinite precludes such an affirmation. Further, there are weighty objections to this assumed necessity for the work of creation. The assumption implies a purpose of God in creating—a purpose that through an objective existence so created he might come to self-consciousness. These ideas are inconsistent. There can be no such purpose without personal consciousness. This leads to further objection. If an objective existence was necessary to the coming of God into a personal consciousness, it follows that such consciousness could not arise until after his creative work. Therefore creation could not be his personal work, for there can be no personal agency without consciousness. Neither could there be intelligence, motive, or aim in the work of creation. In a word, the existence of the world and the universe must be without a divine teleology. We should thus surrender all that is distinctively theistic in the conception of creation.

Some find the necessary source of finite existences in a plenitude of the divine nature which must overflow, and which does overflow in the creation of such forms of existence. Such a view is utterly irreconcilable with any teleological conception of creation. The personal agency of God is whelmed in the necessary activities of his nature. Nor can such a view be reconciled either with the time-origin of the universe or with definite instances of origination. Such a plenitude in God, if assumed at all, must be assumed as eternal. Therefore there should have been an eternal outflow of finite existences, while in fact they are clearly of time-origin.

Many, especially in the line of theological thought, find in the nature of God a moral necessity for his creative work. It is wise and good to create; therefore God as eternally Wise and good must create. “By far the most common opinion from the beginning has been that the creation is to be referred to thebonitas, the goodness, benevolence, or, as the modern Germans at least generally express it, the love of God. As God is love, and the nature of love is to communicate itself, as it must have an object to be enjoyed and rendered blessed, so God created the world that he might rejoice in it and render it blessed.”[292] If the wisdom and goodness of God necessitated the work of creation, it follows that this world, and every other as well, must be the best possible. This was definitely the doctrine of Leibnitz,[293] and in complete logical consistency with such a stand-point. The whole view is open to criticism. It is open to the same insuperable objection as previously alleged against another assumed ground of necessitation. Wisdom and goodness, as of the very nature of God, must be eternal in him. Therefore, if they are assumed to necessitate his creative work, there must be conceded an eternal necessitation. This is utterly irreconcilable with the

time-origin of the world, and especially with the very recent origin of man. Farther, if God must create that he may communicate his love to his creatures and render them blessed, it follows that his creative efficiency should be the only limit of his work. We are in no position to affirm any such implied extension. Finally, ii, as an implication of the ground-principle, this is the best world possible, it further follows that every other world must be precisely the same. There is no proof of any such sameness, but decisive indications of the contrary. Clearly, the angelic orders are very differently constituted from mankind. The reasoning which we thus criticize seems plausible, but it proceeds upon lines which run out far beyond the possible reach of our thought, and hence we cannot be sure of the conclusion. The facts which we can grasp seem decisive against it. If no sentient being, or no rational being, with capacity for higher blessedness, had ever been created, there would have been no wrong to any. Nonentities have no rights.

[292]Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. i, p. 566.

[293]Theodicee. The freedom of God in creating is a requirement of his personal agency therein. Personal agency and free agency are really the same; and there is no clearer truth in Scripture than the personal agency of God in the work of creation. Creation has a purpose and a plan. All things were created in the divine pleasure, and for the manifestation of the divine glory (Revelation 4:11; Psalms 19:1.), to the end that men might know God and live to him as their supreme good (Acts 17:24-28; Romans 1:19-20). Personal agency in such work must be free agency. Hence no necessity could have determined the creative work of God. His freedom therein was absolute.[294]
[294] Cocker:Theistic Conception of the World, pp. 62-66.

058. V. Mosaic Cosmogony And Science.

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1. Historic Character of the Mosaic Narrative.—So ancient and remarkable a document could not escape a most searching criticism. A chief aim of such criticism has been to discredit its historic character. Thus it has been treated as a compilation of more ancient documents, which contained the traditional notions of creation; as a poetic effusion; as a mythical or allegorical composition; as a philosophical speculation of a devout Hebrew upon the origin of the world. In such modes it has been attempted to discredit the Mosaic narrative of creation.

There are no decisive proofs of a compilation. Nor would such a fact affect the character of the narrative, unless it could be proved to have only a pagan source. There is no proof of such a source, but much disproof. In some pagan cosmogonies there are points of likeness to the Mosaic, but also points of very marked difference. The pagan, as Tayler Lewis points out, have a pantheistic cast, and are as much theogonies as cosmogonies.[295] The definite and lofty theistic conception of the Mosaic determines for it a distinct and higher source. The question of a compilation is quite an indifferent one with those who maintain the historic character of this narrative. This is the position of thoroughly orthodox and conservative divines. A compilation, while not complete in originality, may be thoroughly genuine and historical.

[295]The Six Days of Creation, p. 287. Nor is this narrative a poetic effusion. It might be poetic, and yet truly historical. It is not a poem either in form or style. “But every thorough Hebrew scholar knows that in all the Old Testament there is not a more simple, straightforward prose narrative than this first chapter of Genesis.”[296] “There is certainly poetry in other parts of the Bible, and the opening account might have been in the same style, designed like all other poetry, to excite strong emotion—to impress us feelingly with the thought of the wisdom and goodness and greatness of the First Cause, without claiming exact credence for the literal prosaic truth of the representations employed for such an emotional purpose. But the opening narrative of the Bible has not the air and style of poetry, although the subsequent Hebrew poets have drawn largely upon this old store-house of grand conceptions, and thereby thrown back upon it something of a poetical tinge.”[297] Dr. Strong says: “The first chapter of Genesis lacks nearly every element of acknowledged Hebrew poetry.”[298] [296] Terry:Biblical Hermeneutics, p. 548.

[297]Lewis:The Six Days of Creation, pp. 18, 19.

[298]McClintock and Strong:Cyclopaedia, “Cosmology.”

Against the assumption of a mythical or allegorical cast of this narrative we may place the decisive evidences of an historical character. “We have no difficulty in detecting these styles—he mythical and parabolical—in the Scriptures wherever they may occur. When we meet with such a passage as this—‘The trees said to the bramble, Rule thou over us’—or, ‘Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt and planted it’—or, ‘My beloved had a vineyard in a very fruitful hill’—or, ‘A sower went forth to sow, and as he sowed some seed fell by the wayside’—we have no trouble in determining its

character. Every intelligent reader, whether learned in the original languages or not, says at once, if he understands the terms, this is myth—this is parable—this is allegory—this is poetical or figurative language. We fail to detect any of these well-known marks of style in the account of the creation. It professes to narrate the order of facts, or the chronological steps, in the production of our present earth. It is found in Scriptures well known to have existed in our Saviour's day—Scriptures with which he was familiar, which he styled holy, and to which He, the Light of the world, appealed as of divine, and, therefore, unerring, authority. Whatever, then, be its fair meaning, that meaning, we say again, is for the believer the actual truth, the actual fact or facts, the actually intended teaching; and is to be received as such in spite of all impertinent distinctions between the natural and the moral, or any arbitrary fancies in respect to what does or does not fall within the design of a divine revelation."[299] [299] Lewis:The Six Days of Creation, p. 19.

"If we pass to the contents of our account of the creation, they differ as widely from all other cosmogonies as truth from fiction. Those of heathen nations are either hylozoistical, deducing the origin of life and living beings from some primordial matter; or pantheistical, regarding the whole world as emanating from a common divine substance; or as mythological, tracing both gods and men to a chaos or world-egg. They do not even rise to the notion of a creation, much less to the knowledge of an almighty God, as the Creator of all things. . . . In contrast with all these mythical inventions, the biblical account shines out in the clear light of truth, and proves itself by its contents to be an integral part of the revealed history, of which it is accepted as the pedestal throughout the whole of the sacred Scriptures."[300] "Not a few, as Eichhorn, Gabler, Baur, and others, have here found a so-called philosophical myth, wherein a highly cultured Israelite has given us the fruit of his reflections as to the origin of all things, clothed in the form of history. That, however, neither the contents, nor the tone, nor the place of the narrative of creation speaks in favor of this construction is at once apparent to every one. By all later men of God, as also by Jesus and his apostles, the contents thereof are manifestly regarded as history. The form in which the genesis of all things is here clothed can be just as little explained from the mythical standpoint as can the particular object contemplated by the anonymous thinker. . . . By what fatal accident came the thinker on the genesis of the world, who stood so much higher than the most renowned philosophers, to remain unknown to posterity? Assuredly, 'the historical account which is given there bears in itself a fullness of speculative thoughts and poetic glory; but it is itself free from the influences of human philosophemes: the whole narrative is sober, definite, clear, concrete.'"[301] [300] Keil and Delitzsch:On Genesis, pp, 39, 40.

[301]Van Oosterzee:Christian Dogmatics, vol. i, p. 319. The facts thus given respecting the Mosaic narrative are decisive of its historic character. There could be no other intention than to give the facts of creation in an orderly form. Any other view severs the connection of this narrative with the remainder of the book, which is clearly intended for history. Indeed, the whole stream of biblical history is cut off from its fountain. Its similarities to some other cosmogonies may point to an earlier record more or less common to itself and them, but its own profound distinctions and incomparable superiority assert for itself a divine original which the others cannot claim.

2. Theories of Mosaic Consistency with Science.—With the historical character of the Mosaic narrative, the question arises respecting its consistency with science, particularly with geology. It is now above question that geology discloses a process of cosmogony running back through measureless ages; whereas the Mosaic cosmogony is seemingly brought within a few thousand

years of the present time. This apparent discrepancy in time is the real question of adjustment. “When the great age of the world, and not only as a physical body, but in manifold forms of life, came to be manifest in the light of geology. Dr. Chalmers met the issue with the declaration that “the writings of Moses do not fix the antiquity of the globe; and that if they fix any thing at all, it is only the antiquity of the human species.” At a later period, and with the work of the six days in view, he said: “The first creation of the earth and the heavens may have formed no part of that work. This took place at the ‘beginning, and is described in the first verse of Genesis. It is not said when the beginning was.”[302] This position was not wholly new, though mainly so to modern Christian thought. The chief merit of Chalmers, as concerned in this question, lies in his ready apprehension of the issue involved, and in his prompt and confident enunciation of the principle of adjustment. There is no other principle. Yet, while the only one, it is open to different modes of application. It is only in the application that a distinction of theories appears in the reconciliation of Genesis with geology.

[302]Cited by Macdonald:Creation and the Fall, pp. 82, 83.

One mode of adjustment, and the one that Chalmers propounded, proceeds on a distinction of creations as expressed in the first verse of Genesis, and in the account of the six days. There was “in the beginning” a creation of the heavens and the earth. This is the creation the date of which is not fixed, but which is assumed to provide for all the ages of geology. Then there was a second and more recent creation; so recent as to accord with biblical chronology. In the further development of the theory it is maintained that, after long ages of geological history, a cataclysmic disturbance reduced the world to a formless and void mass. All forms of life perished. Some at least hold this view, while others may be less positive of so utter a desolation. Then followed a second and modern creation, the products of which are man and the forms of life cotemporary with him. This creation was the work of six literal days, as detailed in Genesis, and within the reach of biblical chronology.[303] Such is one mode of reconciling the Mosaic cosmogony with geology. If the facts are as posited, the reconciliation is complete.

[303]McClintock and Strong:Cyclopedia, “Cosmogony.”

There is another theory of reconciliation, which, however, is but a modification of the previous one. The same facts of two creations are posited, but the desolation which preceded the modern creation of the six days was only local. After the long ages of geological history arising out of the first creation, with all the actualities of life which this history discloses, a portion of the earth, most likely in south-western Asia, suffered an inundation which destroyed all forms of life therein, and reduced it to a state of chaos. This local section was the scene of the second creation as detailed in the six days of the Mosaic record. These were literal days, and man, with the forms of life more directly related to him, the product of this creative work. Again the reconciliation is complete, if the facts are as given in this modified view.[304] [304] Pye Smith:Scripture and Geology; Murphy:On Genesis, chap. i.

There is a third mode of reconciliation, which agrees with the previous ones in that the Scriptures do not fix the antiquity of the earth, but differs from them in other leading facts. This theory holds the Mosaic and geological cosmogonies to be the same, and provides for the harmony of the two records in the element of time by an extension of the days of creation into geological ages. Such is the distinctive fact in this third mode of adjustment. If such extension is warranted, or even

permissible, the adjustment may be accepted as entirely satisfactory. We know not any other than these three modes of bringing the two records into harmony. There are attempts in fanciful methods, which may be passed without notice.

3. Concerning a Second and Modern Creation.—Most that can be said for this mode of adjustment is that it preserves the literal sense of the days of creation, which, upon the face of the record, seems to be their true sense, and, further, that it answers to the reason for the Sabbath as given in the fourth commandment. It will hardly be pretended that there are interior facts of the records which require such an interpretation. The theory is open to the question whether the interior facts, and the facts of geology as well, are not against the interpretation.

It is surely difficult to read the ideas of this interpretation into the Mosaic narrative, or into the many references of Scripture to the work of creation. Through the whole there runs the sense of an original and completed work, with an unbroken continuity. The absolute silence of Scripture respecting the long ages of life between the creation of the first verse of Genesis and the chaos of the second, the complete overleaping of these ages, and the introduction of a second and modern creation, while the narrative reads just like a history of unbroken continuity, are facts which it is most difficult for the theory to dispose of on any admissible laws of interpretation. There are also very serious difficulties for the theory in the facts of geology, particularly in the unbroken continuity of life since its first inception in the creative work of God.

Against the modified form of the theory, which posits a local chaos, and a local second and modern creation, there are insuperable objections. The continuity of the history is sundered. The grand march of the narrative perishes in the disruption. The sublime work of a universal creation sinks into the narrow limits of a local one. The creative fiat, “Let there be light,” has no higher meaning than a clearing up of the local atmosphere, so that the rays of the sun might again reach the local scene of the second creation. This narrow sense cannot be reconciled with the narrative which places the creation of light and appoints the sun as its perpetual source before the creation of the higher forms of life. Such is the order of facts in the narrative and in the requirement of geology. The theory robs the creation of light of its profound meaning and lofty sublimity. Hugh Miller might well say: “I have stumbled, too, at the conception of a merely local and limited chaos, in which the darkness would be so complete that, when first penetrated by the light, that penetration could be described as actually a making or creating of light.”[305] [305] Testimony of the Rocks, p. 156. The theory requires unwarranted and inadmissible changes in the use of ■■■■■■■■—the earth. In the first and second verses of Genesis the word clearly means the same whole earth, whereas for this theory it means in the second only a small section, reduced again to a state of chaos. Then the theory must force the same narrow sense upon the term in other places which utterly refuse it (Genesis 2:1; Exodus 20:11). “The heavens and the earth, and all the host of them,” of the former, and “Heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is,” of the latter, are clearly the creation of the six days, and such expressly in the latter. It is impossible to reduce such a creation to the narrow sense of this theory.[306] [306] Macdonald:Creation and the Fall, pp. 86-91.

4. Mosaic Days of Creative Work.—The question is, whether these are literal days, as now measured to us, or indefinite and prolonged periods. The latter are the proper alternatives of the former; for if we depart from the literal sense, the length of the days becomes entirely subordinate

to the order of divine works in the process of creation.

Mostly the Christian interpretation of these days has given them the literal sense. Recently, however, there are many exceptions. It may gratify the rancor of infidelity to attribute this change to an exigency created by the disclosures of modern science. Such an occasion may readily be admitted, while all sense of serious perplexity is denied. While the Scriptures are divine, their interpretation is human, and new facts may help to a truer rendering. However, the now rendering is new only to the common view of the later Christian centuries. All along the centuries, and without any exterior pressure, such a sense has been. given, and by most eminent Christian authors—for instance, Augustine and Aquinas. Other names are given by Mivart,[307] and also by Cocker. [308]An indefinite and prolonged duration of these days is not therefore a new meaning forced upon Christian interpreters by the discoveries of modern science, but an earlier one which, in the view of many, the interior facts of the narrative required.

[307]Lessons from Nature, pp. 141, 142.

[308]Theistic Conception of the World, pp. 150, 151. On a casual reading of this record, the days of creation would be taken in a literal souse. In this case, however, as in many others, a deeper insight may modify the first view. The question has no decision, on purely philological ground, for the reason that ■■■—yom—is used in both a definite and indefinite sense. Respecting the former use there is no question. A few instances by reference may suffice for the latter (Genesis 2:4; Job 14:6; Isaiah 12:1; Micah 4:1). As yom—day—is so frequently used in both senses, we must look to the connection for its meaning in any particular place. In the verse where the word first appears it is need for different periods: one, the period of light; the other, the period of the darkness and the light (Genesis 1:5). For the first three days there was no ruling office of the sun to determine their time-measure. Nor is there any apparent law of limitation to a solar measure. There is nothing in the direct account of these three days against the sense of indefinite and long periods. This is the most rational interpretation. With this fact, it seems clearly permissible so to interpret the remaining three days.

5. The Six Days and the Sabbath.—The reason for the Sabbath, as given in the fourth commandment (Exodus 20:11), is specially urged against an indefinite sense of the days of creation. The point is made that the force of the reason for the Sabbath lies in the literal sense of the days of God's working. If this be valid, the literal sense must be true of all the six. It is impossible, however, as we have seen, to fix this sense in the first three. Further, if this reason for the Sabbath requires definite solar days of God's working, it must equally require such a day of his resting, and also a resumption of his work at its close; for his resting as much concerns this reason as his working. Such a consequence proves the groundlessness of this argument for the literal sense of the days of creation.

If the grounds of the Sabbath were the same for God as for man there might be some force in this argument. There is, however, no sameness, not even a similarity, of grounds in the two cases. We need the Sabbath on both physiological and moral grounds—not to name many others. There is no such need in God. Work does not weary him. His resting has no sense of recuperation or repose. Nor is the Sabbath any requirement of his moral nature. Hence the reasons for its observance arising out of his example cannot require a limitation of the days of his working and resting to a definite solar measure. That God wrought through six periods in the upward progress

of his creative work and then ceased, however indefinite or long the days of his working and resting, gives all the reason for the Sabbath, as arising out of his example, which is expressed in the fourth commandment.

G. Consistency of Genesis and Geology.—We have presented the three leading modes of reconciling the Mosaic narrative of creation with the disclosures of geology. While we much prefer the third, and think the others open to objection, we know that they have the preference and support of some leading minds. Were they the only resource of Christian exegesis, it would not be forced into any very serious strait. With the sense of ages for the Mosaic days, which we have found clearly permissible, the reconciliation is complete. Scientists find an accordance between the two records which, beyond the attainment of consistency, proves the divine original of the Mosaic.

It may be objected that scientists are rarely philologists, and the obiection might have weight if this were purely a question of philology. It is not such. Nor is any profound attainment in philology requisite to an intelligent treatment of the question. Only one word is directly involved. As it is used in different senses, its meaning in any particular place must, as we have seen, be found in its connections. These connections are open to clear eyes, even without a profound philology. It is not thus conceded that the learned in biblical philology are generally against the age-sense of day in the Mosaic record. Far from it. Neither is proficiency in science generally, or in geology in particular, necessary to an intelligent treatment of this question. The leading fact to be known is that the geological history of the world is a record of long ages, and, with this, some clear view of the successive stages of its upward progress. One may know all this without being a geologist in any scientific sense. Hence Dr. Cocker, with the requisite knowledge of science and philology, though skilled in neither, might with propriety treat the question as a philosopher. This he has done with rare ability, and with a result which leaves no apparent conflict between science and the Mosaic cosmogony.[309] [309] Theistic Conception of the World, chap. v.

Macdonald and C. H. Hitchcock have treated the question rather as theologians or expositors, but with an intelligent apprehension of the facts concerned, as embodied in the cosmogony of science. The former, after a comparison of the two cosmogonies, says: “It is not too much to assert that the harmony above traced, and the peculiarities of the Mosaic narrative of creation, botli as regards manner and matter, are explicable only on the principle that the Creator of the earth, of its rocks and mountains, its rivers and seas, plants and animals, is also the Author and Source of this record of the wonderful production of his almighty power.”[310] Dr. Hitchcock holds, with many others, the rather poetic view of a revelation of the Mosaic cosmogony through a process of daily visions. This allowed him a primary literal sense of the days; which, however, he holds in a symbolical form. Time-symbols frequently occur in Scripture. There is such a use of day or days and other time-measures in prophetic utterance (Daniel 8:14; Daniel 9:24-26; Daniel 12:11-12; Revelation 9:15; Revelation 11:2-3). As future events were prophetically expressed in a symbolical use of days, so in a like use the successive stages of creation were retrospectively expressed. Further, as the events which fulfill the prophecies reveal the symbolical sense of their time-measure, so the age-sense of day in the narrative of creation is revealed in the light of modern science. It is this sense which enables the author to find in Genesis the cosmogony of science. “A review of the work of creation as described in nature and revelation convinces us of the essential harmony of the two records.”[311] This is the conclusion after a full comparison of

their respective contents.

[310]Creation and the Fall, pp. 85, 86.

[311]Bibliotheca Sacra, July, 1867.

Eminent scientists, proceeding with the sense of geological ages in the days of creation, not only find no serious contrariety between Genesis and geology, but do find a marvelous accordance in the cardinal facts of the two records. Such facts are placed in parallel columns, that the agreement may at once be clear to the eye and the clearer in the mind. This is no “deadly parallel” for Moses, but the proof of a divine original of his cosmogony. Its great facts were, in his time, beyond the reach of the human mind, and remained so until within a century of the present. Only the divine mind could then have communicated these truths.

Hugh Miller, thoroughly Christian in faith and life, was a man of rare intelligence, and eminent in geology. He profoundly studied and compared the cosmogonies of Genesis and geology, so as to command the clearer view of their likeness in the account of the successive stages of the world’s creation. We need not follow the author in this discussion, but may give the result as reached in the full persuasion of his own mind. “Now, I am greatly mistaken if we have not in the six geological periods all the elements, without misplacement or exaggeration, of the Mosaic drama of creation.” “Such seems to have been the sublime panorama of creation exhibited in vision of old to ‘The shepherd who first taught the chosen seed, In the beginning how the heavens and earth Rose out of chaos;’ and, rightly understood, I know not a single scientific truth that militates against even the minutest or least prominent of its details.”[312] [312] Testimony of the Rocks, pp. 204, 210.

Professor Winchell was a distinguished scientist, and thoroughly versed in the questions which concern the cosmogony of Genesis. He also instituted a comparison, and found a wonderful agreement between the two records. The upward progress and completion of the world as detailed in the two is, day for day, substantially the same. “The author of Genesis has given us an account which, when rightly understood, conforms admirably to the indications of latest science.” After a further unfolding of the two records, Winchell says: “Now compare the work of these ‘days’ with the events of the seven ‘periods’ before indicated, and judge whether the correspondence is not real, and, indeed, much greater than we could expect of a history written in an age before the birth of science, and (according to the popular chronology) 2,500 years after the close of the events which it narrates.”[313] [313] Reconciliation of Science and Religion, pp. 358, 361. The eminence of Dr. Dawson for scientific learning is well known. He, too, finds a “parallelism of the scriptural cosmogony with the astronomical and geological history of the earth,” at once illustrative and confirmatory of the former. After a thorough study and lucid comparison of the two histories, he gives the result, modestly, indeed, but clearly without any hesitation in his own mind: “The reader has, I trust, found in the preceding pages sufficient evidence that the Bible has nothing to dread from the revelations of geology, but much to hope in the way of elucidation of its meaning and confirmation of its truth.”[314] [314] Origin of the World, p. 859. On this question Professor Dana has coupled the name of Professor Guyot with his own: “The views here offered, and the following on the cosmogony of the Bible, are essentially those brought out by Professor Guyot in his lectures.”[315] Dana repeats this statement in a fuller treatment of the biblical question.[316] We thus have the common view of two very distinguished scientists.[317] “Professor Dana, of Yale,

and Professor Guyot, of Princeton, belong to the first rank of scientific naturalists; and the friends of the Bible owe them a debt of gratitude for their able vindication of the sacred record."[318] The details of this vindication must be passed simply with the references. Both hold the age-sense of day in the Mosaic record, and in the discussion there is disclosed a wonderful harmony between the cosmogonies of science and Genesis; a harmony which is explicable only with the divine original of the latter. "The order of events in the Scripture cosmogony corresponds essentially with that—of science—which has been given." "The record in the Bible is, therefore, profoundly philosophical in the scheme of creation which it presents. It is both true and divine. It is a declaration of authorship, both of creation and the Bible, on the first page of the sacred volume. There can be no real conflict between the two books of the Great Author. Both are revelations made by him to man—the earlier telling of God-made harmonies coming up from the deep past, and rising to their height when man appeared, the later teaching man's relations to his Maker, and speaking of loftier harmonies in the eternal future."[319] [315] Manual of Geology, p. 472.

[316]Bibliotheca Sacra, January and July, 1856.

[317]Rev. J. O. Means gives a formal statement of Guyot's doctrine inBibliotheca Sacra, April, 1855.

[318]Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. i, p. 573.

[319]Dana:Manual of Geology, pp. 744, 746.

General reference.—Much of the literature of theism, as previously given, relates to the question of creation. The question is discussed in works on systematic theology and commentaries on Genesis; and the later more directly meet the issues raised by modern science.

Pearson: Exposition of the Creed, article i; Howe: The Oracles of God, part ii, sec. 2; Dwight:Theology, sermons xvii-xxii; Venema: System of Theology, chap, xix; Martensen: Christian Dogmatics, sees. 59-78; Hodge: Systematic Theology, vol. i, part i, chap, x; Van Oosterzee: Christian Dogmatics, secs. 56-58; Shedd: Dogmatic Theology, Theology, chap, vii; Oehler: Theology of the Old Testament, part i, sec. 2; Ladd: Doctrine of Sacred Scripture, part ii, chap, ii; Hickok: Creator and Creation; Macdonald: Creation and the Fall; Lewis: The Six Days of Creation; Lange, Murphy, Delitzsch, Dods, Quarry, severally on Genesis; Buckland: Bridgewater Treatise; Miller: Footprints of the Creator; Murchison: Siluria; Mantell: Medals of Creation; McCausland: Sermons in Stones; Cook: Religion and Chemistry; Fraser: Blending Lights; Agassiz: Structure of Animal Life; Herschel; Discourse on Natural Philosophy.

059. Chapter 10: God In Providence.

Chapter 10 God In Providence. A PROVIDENCE of God is very fully revealed as a fact. The Scriptures are replete with expressions of his government. These expressions are given in such terms of universality, and with such detail, that nothing is omitted. God rules in all the realms of nature, and in their minutiae as in their magnitudes. A few texts will verify these statements. God's power sustains and rules the mighty orbs of heaven (Isaiah 40:26), The heavens and all their hosts, the earth and the sea, with all they contain, are the subjects of his preserving and ruling providence (Nehemiah 9:6). The thunder and the lightning are his; the frost and hail and snow, and the warm winds which dissolve them, are the determination of his hand (Job 37:2-11). His showers water the earth, soften the furrows, and bless the springing corn (Psalms 65:9-10). He cares for the falling sparrow, and numbers the hairs of our head (Matthew 10:29-30). Such is the providence of God as revealed in the Scriptures. The idea of a providence is not in itself an obscure one. It appears in the light of our own experience and observation. We see it in the government of the State, or in the offices of the ruler of the State. This sense of providence is expressed in the New Testament (Acts 24:2). The idea is yet more clearly and impressively given in the parental care of the family. In the government of the children, in the watch-care over their interests, in the provisions for their good, there is a true parental providence. With such facts ever present in our own life, it is easy to rise to the idea of a divine providence. God is the Creator of all things, our own Creator and Father. He must care for the works of his own hands, even for those without any capacity for either pleasure or pain. Much more must he care for the forms of existence with such capacity. This care must be providential in its offices. We are his offspring and sustain to him the intimate relation of children. Nor are little children in deeper need of the parental care than we are of the providential ministries of the heavenly Father. There is no reason to doubt his care for us. The idea of his providence is just as simple and assuring as the idea of that parental providence which we see in our human life. We read this meaning in the words of the psalmist: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he rememboreth that we are dust" (Psalms 103:13-14). We read it more 'clearly and deeply in the words which Christ addressed to his disciples for their assurance in the trying experiences of this life: "Your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things" (Luke 12:30). But the providence of God is thus viewed merely as a fact; and it is only in this view that it is clear and simple.

It is useless to assume for this question a simplicity which is not real. It is equally useless to attempt a concealment of its perplexities. They appear all along the history of its doctrinal treatment. Nor are they any less in the more recent issues of the question. Difficulties appear in the diversities of doctrinal view.

Questions arise respecting the nature and extent of the divine agency in the preservation and government of the universe. The answers widely differ. In pantheism God is the only operative force, but as a nature without personal agency. The position of theism must consistently be directly the opposite. The providential agency of God is purely and only personal. As personal, it must be through the rational energizing of his will. On this point theists have not always been sufficiently

definite. There is a doctrine of the divine immanence which does not keep sufficiently clear of the pantheistic view. While the personality of God is still maintained, the view that his divine nature as a universal presence is a universal energy finds too much place in the doctrine of providence. Answers differ respecting the extent of the divine agency as well as respecting its mode. The differences range along the whole line from the negative position of deism to the position that God is the only force operative in nature. Again, the answers differ as to whether the divine agency always operates in harmony with the laws of nature, or whether it sometimes so departs from these laws as to prevent their natural results, or to attain results which could not otherwise be achieved. The point is not here to discuss these several views, but simply to note them as signs of the difficulties which beset the doctrinal treatment of the divine providence. The difficulties of a doctrinal treatment have been increased by its implication with questions of modern science. If, as some scientists maintain, the spheres of animate and rational life are one with the material, and all subject to an absolute continuity of physical causality, there is no place for the providence of God as a personal agency. There is in the order of nature, especially, within the physical sphere, a uniformity which is seemingly the determination of purely natural forces. The question thus arises whether there are such forces, and, if so, whether their operation may be, and sometimes is in fact, modified by the divine agency. All such questions now concern the doctrine of providence.

Another question of difficulty arises from the relation of providence to our free moral agency. It is clear that without such freedom there can be neither moral obligation nor responsibility. Both, however, are realities above any reasonable questioning. Moral freedom must be a reality. Hence the real question is the adjustment of such a freedom to the offices of a divine providence in our human life. To many minds this adjustment may seem very simple and easy, but the history of opinions on the question does not warrant such a view.

There is still the difficulty, and perhaps the most perplexing of all, arising from the magnitude of evil, physical and moral. Only a complete theodicy could fully adjust such evil to the doctrine of providence. There is no present attainment of such a theodicy. However, the truth of a divine providence is not so conditioned for our faith. It is so conditioned only for the full comprehension of our reason. This is not necessary to a fully warranted and very sure faith. While there may be no complete explication of present evils, the proofs of a beneficent providence may be clear and sure. The same is true respecting all other questions of perplexity.

Chapter 60

060. I. Leading Questions Of Providence.

I. Leading Questions Of Providence. The divine providence cannot be formulated under any single law, nor as operative in any single mode. This is obvious in view of the many spheres of its agency. As we found it helpful to distinguish the spheres of God's creative work, so may we find it helpful to distinguish the spheres of his providential work. There is ample ground for such distinction, and for the analysis of the question. In this method we may relieve the doctrinal treatment of much perplexity, and in the end attain a clearer view of providence. We need the statement of some general facts as preparatory to the more definite analysis.

1. Providential Conservation and Government.—The doctrinal treatment of providence recognizes both a conserving and a ruling agency. This is the first distinction to be noted, and the broadest and deepest of all. There is ample ground for it in the Scriptures, and also in the nature and relations of created existences. A conservative providence of God is clearly expressed in the Scriptures. As the creation of all things, and of all In the most comprehensive sense, is ascribed to God, so is their preservation: "And thou preservest them all" (Nehemiah 9:6). "O Lord, thou preservest man and beast" (Psalms 36:6). He calleth by name the hosts of heaven, the stars of the firmament, and upholdeth them by his great power, so that not one faileth (Isaiah 40:26). "For in him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28). "And he is before all things, and by him all things consist" (Colossians 1:17).

It is the sense of Scripture, in many places and in many forms of expression, that all things are subject to the ruling providence of God. The earth and the heavens, the forces of nature, the seasons of the year, the harvests of the field, the fruits of the earth, the powers of human government, the allotments of human life are all thus subject. It is needless to cite, or even to give in substance, the many texts, or even a selection of the many, which contain this truth. A brief reference may suffice (Job 5:10; Job 9:4-10; Job 36:26-32; Job 37:6-18; Psalms 74:12-17; Psalms 104:1-30; Psalms 105:6-7; Isaiah 45:7; Jeremiah 5:23-24; Jeremiah 33:20; Jeremiah 33:25; Joel 2:21-27; Matthew 6:25-34; Acts 14:17). In the reigning and ruling of the Lord there is the sense of a universal governing providence. The texts which express this truth are not merely prophetic of an ultimate universal dominion, nor restricted to the idea of a distinctively spiritual kingdom, but give the sense of a present and perpetual government of all things. "Thine, Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou reignest over all ; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all" (1 Chronicles 29:11-12). "He ruleth by his power; his eyes behold the nations: let not the rebellious exalt themselves" (Psalms 66:7). "The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruletli over all" (Psalms 103:19). "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth" (Revelation 19:6). The nature and relations of created existences point to the distinction between the preserving and ruling offices of providence which we find in the Scriptures. Even the conservation of the orderly

forms of material existences carries with it the sense of providential government. Otherwise, we must think this perpetual order the determination of original laws of nature, without any perpetual agency of God. This is the baldest deism, false to the Scriptures, and offensive to the religious consciousness. The distinction we make is yet more manifest in the relations of providence to the sentient and rational forms of existence. The uniformities of nature are of great value to both, but absolute uniformities would often be at painful odds with their interests. If the sustenance of the living is with the providence of God, the forces of nature must be subject to his sway. For the interests of the human race there must be a ruling as well as a preserving providence.

2. Universality of Providential Agency.—We here need little more than a statement of this universality. It has already appeared, especially in the explicit words of Scripture. If we hold a providence of God in any proper sense, we must rationally think it universal. The special reason for its present statement lies in its intimate relation to the further analysis of the question of providence. The more extended the field of providence the more numerous are the spheres of its agency, A proper distinction of these spheres is necessary to the analysis of the question.

3. Distinction of Providential Spheres.—The two spheres of God's preserving and ruling providence are commensurate in their universality, but distinct for thought, and really distinct for the manner of the divine agency therein. There is also the distinction between material being and its orderly forms; and the divine agency in the preservation of the one and in the preservation and government of the other must give rise to different questions in the doctrinal treatment. Again, there is the distinction between the material and animate spheres, wherein there are different questions for the doctrinal treatment of providence. Finally, there is the profound distinction between free and responsible personalities, on the one hand, and all the lower forms of existence, on the other. With such distinctions in the spheres of providence there must be distinctions of mode in the divine agency.

4. Distinctions of Providential Agency.—We have prepared the way for these distinctions by the statement of the different spheres of providence. The conservation of matter as being—if there be such an office of providence—and the conservation of its cosmical forms must be through different modes of the divine agency. In the first that agency can have no respect to either the spatial relations or the dynamical qualities of the elements of matter, while in the second it must have exclusive respect to such relations and qualities. There is thus in the second a governing agency which determines the collocations of matter or directly modifies the working of its forces, while there is no place for such a manner of agency in the first. From the purely material, whatever its mechanical or chemical form, we pass into a new and higher form of existence in the sphere of the animate. There is a new and higher force in the living organism. The agency of providence must be in adjustment to this new and higher force and to the definite forms in which it works. Forces themselves are hidden from our immediate view, but the manifest difference between the orderly forms of the merely physical and the organic forms of the living clearly points to a distinction of providential agencies in the two spheres. Finally, there is the profound distinction between personal mind and all the lower forms of existence. With this distinction, there cannot be the same law of providential agency for the former as for any sphere of the latter.

Nothing is yet concluded or even discussed respecting the working of providence in the different spheres of finite existence. The aim has been to justify the position that the divine providence

cannot be formulated under any single law, nor as operative in any single mode. It must be studied and interpreted in view of the manifold and diverse spheres in which it may be operative, “What may be the truth of a providence in one may not be the truth in another. If it should even appear that in some one sphere there is no evidence of a providence, it would not follow that there is no providence in others. If it could be made clear that God is the only force operative in material nature, it would not follow that there is neither power nor personal agency in the human mind. Hence an absolute providence in the former would leave the way open for a very different mode of the divine agency in the latter. An absolute continuity in the order of physical sequences could not disprove a divine providence within the realm of mind. Such facts are of value in the study and interpretation of providence in the different spheres of its agency.

061. II. Providence In The Physical Sphere.

II. Providence In The Physical Sphere.

1. Concerning the Conservation of Matter.—There is a preserving providence within the sphere of physical nature. This, as previously shown, is the clear sense of Scripture. There is for this sphere a universal conservation. But as so revealed it is simply the fact of a divine conservation, without any such absolute universality or specific application, that it must hold in being the very essence of matter as well as preserve its orderly forms. Yet such a view is prominent in the history of doctrinal opinion. The assumption is that if matter were left without the upholding power of God, even for an instant, it would in that instant fall into nonentity. Hence its continued existence must be through the unceasing conservation of his power. This is the common view. “The conception of the divine conservation of the world as the simple, uniform, and universal agency of God sustaining all created substances and powers in every moment of their existence and activity is the catholic doctrine of Christendom.”[320] It should be noted that this citation includes spiritual being just as it does the material. This is proper, and not only as a requirement of accuracy in the statement, but also as a requirement of consistency in the doctrine; for if the doctrine be true respecting the essence of matter it must also be true respecting the essence of mind.

[320]Cocker:Theistic Conception of the World, p. 176.

Widely as this doctrine has prevailed, we cannot think it closed against all questioning. In order to any proper view the view we must distinguish between the essence of matter and questioned. its orderly forms. The former existed in the primordial chaos; the latter are the product of the formative work of God. It may be very true that but for his preserving power these orderly forms would quickly relapse into chaos, but it does not follow that the matter itself must also fall into nonentity. This profound distinction has been overlooked, and the question has been treated just as though the essence of matter and its orderly forms were in one dependence upon providence for their continued existence. That it should be so seems against reason. Being, even material being, is a profound reality, and must have a strong hold on existence. It has no tendency to fall into nothing which only omnipotence can counterwork. Instead of saying that only the power which created matter can hold it in being, we would rather say that only such power could annihilate it. What is thus true of the essence of matter must be equally true of the essence of mind.

There is nothing in this view in any contrariety either to the sense of Scripture or to a proper dependence of all things upon God. There is no text which isolates the essence of either mind or matter and declares the dependence of its continued existence upon an upholding providence. As we recur to the texts which reveal the conserving providence of God we see that he up holds the earth and the heavens, not, however, as mere masses of matter, but as worlds of order in the truest cosmical sense. God “preserves man and beast,” but as organic structures, with life and sentience, and also with personality in the former. Further, as matter is the creation of God, and continues to exist only on the condition of his good pleasure, and is wholly subject to his use for the purposes of his wisdom, it is in a very profound sense dependent upon him. There is also a like

dependence of mind. Such a dependence satisfies all the requirements of both reason and Scripture.

2. View of Conservation as Continuous Creation.—From the notion of a dependence of finite being, which for its conservation momentarily requires such a divine energizing as originally gave it existence, there is an easy transition into the notion of a continuous creation. Such a notion early appeared in Christian thought, and has continued to hold at least a limited place. Illustrious names are in the roll of its friends. Augustine is reckoned in the list. His own words so place him.[321] Aquinas is definitely with Augustine.[322]

[321] “Deus, eujus occulta potentia cuncta penetrans incontaminabili prsesentia facit esse quidquid aliquo modo est, in quantumcumque est; quia nisi faciente illo, non tale vel tale esset, sed prorsus esse non posset.”—De Civitate Dei, lib. xii, cap. XXV.

[322]Conservatio rerum a Deo non est per aliquam novam actionem, sed per continuationem actionis qua dat esse.”—Summa Theol., p. i, qu. civ, art. i.

We may add the name of Edwards, who has given the real and full content of this doctrine. “It follows from what has been observed that God’s upholding created substance, or causing its existence in each successive moment, is altogether equivalent to an immediate production out of nothing, at each moment; because its existence at this moment is not merely in part from God, but wholly from him, and not in any part or degree from its antecedent existence. For the supposing that its antecedent existence concurs with God in efficiency, to produce some part of the effect, is attended with all the very same absurdities which have been shown to attend the supposition of its producing it wholly. Therefore the antecedent existence is nothing, as to any proper influence or assistance in the affair; and consequently God produces the effect as much from nothing as if there had been nothing before. So that this effect differs not at all from the first creation, but only circumstantially; as in first creation there had been no such act and effect of God’s power before; whereas, his giving existence afterward follows preceding acts and effects of the same kind in an established order.”[323] [323] Works, vol. ii, p. 489. The sense of this passage is open and full. We know what the author means by the conservation of existences as a continual creation. No doubt such a formula has often been adopted without any clear apprehension of its meaning. The true sense is implied in the citations from Augustine and Aquinas, but it is not brought into clear view, and their words might be used with much less meaning. No one can mistake the meaning of Edwards. Nor has he overstated the sense of a continual creation. If we allow the formula any distinctive meaning, it must be taken in the sense of an immediate origination of existences. This is widely different from a divine agency which constantly sustains their being. We must suppose them momentarily to drop out of being and momentarily to be re-created. The supposition may be most difficult, but such are the implications of the doctrine. It must hold, not only for essential being, but also for all orderly and organic forms of existence, and equally for the human mind. In the treatment of Edwards the latter was the special application of the doctrine. With the full meaning and content of the doctrine thus brought into view, it appears without the support of either reason or Scripture. If the doctrine be true, the present has no real connection with the past. There is no continuity of being. In all the realms of finite existence, nothing of yesterday remains to-day. All such existences of the present moment perish, and new existences take their place in the next. This has been repeated in all the succeeding moments since the original creation. The fact is not

other, that the new existences are so like the old as to allow no distinction for sense-perception. The new are absolutely new. Existences may be annihilated; but, once annihilated, they cannot be re-created. Thus in every moment since the beginning a universe has perished and a universe has come into being. Then there was nothing profoundly distinctive of the original creation. The only distinction, as pointed out in the passage from Edwards, is merely circumstantial. The original was merely the first, but not more really an originative creation. When God said, “Let there be light,” his creative act was not more real than in the creation of light in the next moment and in every moment since. Such a doctrine of providence cannot be true, and, when fully understood, must sink beneath the weight of its own extravagance.

There is not a word in Scripture which either supports or requires such a doctrine. Many passages express the frailty and transience of some forms of organic existence, but without any intimation that they abide but a moment or momentarily sink into nothing, while new creations momentarily take their place. Many forms of nature are described as permanent, abiding through the centuries of the world’s history. There is in the Scriptures no conservation of finite existences in the sense of a continuous creation.

3. Question of Physical Forces.—The question of natural forces, such as we call mediate or secondary causes, deeply concerns the doctrine of providence. Of course, the question here reaches beyond matter as being, and specially respects its orderly forms. It is only in these forms that forces emerge for rational treatment. If there be natural forces, then the mode of providential agency is in their support, in determining the collocations of matter for their efficiency, and in co-working with them for the attainment of chosen ends in the cosmos. If there be no such forces, then God is the only efficience within the physical realm. No exception can be made in the case of human agency. It is true that man has greatly changed the face of the physical world, but he has no immediate power over material nature, and can work only through existing forces, which, on the present theory, are purely modes of the divine energizing. If this theory be true, then all the forces operative in the physical universe, and none the less so the forces through which man works, are the power of God. There is a profound distinction between a divine agency working through natural forces and a sole divine efficiency which determines all movement and change in the physical universe. So profoundly does the question of natural forces concern the doctrine of providence.

There is no unity of view on this question. Not a few deny all secondary causality and find in God the only efficient agency in material nature.[324] Seemingly the present tendency of theistic speculation is toward this view. There is, however, no determining principle. The names given in the note represent widely different schools of religious thought, while among them are theologians, philosophers, and scientists. But others of the same schools hold just the opposite theory. It thus appears that neither theology nor philosophy nor science necessarily determines one’s view on this question. It is here that the treatment of providence is implicated with questions of physical science. This implication rather obscures than clears the question. Nothing is more loudly trumpeted than the very greats and recently very rapid, advancement of physical science. Its achievements are specially noteworthy. After all, the uncertainty and diversities of view on the question of physical forces deny us all light on the question of providence. Physical science within its own limit is purely empirical, and therefore cannot reach the secret of force. Reason imperatively affirms an adequate force for all the movements and changes in physical nature, but what that force is, whether intrinsic to matter, or extraneous and acting upon it, or purely of the

divine energizing, empirical science cannot know. We think that the question is beyond the reach of metaphysics. It is not clear to our reason that physical nature is in itself, and under all collocations of material elements, utterly forceless.

[324]“Dr. Samuel Clarke, Dugald Stewart, John Wesley, Nitzsch, Muller, Chalmers, Harris, Young, Whedon, Channing, Martineau, Hedge, Whewell, Bascom, Professor Tulloch, Sir John Herschel, the Duke of Argyll, Mr. Wallace, Proctor, Cocker, and many among the ablest recent writers have defended this view.” —McClintock and Strong:Cyclopaedia, art. “Providence.” The theory which denies all secondary causality in material nature, and finds in God the only agency operative in the physical realm, is known in philosophic speculation as Occasionalism. The principles were given in the philosophy of Des Cartes, but were more fully developed and applied by his followers. Primarily the doctrine was more directly applied to the bodily action of man. The mind could not act upon the body. A volition to move the arm was not the cause of its moving, but only the occasion on which the divine power determined its movement. In its broader application the doctrine denies all interaction between material bodies. No one can determine any change in another. The implication is the utter powerlessness of physical nature, and that all changes therein are from the divine agency.[325] [325] Morell:History of Modern Philosophy, p. 120. This question is entirely above the plane of empirical science. Metaphysics cannot resolve it. The Scriptures are silent as to any decisive judgment, though seemingly against the doctrine. Yet the question is open to rational treatment in view of its contents. The doctrine is the utter forcelessness of physical nature, and that God is the only force operative therein. We think it open to weighty objections. We need not urge what others have urged, that it imposes an immense drudgery upon God. The force of this objection is only seeming. There can be no drudgery for that which cannot weary; hence there can be no drudgery for omnipotence. This occasionalism must not be allowed any office which the doctrine really denies it. The occasions are not only without all force, but are in no proper sense conditions of the divine agency. The two are merely coincident in time. Matter has no instrumental quality, and is really reduced to a blank. It must be denied all the qualities, primary as well as secondary, with which philosophy has been wont to invest it. With these properties it could not be forceless. Gravitation, cohesive attraction, chemical affinity, magnetism, electricity, without force in themselves, are simply coincident with the divine energizing. The lightning can have no part in riving the oak, the projected ball no part in breaching the wall, for any such part is possible only with the possession of force. The massive cables of steel which seemingly uphold the Brooklyn Bridge have no natural strength of support, but are the mere occasion of the divine energizing as the sustaining power, and for which, so far as any natural strength is concerned, threads of cotton might answer as well. Indeed, if this occasionalism be true, there is no natural weight of the bridge, which is possible only with a natural force of gravitation, and but for a mighty downward pressure of the divine hand there would be no weight to sustain. In the implications of this doctrine there is no natural fitness of physical conditions for vegetable production, none in organic structures for any function of animal life. The “tree planted by the rivers of water” has no natural advantage of growth and fruiting over the tree planted in the most arid and barren earth. The richest harvest might spring as readily from the sand of the desert as from the field of richest soil. The stomach has no more natural fitness for the digestion of food than the dish in which it is served. The system of nerves and ligaments and muscular tissue, so wonderfully wrought in the living body, has no natural fitness for animal movement. The structure of the eagle gives no natural strength for flight, while there is no reaction of the air against the stroke of his wings. All this must be true if there be

no forces of nature. There is no proof of such a doctrine; and in the light of rational thought the extravagance of its implications is conclusive against it. The mystery of natural forces is no valid objection against their reality. We know not how they act. This, however, is no peculiar case, but a common fact respecting the operation of force, whatever its nature. How there can be interaction between material entities, or how gravitation can act across the spaces which separate the planets from the sun, we know not. Our own personal energizing through the will is specially distinct and clear in the light of our consciousness, but only as a fact. How we thus act is as hidden as the action of gravitation across such vast spaces. Surely we cannot know how God puts forth power. There is no profounder mystery than that the energizing of his will in the purely metaphysical form of volition should act as a ruling force in the physical universe. We escape no mystery by denying all natural force and finding in God the only agency operative in the material realm.

It is a weighty objection to this occasionalism that it leads to idealism and pantheism. As a forceless world can have no effect upon our experiences, for us it can have no reality. “The outer world is posited by us only as the explanation of our inner experiences; and as, by hypothesis, the outer world does not affect us, there is no longer any rational ground for affirming it.”[326] The logical result is idealism. “In this one affirmation, that the universe depends upon the productive power of God not only for its first existence, but equally so for its continued being and operation, there is involved the germ of the several doctrines of pre-established harmony, of occasional causes, of our seeing all things in God, and, finally, of pantheism itself, the ultimate point to which they all tend.”[327] [326] Bowne:Metaphysics, p. 116.

[327]Morell:History of Modern Philosophy, p. 120.

4. Providence in the Orderly Forms of Matter.—The reality of physical forces does not mean their sufficiency for either the origin or the on-going of the cosmos. There is still an ample sphere for the divine agency in supporting these forces, and in determining the collocations of material elements which are the necessary condition of their orderly efficiency. A true doctrine of providence must accord with such facts—the reality of natural forces, and their dependence upon God for their orderly working. Hence, as previously noted, the true doctrine must widely differ from any one constructed on the assumption of an utter forcelessness of physical nature. For the true doctrine we shall appropriate the statement of a recent excellent work. It contains a few words seemingly not in full accord with our own views, but is so good as a whole that we omit all exceptions. “The theory which seems most consistent with all we know of God and nature is that which supposes the Creator to have constituted the world with certain qualities, attributes, or tendencies, by which one part has a causal influence on another, and one state or combination of parts produces another, according to what we call laws of nature, the result being the co-ordination and succession of events which we call the operations of nature. At the same time all nature is pervaded by the living presence of God, sustaining the being and operations of the world he has made and governs, retaining a supreme control which may at any point supersede or vary the usual course of natural causation. Ordinarily he neither sets aside the causal qualities of nature nor leaves them to themselves. This is the reconciliation, if any were needed, of the primary and secondary causes. God is immanent in natural causation, as truly and necessarily as in natural being, in the operations as in the existence of matter or mind.”[328] [328] Randles:First Principles of Faith, pp. 232, 233.

Any inference from the uniformity of nature against a providential agency within the sphere of physical forces is utterly groundless. The two are not only entirely consistent, but the latter is the only rational account of the former. The denial of such consistency must either assume an absolute uniformity of nature as the determination of physical forces which leaves no place for the divine agency, or that such agency must be capricious and the cause of disorder. There is no ground for either assumption. If the processes of nature are wholly from the energizing of a blind and purposeless force, there is no guarantee of an absolute uniformity. For aught we know there may have been great variations in the past, and the near future may bring an utter reversion of the present order of things. We could know the contrary only by a perfect knowledge of the blind and purposeless nature assumed to determine the order of existences, which is for us an impossible attainment. “Whether the members of the system will always continue, or whether they will instantaneously or successively disappear, are questions which lie beyond all knowledge. We do not know what direction the future will take in any respect whatever. The facts in all these cases depend upon the plan or nature of the infinite; and unless we can get an insight into this plan or nature, our knowledge of both past and future must be purely hypothetical.”[329] [329] Bowne:Metaphysics, p. 139.

Such result is inevitable if the infinite or ground of the finite is assumed to be a blind and purposeless nature. There is no a priori necessity of uniformity in the working of such a nature. When Mr. J. S. Mill says, “I am convinced that any one accustomed to abstraction and analysis, who will fairly exert his faculties for the purpose, will, when his imagination has once learned to entertain the notion, find no difficulty in conceiving that in some one, for instance, of the many firmaments into which sidereal astronomy now divides the universe events may succeed one another at random, without any fixed law,”[330] he fully admits that the orderly course of nature is no necessity of physical causality, and hence that such order is entirely consistent with the agency of a divine providence. When by such a putting of the question Mill would unsettle the law of causation, that every event must have an adequate cause, he utterly fails. In the necessity of thought the movement of worlds at random, or without any fixed law, would no less imperatively require a cause than the movement of worlds in the order of a system. However, the axiomatic truth of causation is only a formal truth, valid for all events but without the determination of any, while events themselves, with their respective causes, are matters of empirical or logical knowledge. It remains true that there is no absolute uniformity of nature which must exclude the agency of a divine providence.

[330]Logic, book iii, chap, xxi, sec. 1. In the light of reason, as in the sense of Scripture, the providence of God is the ground and guarantee of the uniformities which the system of nature requires. The requirement is specially for the adjustment of the physical sphere to the living and rational spheres. The physical, however complete its mechanical order, has no rational end in itself, and must find such an end in the interest of sentient and rational life. “There only, where the possession, the preservation of being is felt, can existence be considered as a good, and consequently as an end to which a system of means is subordinated. What does it really matter to a crystal to be or not to be? What does it matter to it whether it have eight angles in place of twelve, or be organized geometrically rather than in any other way? Existence having no value for it, why should nature have taken means to secure it? Why should it have been at the expense of a plan and a system of combinations to produce a result without value to any one, at least in the

absence of living beings? So, again, however beautiful the sidereal and planetary order may be, what matters this beauty, this order, to the stars themselves that know nothing of it? And if you say that this fair order was constructed to be admired by men, or that God might therein contemplate his glory, it is evident that an end can only be given to these objects by going out of themselves, by passing them by, and rising above their proper sphere."[331] As in the plan of God the physical system was constituted as preparatory to the coming of sentient and rational existences, so its orderly preservation is for their sake. "Physical and mechanical things being in a general manner connected with finality by their relation to living beings, we conceive that there may thus be in the inorganic world a general interest of order and stability conditions of security for the living beings."[332] With such an original purpose in the constitution of the physical system, there is a manifest reason for the providence of God in its orderly conservation.

[331]Janet:Final Causes, pp. 156, 157.

[332]Janet:Final Causes, p. 159.

Thus the providence of God, so far from being in any contrariety to the orderly course of nature, is in fact the ground of its uniformities. The contrary view arises from the false notion that a divine agency within the course of nature must be capricious and disorderly. Nothing could be more irrational. Nothing could be more utterly groundless than any inference from the orderly course of nature that there can be no providential agency therein. "For when men find themselves necessitated to confess an Author of nature, or that God is the natural Governor of the world, they must not deny this again, because his government is uniform; they must not deny that he does all things at all, because he does them constantly; because the effects of his acts are permanent, whether his acting be so or not; though there is no reason to think it is not."[333] We may add the noble words of Hooker, as replete with the same ideas: "Now, if nature should intermit her course, and leave altogether, though it were but for a while, the observation of her own laws—if those principal and mother elements, whereof all things in this lower world are made, should lose the qualities which they now have—if the frame of that heavenly arch erected over our heads should loose and dissolve itself—if celestial spheres should forget their wonted motions, and, by irregular volubility, turn themselves any way as it might happen—if the prince of the lights of heaven, which now as a giant doth run his unwearied course, should, as it were, through a languishing faintness, begin to stand still and rest himself—if the moon should wander from her beaten way, the times and seasons blend themselves by disorder and confused mixture, the winds breathe out their last gasp, the clouds yield no rain, the earth be defeated of heavenly influence, the fruits of the earth pine away as children at the withered breast of their mother, no longer able to yield them relief—what would become of man himself, whom these things do now all serve ?"[334] All such dissolutions in the physical system would be utterly indifferent but for the interest of sentient and rational existences; and God, who constituted that system for the sake of such existences as its finality, ever maintains its uniformities in their interest. This is the work of his providence in the conservation of the orderly forms of matter.

[333]Butler:Analogy, part i, chap. ii.

[334]Hooker: Works (Oxford ed., 1793), vol. i, pp. 204, 205.

062. III. Providence In Animate Nature.

III. Providence In Animate Nature.

1. Reality and Mystery of Life.—In passing from the lifeless to the living we reach a higher order of existence. From the highest chemical and crystalline forms of matter there is still a high ascent to the lowest forms of life. In the living organism there is a new element or force, and one far higher than any force of nature previously operative in the physical history of the world. Life is at once a reality and a mystery. The mystery cannot conceal the reality, nor the reality unfold the mystery.

Whatever be the nature of life, it is too subtle for any empirical cognition. Neither the scalpel nor the microscope can reach it. Yet it is not on this account any less a reality. It is a reality for our reason, just as other forces which, however manifest in their effects, never reveal themselves to any sense-perception. Gravitation, cohesion, chemical affinity, magnetism are such hidden forces. There can, however, be no question respecting their reality. They are every-where operative in nature, and the aggregate of effects ever resulting from their agency allows no such question. So the vast aggregate of vital phenomena, so manifold and marvelous in form, can allow no question respecting the reality of life. As by an imperative law of thought we require a force of cohesion for the compacting of solid bodies, a force of chemical affinity for the compounding of discrete elements into concrete forms, and a force of gravitation for the orderly ruling of the heavens, so do we require a vital principle or force for the many facts ever appearing in the sphere of animate nature. This requirement gives us the reality of life. The reality of a vital element or force is not the explanation of its nature. The mystery remains. This fact, however, is not peculiar to life, but is common to all the forces of nature. No one pretends to any explanation of the inner nature of either gravitation, or cohesive attraction, or chemical affinity, or magnetism. “Astronomers consider gravitation the unknown cause of the movement of the stars; I consider life as the unknown cause of the phenomena which are characteristic of organized beings. It may be that both gravitation and life, as well as the other general forces are merely as x, of which the equation has not yet been discovered.”[335] In all these cases, however, the mystery is still the nature of the cause, not its reality.

[335]Quatrefages:The Human Species, p. 7.

2. Providence in the Sphere of Life.—As the cosmos itself, so life must take its place under the law of dependence. Neither its spontaneous origin nor its self-sufficiency for the continued facts of vital phenomena is in any sense an implication of its reality. For the existence of life and the realm of its activities, reason requires the interposition of a divine agency. Spontaneous generation has often been asserted, not, however, as a fact proved, but as the implication and requirement of a purely naturalistic theory of evolution. The absence of all proof of such an origin of life is admitted. There is still for mere science the impassable gulf between the lifeless and the living. God who said, “Let there be light,” must also have said, ‘‘Let there be life.” Only in such a divine fiat could life have its origin.

Even such an origin of life does not give us any insight into its nature; though it does give us the idea of a living organism, even if in its germinal incipiency. We can have no idea of life apart from an organism. It is the sense of Scripture that the beginning of life was in organic forms. It is equally the sense of Scripture that life was to be perpetuated through a law of propagation (Genesis 1:11; Genesis 1:22; Genesis 1:28). Such is the divine law for the realm of life. But it does not mean that life itself as thus initiated should be sufficient for all the future of this realm. We should rather find in the facts the proof of a divine agency than the intrinsic sufficiency of life itself for such a marvelous outcome. This view is fully warranted by the wonderful complexities and correlations of part with part in the living organism. It is not thinkable that life itself, without any higher directive agency, could weave the elements of matter into such marvelous forms. There must be a divine providence in the realm of life.

3. The View of Scripture.—It is the clear sense of Scripture that God is the Author of all orderly forms of existence, and not only by an original creative act, but by a perpetual providential agency through which such forms are perpetuated. It is also the sense of Scripture that there is a providence of God over living orders of existence and operative for their preservation. The living creatures of the sea wait upon God for their meat, and receive it in due season. Their life is in his hand, and they live or die according to his pleasure. He sends forth his Spirit, and life in manifold forms is created, and the face of the earth renewed (Psalms 104:27-30). “The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing” (Psalms 145:15-16). “He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry” (Psalms 147:9). “Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them” (Matthew 6:26). The same doctrine of a divine providence in the realm of life, especially in the sphere of sentient existences, is given by Paul in his great words to the men of Athens. God is the Creator of all living orders, and gives to all life, and breath, and all things. Men are his offspring, and in him live, and move, and have their being (Acts 17:22-28).

063. IV. Providence In The Realm Of Mind.

IV. Providence In The Realm Of Mind.

1. Reality of Power in Mind.—Any proper interpretation of providence over mind must keep in view the qualities which differentiate it from all lower orders of existence. In his present constitution man partakes of much in common with the lower orders. So far he may be the subject of a common providence with them. With the powers of a personal agency, he is placed in relation to higher laws of government. Nature without spontaneity is subject only to a law of force. This is true of the entire physical realm. With sensibility and instinct, as in the animal orders, there is spontaneity, but no law of freedom. For such the method of providence must be according to their nature. There are powers in man which distinguish him, not only from mere physical nature, but from all other living orders. With many, matter in itself is utterly forceless. With not a few, animals are mere automata. As such they could possess no power of spontaneity, and would in this respect be reduced to a level with mere matter. Man cannot be so reduced. Spontaneity cannot be denied him. The proof of such power is given in every man's consciousness, and in every instance of free voluntary action. There is not only the power of voluntary action, such as an animal may put forth, but the power of rational action. Such action must be from rational motive, and in freedom. So different is man from all the lower forms of existence as a subject of providence and law. The rational inference is that the mode of providence in his government must be widely different from that in the government of the lower orders.

2. Profound Truth of Personal Agency.—The significance of the power in man for the question of providence requires further statement. Analysis of the mind gives us the powers of a personal agency, rational, moral, and religious. There is the freedom of action in obedience to the laws of his personal constitution, or against them. In the secular sphere he is capable of a rational life with respect to present interests and duties. He is thus largely responsible for his present estate. It is better for him to be thus responsible, even with the contingencies of secular evil, than to be the subject of necessity. Man has still a higher nature, and the powers of higher action. Conscience and moral reason, the sense of God and religious duty belong to his personal constitution. As so constituted he is properly a subject of moral law, and to be governed by moral motives. He cannot else be governed at all according to his moral and religious nature. He can be so governed only in freedom. This is significant for the mode of his providential government. He cannot be subject to any such determining law as rules in physical nature, or even in the animal orders. He must be left in freedom, even with the contingency of moral evil. The proof that he is so left is in all the history of the race.[336] Man, in common with all other finite existences, is ever in a state of dependence. "But this natural dependence upon the divine omnipotence is only the groundwork of a moral and religious dependence, which allows ample room for the exercise of self-determination. In the moral order of the world God's power does not avail itself merely as natural omnipotence—as the all-generating, world-creating, and world-sustaining will but as a commanding and reminding will, speaking to us 'at sundry times, and in diverse manners,' by the law and the prophets within us as well as without; and likewise as the permissive will (voluntas permissiva), which permits even

‘darkness’ to have its hour and its power (Luke 22:53). Viewed then in the light of the holy law of God, the course of this world is not only a working together with God, ut a working against him also; and the words of Scripture are realized, ‘man’s thoughts are not God’s thoughts, neither are man’s ways God’s ways (Isaiah 55:8), ‘the people imagine a vain thing;’ the truth is held ‘in unrighteousness;’ the spirits of time and the powers of the darkness of this world oppose God and the kingdom of his holiness (Psalms 2:1-3; Romans 1:18; Ephesians 6:12). It is only a false optimism which regards the actual as in and for itself necessary” [337].

[336]Butler:Analogy, part i, chaps, ii-v.

[337](Martensen:Christian Dogmatics, p. 216)

3. Providence over Free Personalities.—With the reality of freedom, there is still an ample sphere for the providence of God over man. Only, in the moral sphere the agency of providence must accord with this freedom. That it does so accord is a truth previously set forth as manifest in all the history of the race. If such is not the truth, the evil deeds of men, as really as the good, must result from a determining divine agency. A theory of providence which must either render moral action impossible or make God the determining agent in all evil can have no place in a true theology. In the constitution of our moral and religious nature there are spontaneous activities which warn us from the evil and prompt us to the practice of the good. There is the sense of God and duty, the sense of spiritual need, spontaneous outgoings of the soul for the grace and blessing of the heavenly Father. In many ways God may address himself to such feelings and quicken them into a higher state of practical force. He may do this through events of his providence, through the words of godly men, through the clearer manifestation of religious truth, or by an immediate agency of the Spirit within the religious consciousness. The mind may be thus enlightened, the moral and religious nature quickened and strengthened, the deep sense of sin awakened, the freeness and blessedness of the divine favor made manifest. In such ways, as in many others, God may deal with men in the ministries of his providence. Regarded as in their moral and religious nature, such are specially the offices of his providence over them. Therein is the chief sphere of his providence in dealing with men. Plainly, such offices are in full accord with our freedom.

4. The Sense of Scripture.—We need no large collection of texts, nor any elaborate and profound exegesis, to find in the Scriptures a sense of providence in accord with the law previously stated. There is still a providence over man determinative of many things in his life quite irrespective of his own agency. Yet even in his secular life he is mostly treated as a personal agent, at once rational, responsible, and free. The many promises of secular good, the many threatenings of secular evil have respect to human conduct, and clearly with the sense of freedom and responsibility therein. Specially is this so within the moral and religious sphere. Man begins his life under a law of duty, with the sanctions of life and death (Genesis 2:16-17). His history proceeds with divine appeals to his moral and religious nature in favor of a good life and against an evil one, with the sanction of reward or retribution according as he is good or evil. Through all the economies of religion divine providence proceeded in the same manner. Under the law and the prophets, under the mission of Christ and the ministry of his apostles, appeals are made to man as a free and responsible subject of moral government. The righteousness of the final rewards of this life is grounded in the same law. Such facts belong to the divine providence over men. They are all in strict accordance with our personal agency and freedom. Such are the facts of providence as they openly take their place

in the process of the divine revelation. There must be the same law for the less open facts of providence in its usual course. This truth must be of value in the question of theodicy. If the agency of providence must be absolute, even in the moral and religious sphere, there can be no approach toward a theodicy. All evil, physical and moral, must be directly placed to the divine account. Man can have no personal or responsible agency in either. For good and evil he is but the passive subject of an absolute providence. In the light of reason, and conscience, and Scripture there is no such a providence over man.

064. V. Formulas Of Providential Agency.

V. Formulas Of Providential Agency. In the doctrine of providence there is mostly recognized a distinction between the uniform agency of God in the course of nature and his occasional interpositions, with results exceptional to that uniformity. There is ground for such a distinction, and its clear expression would be helpful to clearness of doctrine. The distinction itself is not obscure for thought; yet its proper formulation is not an easy attainment. There is no one formula in common use. All are open to criticism. A brief notice of such formulas may help us to a clearer view of the distinction which they are intended to express, and also to a clearer view of providence itself.

1. As General and Special.—Sometimes the word particular is used in the place of special, but without distinction of sense. Neither the primary sense of these terms nor their usual interpretation in this formula marks any distinction between the uniform agency of providence in the course of nature and its exceptional interpositions, with results apart from that uniformity. The sense of providence as general is that it sustains and rules all things; as special or particular, that it is concerned with all the parts, even the smallest parts of the whole. There is thus no real distinction between the general and the special, and the only service of the latter term is to emphasize the comprehensive sense of the former. Here is an instance of such interpretation: “There have been disputes among thinking minds in all ages as to whether the providence of God is general or particular. Philosophers, so called, have generally taken the former view, and divines the latter. There has been a wide difference between the views of these two parties, but there is no necessary antagonism between the doctrines themselves. The general providence of God, properly understood, reaches to the most particular and minute objects and events; and the particular providence of God becomes general by its embracing every particular”[338] It thus appears that the most vital question of providence never comes into view under this formula. That question respects interpositions of God apart from his agency in the uniformities of nature, and above the course of nature, and which in special instances prevent the results of that course, or produce results which it would not reach. This is the real question of the supernatural in providence and in religion. No formula of providential agency is adequate which does not bring this truth into clear view.

[338]McCosh:The Divine Government, p. 181.

2. As Immanent and Transcendent.—This formula is in frequent use, and, seemingly, growing in favor. “We must distinction of distinguish between the immanent and the transcendent the terms in the operations of the providence of God. We call those of its workings immanent wherein the divine providence incloses itself in the laws of this world’s progress, and reveals itself in the form of sustainingpower in the moral order of things. We call those of its operations transcendent wherein the course of history is interrupted, and the divine will breaks forth in creative or commanding manifestations.”[339] The real and vital distinction between the uniform operations of providence in the order of nature and its supernatural interpositions which in special instances

depart from that course is here rather intimated or implied than expressed. Yet this distinction is the very truth which should be most clearly expressed. Further, the above statements are open to the inference that as between an immanent and a transcendent providence God operates in different modes: in the former by the activities of his nature; in the latter purely by the energizing of his will. There is no ground for any such distinction. All the providential agency of God is purely through his will, and no less so in the maintenance of the orderly course of nature than in those occasional supernatural interpositions which produce results apart from that course.

[339]Martensen:Christian Dogmatics, pp. 219, 220. This distinction between the immanence of God in nature and his transcendence above nature is one that should be cautiously used. It is true that so long as his personality stands clearly with his transcendence his immanence in nature cannot consistently be held in any contradictory sense. But we are not always logical in our thinking. Inconsistency is ever a liability. With the immanence of God as the only force operative in nature, we are formally close upon pantheism. Expressions of this force inconsistent with the divine personality are pretty sure to follow. “God is not simply the transitive but theimmanent cause of the universe. He is in nature, not merely as a regulative principle impressing laws upon matter, but as a constitutive principle, the ever-present source and ever-operating cause of all its phenomena. . . . Nature is more than matter: it is matter swayed by the divine power, and organized and animated by the divine life. . . . The will of God is the one primal force which streams forth in ever-recurring impulses with an immeasurable rapidity at every point in space—an incessant pulse-beat of the Infinite Life.”[340] [340] Cocker:Theistic Conception of the World, pp. 141, 142.

Dr. Cocker has not left us in any doubt of his theism; yet many of these expressions are more consistent with pantheism. They spring from an extreme and unguarded view of the divine immanence in the processes of nature. The providential agency of God, in whatever sphere of its operation, is purely through his personal will. This cannot be expressed as an organizing and animating divine life in nature. Nor can it be expressed as a force ever streaming forth at every point in space, as with ceaseless and infinitely rapid pulsations—an incessant pulse-beat of the Infinite Life. God is not operative in his providence as a nature, but only as a person. He is in no sense a natura naturans. It follows that the providential agency of God is as purely personal and supernatural in his immanence as in his transcendence. Nor does this formula properly distinguish between the uniformity of providence in the course of nature and its exceptional variations.

3. As Natural and Supernatural.—Others may have used this formula, though we do not remember any instance. On first view, it must seem highly objectionable; and the more so if, as maintained, the agency of providence is as verily supernatural in the uniformities of nature as in its exceptional variations from such uniformity. With Bishop Butler’s sense of natural, such objection is obviated and the formula approved. “But the only distinct meaning of the word is, stated, fixed, or settled; since what is natural as much requires and presupposes an intelligent agent to render it so—that is, to effect it continually, or at stated times—as what is supernatural or miraculous does to effect it for once.”[341] In this sense, natural expresses, not the causal force in the cosmos, but the uniformity of its operation. Physical causality as the whole account of the cosmos is no implication of the order of uniformity. Such may be the order of an intelligent, personal cause. Order itself, for which mere physical causality is inadequate, is the proof of an intelligent cause. This then is the sense of providence as natural—a providence which operates uniformly, as in the orderly

processes of nature. For the attainment and maintenance of a cosmos there must be uniformity of causal agency, and for the personal as for the physical. Order is the central reality of a system. Any assumption that personal causality must be capricious is the sheerest gratuity. The perfections of the divine personality are the only sufficient cause and the only guarantee of the uniformities of nature. There is such a providence of God, in the maintenance of the orderly processes of nature, which from its uniformity we call his natural providence.

[341]Analogy, part I, chap. i But such a providence, because it is personal, may, in given instances and for sufficient reasons, so vary its agency as to prevent the results of its uniform operation, or attain results which otherwise would not be reached. Such interpositions we call a supernatural providence. The real distinction, however, is one of order, not of agency. In both the agency is supernatural, and equally in both, as in distinction from mere physical forces, but in the one it operates with uniformity, and in the other with occasional and varying interpositions.

4. Illustrations of the Natural and the Supernatural.—We shall directly point out the difficulty of distinguishing between the natural and the supernatural modes of providence, as events usually arise in the history of the world. We turn therefore for illustrations to sacred history. If any object to such instances, they may be regarded simply as suppositions. They will in this view equally answer for illustration.

Palestine has its meteorology, the usual phenomena of which are well known. It has its former and latter seasons of rain as yearly occurring. These are facts under the natural providence of God. Then under his ordering there is a drought and a famine for three years and six months; and then in answer to prayer there is, out of season and coming suddenly, a mighty rain. These are facts of a supernatural providence. God has so interposed within the laws of nature or the order of his natural providence as to achieve these supernatural results. Under a natural providence sun and moon run their appointed course, and give us the orderly measures of day and night. But God so interposes in the working of his natural providence that the sun stands still in Gibeon and the moon is stayed in the valley of Ajalon; and thus arise the facts of a supernatural providence. For the illustration we need not assume a literal standing still of either sun or moon. A phenomenal staying will answer as well for the Scripture account. The limited localization of the facts requires a purely phenomenal mode. As such they were easily within the power of God, and were the product of his supernatural providence. The realm of mind is specially, and chiefly, the sphere of a supernatural providence. The human mind possesses the powers of personal agency under a law of freedom. God is the author of its powers, with the laws of their action. These laws, together with the providential allotments of life, have much to do with our action, even under a law of freedom. We must therefore be the subjects of a natural providence. Often there are in human life the facts of a supernatural providence. Ahasuerus comes to the throne of Persia. His administration proceeds according to the laws of the kingdom. His daily life is employed in the exercise of the powers with which he is endowed. So far it proceeds in the order of a natural providence. But on a certain night the king is strangely sleepless and restless. A divine influence has touched the sources of thought and feeling. His mind is put upon a process of reflection which it would not have reached in its own working. In this new mood he calls for a reading of the chronicles of the court. Thus in a crisis of profound interest the king discovers the hidden wickedness of Haman—which leads to his speedy and merited destruction, and to the deliverance of the Jews whose utter ruin he had so craftily and cruelly plotted (Esther 6-7). Here are the facts of a supernatural providence. In his missionary tour

St. Paul comes to Mysia, intending to go hence into Bithynia. He is proceeding upon a plan formed in his own judgment. So far he is acting under a natural providence. Here his plan is changed. Through an impression of the divine Spirit he goes, not into Bithynia, but into Macedonia (Acts 16:7-10). Here again are the facts of a supernatural providence.

5. The Mode of Providence often Hidden.—The events of a supernatural providence are as really supernatural as the miracles of Scripture. Miracles, however, have a distinct office as the credentials of God's messengers, and therefore must have an open manifestation. Providential events have no such office, and therefore need no such manifestation. They are none the less supernatural on that account. Any divine interposition which modifies the working of a natural force, in however slight a measure, is as truly supernatural as all the miracles of Moses in Egypt. Any divine influence which induces new movements of thought and feeling, however unconsciously to the mind itself, is as really supernatural as the inspiration of Isaiah and Paul, as the mission of the Spirit at the Pentecost. But as such providence has no office requiring an open manifestation it is rarely self-identifying. The two modes of providence work in the fullest harmony, but because both are without open manifestation the actual mode in any given instance is hidden. In marked cases, even in great catastrophes, it is not in human wisdom to know whether they arise from a natural or a supernatural providence. For illustration we recall an event already more than thirty years past, but one still living in the memory of such as then received its fuller impression. The Arctic, freighted with much precious life, sailed from Liverpool for New York. Onward she moved, day after day, until she reached the Banks of Newfound land. Meantime a French ship sailed from a Canadian port, on a course which brought her to the same Banks, and upon a line crossing the path of the Arctic. There was a collision, and the Arctic quickly perished. It was a fearful catastrophe. Whether this was a natural or a supernatural providence only God could know. If we assume the former, then how easy for the interposition of the latter! A few seconds earlier or later sailing; a very slight change of speed; the turning of a pilot-wheel, even to a spoke or two, half an hour before—on any such change in the case of either ship they would have safely cleared each other. How easy for God to effect such a change through any ruling mind in the management of either! Or, if we assume a supernatural providence in this memorable event, the means were just as ready to the divine hand for its inducement as for its prevention. On either view we must recognize a divine providence in such an event. Whether a natural or a supernatural providence, the heart of God was with the fated Arctic in every league and knot of her voyage. This is sure to our faith, however dark the event to our reason. From our low level we look up as into an investing fog, such as covered the scene of this fatal collision. God is in the light, and for him all events are in the light, and he looks down upon them with the eye of his own wisdom and love. We know that his eye marks the falling sparrow. Nor should we question that with an infinitely deeper regard he beheld this fearful event. As the mode of providence is so hidden from our view, we should not hastily assume a supernatural interposition in bringing about every event which specially concerns the Interests of men. There is no warrant for such an assumption. On the other hand, we are assured that the divine providence, in one mode or another, is present in all such events. We are ever in the view of God, and under his watchful care.

065. VI. Truth Of A Supernatural Providence.

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1. A Truth of Theism.—In a true sense of theism the causal ground of finite existences is a personal being, with the essential attributes of personality. As a personal being, his agency must ever be under a law of freedom. Therefore it must not be fettered with the laws of either materialism or pantheism. Both systems are utterly fatalistic. Of course there can be no freedom under either. From the beginning, and through all its process, the course of nature must be absolutely determined, and by the blindest necessity. The order of nature must be natural in the lowest sense of materialism or pantheism. There can be no variation from such absolute determinism. Consistently with such principles, the supernatural is utterly denied. Agnosticism is equally exclusive of freedom, as every system must be which has no place for the divine personality. Theism is the opposite extreme to such systems. God is a personal being, with the freedom of personal agency. Such truths are central to theism, and to surrender them is to surrender all that is most vital in the doctrine. It is not for a personal God to fetter himself with a chain of absolute sequence in the processes of nature. He is free to modify these processes, and in the interest of sentient and rational existences must modify them in exceptional cases. Without a supernatural providence we sink into the bleakness of deism, and might as well sink into materialism or pantheism. Theism is supernaturalism. If there is a personal God there is a supernatural providence.

2. A Truth of Moral Government.—There is a moral government over man. The moral consciousness of the race affirms its truth. There is in this consciousness a sense of God, of duty, of responsibility. For the consciousness of the race God is a supernatural being; one who is concerned with human affairs, and in whose regards men have a profound interest. With all the crudities of polytheism, the elements of such convictions still abide. Duty, however neglected, is yet confessed to be paramount. Responsibility, however forgotten or resisted in the interest of present appetence and pleasure still asserts itself and constrains the confession of its importance. With these convictions there is consistently the sense of a supernatural providence. If they are groundless, the deepest and most imperative consciousness of the race is a delusion. If they are grounded in truth, as we must rationally think them, there must be a moral government, and therefore a supernatural providence. Without such a providence all that is real in such a government falls away. On the ground of theism there must be a moral government. With the Christian conception of God there is, and there must be, such a government; and with the truth of a moral government there must be a supernatural providence. It is not to be thought that God, as our moral ruler, would leave us wholly to the guidance of conscience and experience. If we should except the physical realm from all supernatural interpositions, we cannot rationally close the moral against such agency. A supernatural providence is the requirement and complement of a moral government.

3. A Truth of the Divine Fatherhood.—The religious consciousness of the race longs for something more than a blind force, even though it were omnipotent, back of finite and dependent existences. The profoundest reason imperatively requires something more. Both require personality in the causal ground of such existences. The common religious consciousness, with the deep and abiding sense of dependence and need, requires sympathy and love in the Creator and Lord of all. Nothing less can satisfy it, or give assurance of needed help in the exigencies of life. The assurance of sympathy and love is reached in the idea of the divine Fatherhood. The light of reason leads up to this idea. The doctrine of Paul, as delivered to the men of Athens, cannot mean less. Revelation, opening with the more special view of the power of God, advances to the idea of his sympathy and love, and on to that of his Fatherhood. The divine Son sets this truth in the clearest, divinest light. He came to show us the Father. His mission was marvelously fulfilled. He has revealed the Father in the richness of his grace and the pathos of his love. The prayer of humanity may now begin with “Our Father.”

We found it to be against all rational thinking that God as moral ruler over men should leave them, with their profound obligation and responsibility, wholly to the guidance of conscience and experience. How much less could the heavenly Father so leave his dependent and needy children! He must often interpose by an immediate agency for their good. The truth of the divine Fatherhood is the truth of a supernatural providence.

4. A Clear Truth of the Scriptures.—As we previously pointed out, the agency of God in the uniformities of nature is in itself, and in distinction from any mere natural force, as strictly supernatural as in those special interpositions which modify the course of nature and constitute what we distinctively call a supernatural providence. The Scriptures are replete with both ideas. However, we are here specially concerned with the latter.

There are many facts of Scripture which can neither be reduced to the uniformity of nature nor accounted for by any known or unknown law of nature. Any such interpretation is false to the truth and life of the facts. In the history of creation, in the life of Enoch, in the call of Abraham, in the segregation and history of the Hebrews, in the ministry of Moses, in the inspiration of prophets, there were interpositions of the divine agency apart from the order of nature, and results above any mere law of nature. There is like truth respecting many facts of the New Testament. In the birth and life of our Lord, in his lessons of truth and miracles of power and grace, in the ministry of his apostles, in the new spiritual life through the grace of the Gospel and the power of the Spirit, there are again the interpositions of a distinctively supernatural agency of God. Theology finds in the power of God the sufficient cause of such facts, and in his wisdom and grace their sufficient reason. There is no law of thought which requires more; certainly none which demands either their subjection to natural law or the denial of their reality. Theology has no issue with science respecting the reign of law in the realm of nature; but regards the demands of science, that the spiritual realm, if there be such, shall be subject to the same law, as the height of arrogance. Any attempted elimination of the supernatural from the Scriptures in the interest of theology is at once a perversion of the truth and a cowardly surrender to the adversary. Theism is supernaturalism. Revelation is supernaturalism. Christ himself is supernatural. Every true spiritual life is supernatural. We shall hold fast the supernatural in the interest of theology and religion.

It is the clear sense of Scripture that the divine agency in its supernatural interpositions reaches beyond the distinctively spiritual realm into the natural. These instances, however, are neither so frequent nor so radical as to hinder the interests of science or unsettle the laws of our secular life. Still there are real instances of a supernatural agency within the lower sphere in the interest of the higher; within the lifeless in the interest of the living; within the natural in the interest of the spiritual. It is a rational law, and one ever observable in the process of nature, that the lower may be used in the service of the higher. Thus the divine agency is supernaturally operative within the lower forms of existence in the service of the higher. There is no true interpretation of the Scriptures without the truth of the supernatural.

5. Providence the Privilege of Prayer.—Were there no providence with a supernatural agency there could be no place for prayer. With the reality of such a providence, prayer is a common privilege, and the means of blessings not otherwise attainable. Hence objections to the efficacy of prayer are mostly the same as those urged against a supernatural providence, and so far require no separate review. They will be considered in the proper place. However, this may be said now, that all the proofs of a supernatural providence go to the refutation of these objections. The refutation is already quite sufficient.

Prayer is the supplication of the soul, offered up to God for his blessing. The forms of need may be many, and the answers may vary accordingly, but still with a blessing. The presuppositions of prayer are the personality and providence of God, his power over nature and mind, his interested watch-care over us, his kindly regard for our good, his gracious readiness to help us. The impulse to prayer arises from a sense of dependence and need. Beyond this, as the soul enters into the truer religious life prayer is imbued with the spirit of worship, is full of praise and love. There is the grateful sense of blessings received in answer to prayer. Hence the deeper ideas of prayer are the same in the thanksgiving as in the supplication. The instinct for prayer is a part of our religious nature. We have a religious nature, and one as real and ineradicable as any other intrinsic quality. This is rarely questioned. Thinkers who deny all supernaturalism in religion openly confess this reality.[342] The logic of religious facts constrains this confession. The time when unbelief would banish all religion is forever past. Conscience and moral reason, the sense of God and duty, of dependence and need, are confessedly characteristic facts of our nature. With these facts, there is the instinctive impulse to prayer. This impulse must be active in the deeper exigencies of experience. The fact has often been exemplified, even with such as usually deny all religious faith. In the hour of painful suspense, in the presence of calamity, no unbelief can repress this impulse.

[342]Spencer:First Principles, pp. 13-15; Tyndall:Preface to Belfast Address, seventh edition. The sense of Scripture on the question of prayer is very full and clear.[343] Prayer is a common duty and privilege (Matthew 7:7; Matthew 7:11; Luke 21:36; Romans 12:12; Php 4:6 ; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; 1 Timothy 2:8). Prayer should be offered for national blessings (Psalms 122:6; 1 Timothy 2:1-3. Intercessory prayer, prayer of one for another, is a requirement of the Scriptures (Exodus 32:11; Acts 12:5; Romans 1:9; Romans 15:30; James 5:16). Our prayer should be with persistence (Matthew 26:44; Luke 181-8 ; 2 Corinthians 12:8). The help of the Spirit in our prayers is graciously promised (Romans 8:26-27). There are many instances of timely and gracious answer to prayer. The blessings for which we may pray, and which are in the promised answer, are specially of a spiritual nature, but are far from being exclusively such. Secular blessings are included with the spiritual. God, who commands our prayer and promises the answer, is sovereign

in the natural as in the spiritual realm. Our interests lie in both, though chiefly in the latter. Yet profound exigencies arise in the former. Both alike are known to our heavenly Father, who careth for us in all our wants. Prayer for temporal blessings has a divine warrant in the prayer of our Lord: “Give us this day our daily bread.”

[343]Paley:Moral Philosophy, book v, chap. iii. A few words may properly be added for the sake of the truth, and as a caution against fanaticism. Two facts are worthy of special notice. One is that the Jewish theocracy specially abounded in secular blessings. So far the truth holds, however false the view which denies to that economy all outlook beyond the present life. There were rich promises of such blessings, and these promises were often fulfilled in answer to prayer. We, however, are not warranted in the common expectation of answers so full and so openly supernatural under an economy so distinctly spiritual as the Christian in its blessings. The other fact is that the initial period of Christianity was specially supernatural, miraculous even, and that within the natural realm. “What thus belonged distinctively to that period can have only a qualified application in subsequent ages. For instance, we are not warranted to expect the healing of the sick in a manner so openly supernatural as in that initial period. Nor have we reason to expect instant or even speedy release from bodily ills or other forms of trouble simply in answer to prayer. Certainly there should be limit to such expectation. Submission to the will of God must always qualify our faith in praying for such blessings. There is in the Scriptures the lesson of patience in suffering. There are promises whose special grace is for such as endure suffering. These facts lesson of do not bar the privilege of prayer for temporal blessings, patience, but should moderate the expectation of supernatural interpositions in a manner specially open and manifest. They should teach us the lesson of humble submission to the divine will. “Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me : nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done” (Luke 12:42). How profound is this lesson! With this spirit, there is still a wide place for prayer in the seasons of temporal affliction. God may answer in our deliverance, or in the mitigation of our affliction. Or he may answer us as he answered Paul respecting the thorn in the flesh (2 Corinthians 12:7-9). Our prayer shall not be in vain.

6. Review of Leading Objections.—A supernatural providence and the efficacy of prayer are so linked in principle that the same objections are common to both. Any distinction is so slight that it may be omitted in the present review. Certain things are alleged as the disproof of such a providence. The divine perfections are assumed to be the ground of such an objection. We require some detail in order to a proper review of this objection. There are indeed several objections on the ground of these perfections, as severally viewed. One objection is based on the divine immutability. The idea of a supernatural providence, with answers to prayer, is the idea of a temporal agency of God above the order of nature. The objection is that such an agency is contradictory to the divine immutability. There is no issue respecting the truth of immutability. Is such an agency contradictory to this truth? An affirmative answer must reduce our Christian theism to the baldest deism. Whatever the agency of God in the realms of nature and mind, it must be exercised through the personal energizing of his will. If such a personal providence is consistent with immutability, so are the definite acts of a supernatural providence. Only a false sense of immutability can require the same divine action toward nations and individuals, whatever the changes of moral conduct in them; the same toward Christian believers, whatever the changes of estate with them. A true sense of immutability requires changes of divine action in adjustment to

such changes in men. It seems strange that any one who accepts the Scriptures can for a moment give place to this objection.

Another objection is based on the divine omniscience. This objection is made specially against the efficacy of prayer. God foreknows all things, knows from eternity the state and need of every soul. Hence prayer is not necessary, nor can it have any influence upon the divine mind. These inferences are not warranted. If it were the office of prayer to give information of our wants, it is surely needless, and must be useless. Prayer has no such office. It is required as the proper religious movement of a soul in its dependence and need, and thus becomes the means of God's blessing. The soul is doubly blest through such a condition of the divine blessing. This will further appear.

Again, objection to the need and efficacy of prayer is urged on the ground of the wisdom and goodness of God. He is wise and good, and, therefore, will give what is good without our asking. We appropriate an answer: "This objection admits but of one answer, namely, that it may be agreeable to perfect wisdom to grant that to our prayers which it would not have been agreeable to the same wisdom to have given us without praying for. . . . A favor granted to prayer may be more apt, on that very account, to produce good effects upon the person obliged. It may hold in the divine bounty, what experience has raised into a proverb in the collation of human benefits, that what is obtained without asking is oftentimes received without gratitude. It may be consistent with the wisdom of the Deity to withhold his favors till they be asked for, as an expedient to encourage devotion in his rational creation, in order thereby to keep up and circulate a knowledge and sense of their dependency upon him. Prayer has a natural tendency to amend the petitioner himself; and thus to bring him within the rules which the wisdom of the Deity has prescribed to the dispensation of his favors."[344] [344] Paley:Moral Philosophy, book v, chap. ii.

Some attempt an adjustment of providential events to the order of nature through the mediation of some higher, unknown law. Such events would thus stand in harmony with nature, though above it as known to us. There are weighty objections to this view. Such a higher law is the merest assumption, and therefore useless for the proposed adjustment. The weight of the objection to a supernatural providence is tacitly conceded, while this hypothetic law brings no answer. No difficulty is obviated or in the least relieved. Further, how could such a law of nature be on hand just in the time of need, or wisely minister to us in the exigencies of our experience, or make timely answer to our prayers? There is no answer to such questions. Nor can the theory admit any divine application of the law, for this would be the very supernaturalism which it assumes to displace.

There is another mode in which it is attempted to place the facts of providence in accord with the order of nature. It is that in the original constitution of nature God provided for the foreseen wants and prayers of men. Thus the plan of providence is supernatural, but the mode of its ministries is purely natural. The theory must hold the reality of natural forces. Otherwise God is the only force in nature, and the original provisions of his providence must mean simply a determination of the modes of his own future agency on the contingency of human exigencies and prayers. This, however, is the extremest form of supernaturalism, and therefore out of all consistency with the theory. With the reality of natural forces, the difficulties of the theory become insuperable. It is assumed that such forces act with absolute uniformity. This is the principle on which a supernatural providence is denied. How, then, can original provision be made for answers to future

prayers through the agency of such forces ? If human actions were a part of the processes of nature and subject to the same necessity, such provision might be made. With the freedom of human action, it is impossible. The forces of nature, which in themselves ever act in accord with their own laws, can never turn aside to meet the exigencies of our experience or to answer our prayers. This is the work of a supernatural providence.[345] [345] Buchanan:Modern Atheism, pp. 283-301; Mozley: On Miracles, lect. vi. The uniformity of nature is often asserted in objection to a supernatural providence. So far as this objection is concerned, such uniformity is simply a question of fact, and therefore must be proved before the objection can be valid. The actual uniformity of nature is no a priory truth. The contrary is clearly thinkable and possible. The Author of nature can vary the working of its laws, and may often have reason for such interposition. Hence the question of an unvaried uniformity requires proof, just as any other question of fact. It never has been proved; nor can it ever be.[346] It might appear that nature, so far as open to our observation, is uniform; but such observation reaches only to a small segment of the whole. Further, the causal force is never open to sense-perception, and an event which might seem to arise from natural forces might in fact arise from the supernatural agency of God. He could so alter the meteorological conditions in a given place that a storm should quickly replace the calm. In such a case there would appear only the signs of natural force, but the affirmation of unvaried uniformity would be false to the deepest truth. It might be assumed that the forces of nature are always uniform in their own working, but an unvaried uniformity would not follow. For such a consequence it would still be necessary to prove that they are the only forces operative in nature. Of this there is no proof. The agency of mind is conclusive of the contrary. Mind is an agency above that order of forces of which uniformity is alleged, and often so modifies their working as to vary their results. So, there may be, and there is, a divine mind operative within the realm of nature, and in a manner to modify the results of mere natural force.

[346]Jevons:Principles of Science, pp. 149-152, 765. This objection advances beyond the previous ground, and denies the possibility of a supernatural providence. The position would be valid upon the ground of both materialism and pantheism; but neither of these theories is verified, and so far the position is groundless. As previously pointed out, personal mind acting under a law of freedom is an agency above the forces of nature, and, in distinction from them, strictly supernatural.[347] This is the disproof of an absolute naturalism. The only ground of such a naturalism is atheism; but atheism is not proved. If there be a personal God, a supernatural providence is surely possible. So plain a truth must be clear to all minds with sufficient intelligence to understand the proposition. John Stuart Mill deserved no praise, though he has been praised, for saying that if there be a personal God a miracle is possible. Of course it is; and the denial of so plain a truth would betoken the most willful blindness. The possibility of a miracle is the possibility of a supernatural providence through a divine variation of the working of natural forces. The truth of theism is the refutation of this objection to a supernatural providence.

[347]Bushnell: Nature and the Supernatural, chap. ii.

It is objected to a supernatural providence that it must prove itself a disorderly and disruptive agency within the order of nature. “Without a disturbance of natural law, quite as serious as the stoppage of an eclipse, or the rolling of the St. Lawrence up the Falls of Niagara, no act of humiliation, individual or national, could call one shower from heaven, or deflect toward us a single beam of the sun.” “Assuming the efficacy of free prayer to produce changes in external nature, it

necessarily follows that natural laws are more or less at the mercy of man's volition, and no conclusion founded on the assumed permanence of those laws would be worthy of confidence."[348] These statements are without logical warrant, and are plausible only through exaggeration and distortion. The efficacy of prayer does not subject the course of nature to the caprice of men. Nor is the agency of providence subversive of the order of nature. Representations more false to the sense of a supernatural providence are scarcely possible.

[348]Tyndall:Fragments of Science, pp. 361, 362. A supernatural providence is the agency of God within the realm of his own works. The laws of nature are his own ordination. His supernatural agency is not the disruption of nature, not a suspension of the laws of nature, but an interposition which in particular instances produces new results. By new adjustments and combinations within the sphere of nature we often modify the results, and without any violence or disorder. The mechanist so constructs his machinery that its movement may be adjusted to changing conditions. Its higher perfection appears in this fact. There is no disorder in the varied movement. We should not think less of the wisdom of God in the constitution and government of nature. As a chemist may vary results by new combinations, or an engineer hasten or slacken the speed of his train, or a father recast the thought and impulse of his child, so may God interpose the agency of a supernatural providence within the realm of his own creation and government. The miracles of Scripture, just as they stand in the several narratives, involve no disruption of the constitution of nature. A mighty rain in answer to the prayer of Elijah is phenomenally the same as if arising in the regular course of nature, and just as free from violence or disorder. God could so change the local conditions of the atmosphere without any change of the laws of nature. Suppose it true that through his immediate agency an ax-head rose from the bottom of the Jordan to the surface of the water: the fact involved no violence or disruption of nature. The law of gravitation was not suspended. The river did not take to the hills. No mountain trembled or toppled. Iron ores remained quiet in their beds. There was no reeling of the earth nor falling of the stars. Suppose Elisha had recovered the ax-head with a grapple: even more gently and orderly did the agency of God lift it to the surface of the water. The word of Christ which calms the storm and the sea is no more a disorderly agency than the oil which quiets the beating waves. Dietetics remain the same after the miraculous feeding of thousands with a few loaves and fishes. The common laws of life and death are the same after the resurrection of Lazarus as before it, yea, the very same in the instant of his reviviscence. The violence and disruption of a supernatural providence are the picturings of a distorted imagination, and no part of the reality. Nature remains the same for science and all the practical interests of life.

Mind is the chief sphere of a supernatural providence; and there is here the same absence of disorder. The divine agency acts upon individual minds, and in a manner accordant with the laws of mental action. Personal agency and moral freedom remain complete. It is often the case that one man influences the thought and feeling of another, and thus indirectly influences his action. In like manner the teacher influences the pupil, the parent the child. Here indeed is a law of great potency in human life; but so far as it operates in accordance with the laws of personal agency it is free from all violence. By an immediate agency operative within the mind God can move man's thoughts and feelings in like accordance with his mental constitution and personal agency, yet so as to induce new forms of action. So orderly is this agency of providence within the realm of mind. The facts of a supernatural providence differ from miracles in their office, and therefore in respect

to manifestation. It is the special function of the latter to accredit God's messengers of truth; therefore they must be open to sense-perception. The former, while no less supernatural, have no such special mission, and therefore require no such manifestation. In accordance with this fact the end of a supernatural providence may often be reached as readily through the laws of mind as through the forces of nature. Hence, if it could be determined that events which have answered great ends were purely natural within the physical realm, it would not follow that there was no supernatural agency connected with them. Were the timely storms which destroyed the invincible Armada the immediate work of God? Whether such or not, a true faith sees the hand of God in the great event. There was a simpler and more rational mode of the divine agency than in the origination of these storms for the hour; and the recognition of such an alternative would have been quite as creditable to Macaulay as his rather flippant criticism of the popular judgment in the case.[349] Just when the Armada should reach the place of its disaster was not the determination of natural law. In the contingency of human agency its arrival might have been earlier or later. How easy for the divine agency, acting upon a few minds, or even upon one controlling mind, to hasten or delay the sailing, so that the fleet intended for the destruction of England should encounter the whelming storms which arose purely in the order of nature I Surely the profound interests contingent upon the result justify the faith in such a providence. In a few questions Pope embodies the objections, whether on philosophic or scientific grounds, to a supernatural providence. [350] Shall God reverse his laws for his favorites? Shall gravitation cease when one may be passing a mountain just ready to fall? The only apparent force of these questions is in the false assumption that physical nature is the exclusive sphere of a supernatural providence. Then this false assumption is infinitely exaggerated in the view that such an interposition of providence must be only through a universal suspension of some law of nature. We have previously shown the falsity of this view. A man stays a falling rock till his imperiled friend escapes; but surely he does not repeal the law of gravitation. It suffices that, for the time, he counterworks its force in the impending rock. What man so does God may do. But, as previously pointed out, there is still a simpler mode of the divine agency in any such case. God can accomplish his pleasure through the laws of mind.[351] [349] History of England, chap. ix.

[350]Essay on Man.

[351]McCosh:The Divine Government, pp. 182, 183. The question of so much evil in human life must arise in connection with several points in the course of theological discussion. Only a theodicy could fully dispose of its perplexities. That there is a theodicy we have no doubt; but we are quite as sure that for us it is an impossible attainment. While righteousness and judgment are the habitation of God's throne, clouds and darkness are round about him (Psalms 97:2). With these facts before us, a few words may here suffice.

There is no solution of the question in the principle of Optimism—that the universe, and therefore the world as a part of it, is the best that could be created. The principle must be a deduction from the absolute righteousness of God as its only possible ground. The issue is thus closed against all objections arising from the magnitude of evil, but only by the assumption of the righteousness against which they are urged. There is no light for our understanding in such dialectics. For such illumination we would require not only the primary truth of an absolute divine righteousness, but also a comprehension of the present world as the best possible. We have no such power; and any attempt to solve the perplexities of sin and suffering in such a mode is but a vain endeavor. It is far

better not to attempt the impossible. For our understanding, human ills do perplex the question of a supernatural providence. The righteousness of God, clearly manifest despite these ills, is the vindication of his providence for our faith. This is the utmost attainment for the present life.

Life is a moral probation. This is the paramount fact of our present existence, the fact in which our deepest interests center. The ministries of a supernatural providence must be in adjustment to such a probation. It does not follow that freedom from all present evil is a requirement of its offices. Sin is a possibility of such probation, and has become actual. This is the source of human ills. With the fact of sin and its attendant ills, our moral probation still remains, with its profound contingencies. Providence must deal with us in view of all these facts. Our highest good must be its aim. What shall be its method? We dare not say that its wisest method is in the prevention of all present suffering, or in its reduction to the smallest possible measure. Our moral interests are paramount; and it may be the case, and no doubt is, that the wiser method of providence in their favor is in the permission and use of present suffering. What seems to us an evil may be a good. We rashly assume a knowledge of what would be the wisest ministries of providence, and thus involve ourselves in perplexity and doubt. A little child knows not its own interests, and therefore knows not the wisest parental treatment. No more can we know what measures and ministries of providence shall best accord with its wisdom. With the deepest mystery of suffering, what would be gained by the denial of a supernatural providence? The denial would not lessen the ills of life, but would deprive us of the divinest inspiration of trust and patience and hope. God would no longer be for the soul an assured “refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble” (Psalms 46:1). From the persuasion of a supernatural providence springs the heroism of faith. With this truth, Paul could say, even in the deepest trouble, and with the profoundest sense of security, “I know whom I have believed” (2 Timothy 1:12); and Job could say, “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him” (Job 13:15). If we read with the Revised Version, “Yet will I wait for him,” the sense appears little changed, especially in view of the context. Such a faith is the strength of the soul, and the formative power of the noblest life. The ills of life, however, are not all in utter darkness. When punitive they have an explanation in the demerit of sin, and no ground of complaint remains. Often afflictions have a disciplinary office, and are ministries of love. We need their correcting and restraining force, and are the better for their patient endurance. Thus the chastenings of the heavenly Father proceed from his love, with the aim of our highest good. Though for the present grievous, and not Joyous, they are fruitful of righteousness (Hebrews 12:5-11). This whole lesson on the ministry of suffering is replete with the deepest truth. If such afflictions fail of their proper results, the fault is our own. We may pervert them just as we may pervert the most direct blessings of life. It suffices for the vindication of providence, that they are wisely and graciously intended as the means of our greatest good. When rightly endured their fruitage is in blessedness. “Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy” (James 5:11). In the instances of Abraham, and Joseph, and Moses, and Daniel, and Paul, life is tested in the furnace of affliction, and the gold is only the purer for the trial. In addition to their own personal good, how valuable the lesson of their patience and piety! That lesson has been the inspiration of many a true soul. Nor have all the passing centuries exhausted its helpful influence. It is still working for good, and will continue so to work through all the coming centuries. For Christian thought the truth of a supernatural providence stands in the clear light of the cross. This is the great fact of such a providence in behalf of the world and the interests of moral government. It is the crowning fact of

blessing through suffering; of blessing for the many through the suffering of the One. It is replete and radiant with the divine wisdom and love. In it center the divinest moral truths. There is no murmur upon the lips of Christ, as against a dark and afflictive providence, that he should so suffer for the good of others. In the presence of the cross there should be with us no murmurings against the ills of life, no doubt of a good providence over us, but patience and faith, and the inspiration of the truest, best life.

General reference.—Sherlock: On Providence; Young: The Providence of God Displayed; Flavel: Divine Conduct, or the Mystery of Providence; Croly: Divine Providence; Pilkington: Doctrine of Providence; Proclus: Essay on Providence; Wood: Works, lects. xlii-xlv; Hodge: Systematic Theology, vol. i, part i, chap, xi; Knapp: Christian Theology, secs. 67-73; McCosh: The Divine Government, book ii; Dorner:System of Christian Doctrine, vol. ii, pp. 44-62; Shedd: Dogmatic Theology, Theology, chap, viii; Van Oosterzee: Christian Dogmatics, secs, lix-lxiv; Smith: System of Christian Theology, pp. 103-114; Strong: Systematic Theology, pp. 202-220.

066. Part III.— Anthropology.

Part III.— Anthropology. The one term, anthropology, has both a theological and a scientific use. Theological anthropology deals with the facts of man's moral and religious constitution and history as related to Christian doctrine, while scientific anthropology deals with his specifical characteristics. However, in the latter case there are wide variations. With naturalists anthropology means the natural history of the race. With German philosophers the term is so broadened as to include psychology, sociology, and ethics, together with anatomy and physiology.[352] Hence in works with the common title of anthropology there is a great difference in the range of topics. In the wider range some things are included which belong also to theology. However, enough difference still remains for the division into a scientific and a theological anthropology.

[352]Krauth-Fleming:Vocabulary of the Philosophical Sciences, Anthropology.

It should be noted that this distinction simply differentiates topics, not methods of treatment. It is not meant that the treatment of scientific anthropology is any more scientific than the treatment of theological anthropology. In a philosophy of religion all the facts which concern the moral and religious constitution and history of man might properly be called anthropological. This would greatly broaden the term, as we found it broadened in the scientific sphere. In an evangelical theology, however, the view of anthropology is largely determined by its relation to the mediation of Christ. Man is thus viewed as in need of redemption and salvation. This need arises from the fact of sin, or the common sinful state of man. This state is the chief question of doctrinal anthropology. It is, in accordance with theological formulation, the doctrine of sin. But a proper treatment of this doctrine requires a previous treatment of primitive man, his probation and fall, and the consequence of that moral lapse to the race. With this question of consequence the further question of our relation to the Adamic probation arises—whether it was such as to involve us in the guilt and punishment of Adam's sin. There is still a further question—whether the common native depravity, as consequent to the Adamic fall, has in itself the demerit of sin. We have thus indicated, in a summary way, the leading questions of anthropology in a system of Christian doctrine. In their discussion they will appear in their proper order, and with more exact formulation.

These questions are not simply of speculative interest, or merely incidental to a system of Christian theology, but intrinsic and determining. In any system, whether evangelical or rationalistic, the anthropology and soteriology must be in scientific accordance. If we start from the side of anthropology, our soteriology must follow accordingly. If we proceed in the reverse order, a like consequence must follow for our anthropology. If our present state is the same as our primitive state, if there is no moral lapse of the race, and no common native depravity, there can be no need of a redemptive mediation in Christ, nor of regeneration through the agency of the Holy Spirit. To allege any such necessity is to assume an original constitution of man in a state of moral evil and ruin. No theory of Christianity can rationally admit such an implication. With a moral lapse of the race and a common native depravity, we need the redemptive mediation of Christ, and the offices of the Holy Spirit in our regeneration and spiritual life. For the reality of these facts we require the

divinity of the Christ, the personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit. With these truths we require the truth of the divine Trinity. On a denial of the primitive lapse and moral ruin of the race, all these great truths may be dismissed. They can have no proper place in theology. So intrinsic and determining is the doctrine of anthropology in a system of Christian theology. “Original sin is the foundation upon which we must build the teaching of Christian theology. This universal evil is the primary fact, the leading truth whence the science takes its departure; and it is this which forms the peculiar distinction of theology from sciences which work their own advancement by the powers of reason.”[353] [353] Melanchthon.

067. Chapter 1: Preliminary Questions.

Chapter 1 Preliminary Questions. The origin of man, the time of his origin, and the unity of the race are open questions of science, and, with the wide study of anthropology, could not fail to be brought into scientific treatment. These same questions are also related, more or less intimately, to theological anthropology. Instances of divergence in scientific and doctrinal opinion are not to be thought strange. With the extreme views of some scientists, certain points of issue arise, more especially respecting the origin of man and the time of his origin. On the side of revelation these questions specially concern the offices of exegesis and apologetics; yet they are so related to systematic theology that we cannot pass them without some notice. A summary treatment will suffice.

068. I. The Origin Of Man.

I. The Origin Of Man.

1. In Theories of Evolution.—Theories of evolution widely differ in the account which they give of the origin and progress of life in its manifold forms. The variations range from a materialistic ground up to a form held to be consistent with biblical theism. With this wide range of theories, and with the marked characteristics of man which differentiate him from all other forms of organic being, evolutionists specially differ respecting his origin. We may notice three views.

First, then, there is the theory which is purely materialistic and atheistic in its principles. Matter is the only real being, and is eternal. Primordially, it existed in the condition of a vastly diffused fire-mist. The inception of evolution was from the nature of matter in such a state. Such was the beginning. The whole process has been equally naturalistic. There is no other force than such as in some way belongs to matter. Man is the product of this force, not immediately in the order of sequence, but none the less really; for, according to this doctrine of evolution, all the force ever operative in the universe existed potentially in the original fire-mist. Such is the origin of man in this theory. He is the outcome of a long process in the ascending scale of evolution, but none the less a product of mere material force. There is such a theory of evolution. Its advocates are not the many, yet it has its representative names. We have no occasion again to controvert the theory.

Another theory admits the interposition of a divine agency, but only in a very restricted measure. Originally Mr. Darwin attributed the inception of living orders to such an agency. But the primary endowment of one or, at most, a few simple forms with life is with him the sum of that agency. There is no divine interposition at any other point. From this inception the whole process of evolution is purely naturalistic. Man is the outcome of this process. His origin is the same and one with the lowest forms of life. There is no provision for any essential distinction of mind. In a third view, God was not only operative in the inception of life, but has continued his agency through the whole process of evolution. Some regard evolution simply as the method of his creative work. Hence in the evolution of new species mere natural force is replaced by the divine agency. Special account is made of this agency in the evolution of man. From this point, however, opinions may widely diverge. The divergence is into different views of the nature of man. There may be no profound distinction between his physical and mental natures. Mind itself may be regarded as a product of evolution, and without any essential distinction from the body. With others there is a profound distinction between the two; and, while the body is an evolution, the mind is an immediate creation of God.

2. In the Sense of Scripture.—We turn to the sacred narratives of man’s creation for the Scripture sense of his origin. The whole account is given in comparatively few words. “And God said. Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” (Genesis 1:26). In these words, with their connection, a few facts are specially noteworthy. In the process of this narrative we have the several phrases, “Let there be;” “Let the earth bring forth;” “Let the waters bring forth” (Genesis 1:3; Genesis 1:11; Genesis 1:20). These words signify the divine energizing in the work of creation. Any interpretation

which limits the sense to an agency of nature is utterly false to the deeper truth. “The earth” and “the waters” mean the fields of the divine agency rather than any creative agency of their own. While these forms of expression are entirely consistent with the use of secondary causes in the method of creation, they never can be interpreted satisfactorily without the divine agency.

There is a notable change in the form of words respecting the creation of man. He is the last in the successive orders, and the crown of the whole. There is a change in the divine procedure; no longer an immediate word of creative energy, but deliberation, preparatory counsel: “Let us make man.” The truth of the Trinity, implicit in these words, becomes explicit as we read them in the light of the more perfect revelation. The grade of man in the scale of creation is marked with the deepest emphasis: “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” All the deep meaning of these words is not for present inquiry. Their most open sense places man above all other orders as a spiritual, personal being. We read the same meaning in the dominion assigned him over all other orders (Genesis 1:26; Genesis 1:28). He was created in the likeness of God to this end, and with qualification for this headship. These facts place the origin of man in an immediate divine creation.[354] [354] Macdonald:Creation and the Fall, pp. 287-291; Laidlaw:Bible Doctrine of Man, pp. 277-279. In the second narrative of man’s creation we read: “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Genesis 2:7). There is no contradiction, not even discrepancy, between these two narratives. The second is more specific respecting a few facts, but in entire consistency with the more general account. In the second there is a distinction of soul and body. Even without this second narrative, the same distinction would have been read into the first. Otherwise, the body rather than the soul would have been omitted from the meaning, because, without the latter, in no proper sense could man be the image of God. The formation of the body from the dust of the ground, or out of existing material, is also a more specific fact of the second narrative. With only the first narrative, such would have been the more rational inference. So consistent are the two respecting this fact. Again, in the first narrative we learn that God created man male and female; but only the general fact is stated (Genesis 1:27). Then in the second the specific manner of woman’s creation is given (Genesis 2:21-22). Thus through and through the two narratives are in full accord. Man is still so distinct from all other orders that we must assign his origin to an original creation.

3. Relation of the Question to Theology.—With a purely naturalistic evolution, and inclusive of man as of all lower orders, no place remains for a theological anthropology or for any form of theology. Outright materialism is the only ground of such an evolution; and outright materialism is outright atheism. With atheism, atheology. The second theory, which admits a divine agency in the inception of life, but finds no place for that agency in the whole process of evolution, not even in the origin of man, leaves no ground for a doctrinal anthropology as related to other central doctrines of Christianity. Man remains thoroughly implicated in the course of nature. Indeed, he is but a part of nature, down in the dead level of the whole, and without any essential distinction in himself. The theory pushes God so far from the course of nature, and so utterly away from man, that for religion and theology it is practically atheistic. No theory of evolution which denies an immediate and transcendent agency of God in the origin of man can be consistent with Christian theology. The third form of evolution, which excepts the mind from the process of nature and accounts its origin to the transcendent agency of God, stands in a very different relation to

theology. The evolution of man in his physiological constitution, if established as a truth, would raise new questions of exegesis, but would not unsettle the grounds of Christian doctrine. Some theologians and expositors, with thorough loyalty to the Scriptures, hold this view. The position is that, while the Scriptures account the origin of the human species, even in its physical constitution, to the divine agency, they leave it an open question whether the method of that agency was by a mediate or immediate creation. “Whether God formed the body of primitive man immediately from the ground or mediately through a long process of genetic derivation does not in itself affect either his complete constitution as man or his place in Scripture, as related to theological anthropology. The modern hypothesis of evolution should cause no alarm for Christian theology. Evolution itself is as yet a mere hypothesis, unverified as a theory. A purely naturalistic evolution is not only unproved, but in the very nature of the case is unprovable. With the evolution of the human body, the human mind would still stand apart from the physical process, with the only account of its origin in the creative agency of God. There is no urgency for haste in making terms with modern evolution. It is only an hypothetic structure, without the substance of a science. With limitless assumption and dogmatism, it lacks the material for the foundation of a science. There must be long waiting for the superstructure. The evolution of the human race is wholly without proof, and the sheerest assumption. There is the broad margin between man and the highest order below him—confessedly too broad for crossing by a single transition in the process of evolution. All search for connecting links is utterly fruitless. That broad margin remains without the slightest token of successive stages in the transition across to man. The Bible account of his origin in the creative agency of God remains, and will remain, the only rational account. The grounds of a theological anthropology remain secure.

069. II. Time Of Man's Origin.

II. Time Of Man's Origin. The question of the antiquity of man could not fail of prominence in the discussions of modern science. As students of nature trace the marks of change in the spheres of cosmogony, geology, zoology, archaeology, the question of time must constantly arise. The division of geology into periods keeps the question ever present in that study. Period will be compared with period in respect to length of duration. A fuller knowledge of nature is possible only with some insight into the measures of time occupied in the processes of change. This question, so constantly present, could not fail of special interest in its application to man. Even for the extremest evolutionist his appearance must have an interest above every other event in the course of nature. Very naturally, therefore, the signs of his presence have been carefully traced, and deeply studied in connection with such other facts as might be helpful toward a proximate measurement of his time in the natural history of the world.

Scientists are agreed that, of all living orders in the world's history, man came last. They are equally agreed that his origin is comparatively recent. But a comparative recency in geological time may be very long ago—so long as to dwarf the centuries of biblical chronology into mere hours. Such measurements are made. An issue thus arises, for the thorough discussion of which only a large volume would answer. We can do little more than state the question. It may be said here that these measurements of man's time on earth vary almost infinitely, and that this fact denies to scientists infallibility on the question. Not only are they at such variance, but some measure a time in no serious issue with biblical chronology, on a permissible extension of its centuries.

1. In the View of Biblical Chronology.—It is well known that biblical chronology remains, as it has ever has been, an open question. Individuals may have been very positive respecting the exact years of the great epochal events in the world's history, but there is no common concurrence in such a view. The profoundest students of the question find different measures of time, not varying so widely as between scientists, yet sufficiently to be of value in the adjustment of the seeming issue with facts of science. The leading views are well known and easily stated. The origin of man preceded the advent of our Lord by 4,004 years, as reckoned by Usher on the ground of the Hebrew Scriptures; by 5,411 years, as reckoned by Hales on the ground of the Septuagint Version. Here is a margin of 1,407 years, which might cover many facts of science respecting the presence of man in the world, and bring them into harmony with biblical chronology. The acceptance of this reckoning requires no cunning device. While through the Vulgate Version the shorter period gained ascendency in the Western Church, in the Eastern the longer period prevailed. With the whole Church it has been quite as common; and, while a lower estimate than that of Usher has rarely been made, a longer reckoning than that of Hales has not been rare. The uncertainty of biblical chronology is of special value in its adjustment to the reasonable claims of science respect. The time of man's origin. That uncertainty is no recent assumption, no mere device which the exigency of an issue with science has forced upon biblical chronologists, but has long been felt and openly expressed. The many different and widely varying results of the most

careful reckoning witness to the uncertainty of the data upon which that reckoning proceeds. The tables of genealogy are the chief data in the case, and their aim is to trace the lines of descent, not to mark the succession of years. Hence the line of connection is not always traced immediately from father to son, but often the transition is to a descendant several generations later—which answers just as well for the ruling purpose, however it may perplex the question of time. “Thus in Genesis 46:18, after recording the sons of Zilpa, her grandsons and her great-grandsons, the writer adds, ‘These are the sons of Zilpa, . . . and these she bare unto Jacob, even sixteen souls.’ The same thing recurs in the case of Bilha, verse 25, ‘she bare these unto Jacob: all the souls were seven,’ Compare verses 15, 22. No one can pretend that the author of this register did not use the term understandingly of descendants beyond the first generation. In like manner, according to Matthew 1:11, Josias begat his grandson Jechonias, and verse 8, Joram begat his great-grandson Ozias. And in Genesis 10:15-18, Canaan, the grandson of Noah, is said to have begotten several whole nations, the Jebusite, the Amorite, the Girgasite, the Hivite, etc. Nothing can be plainer, therefore, than that, in the usage of the Bible, ‘to bear’ and ‘to beget ‘ are used in a wide sense to indicate descent, without restricting this to the immediate offspring.”[355] It would be easy to give many other instances of a like presentation of facts. Such facts justify the prevalent uncertainty respecting biblical chronology. Indeed, the tables which furnish the chief data for its construction are purely genealogical, and in no proper sense chronological. With such uncertainty of data, no biblical chronology can have either fixed limits or doctrinal claim. It follows that the usual reckoning may be so extended as to meet any reasonable requirement of scientific facts respecting the time of man’s origin, without the perversion of any part of Scripture or the violation of any law of hermeneutics. Such are the views of theologians thoroughly orthodox in creed and most loyal to the Scriptures.[356] [355] Green:The Pentateuch Vindicated from the Aspersions of Bishop Colenso, p. 132.

[356]Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 40, 41; Pope:Christian Theology, vol. i, pp. 219, 434; Strong:Systematic Theology, p. 106.

2. Scientific Claim of a High Antiquity.—While scientists are agreed that man is the latest of living orders, and comparatively very recent, there is with them a wide range of opinion respecting the time of his origin. Many are agreed in assigning him a high antiquity. However, beyond this point of agreement the range is from a comparatively moderate reckoning, say 100,000 years, up to millions, and even hundreds of millions. Figures, however, are rarely given, but alleged facts are assumed to measure vast ages. Lyell thinks he can trace the signs of man’s existence up to the post-pliocene era, and anticipates the finding of his remains in the pliocene period.[357] Only an immense reach of time can carry us back to that period. Again, he thinks that the facts of geology “point distinctly to the vast antiquity of paleolithic man.”[358] After a review of some of the evidences of man’s antiquity Huxley puts the question of time thus: “Where, then, must we look for primitive man? Was the oldest Homo sapiens pliocene or miocene, or yet more ancient?”[359] Without the “yet more ancient,” he had already gone back into the midst of the tertiary period. By so much does he transcend Lyell. On the truth of evolution Huxley is sure that “we must extend by long epochs the most liberal estimate that has yet been made of the antiquity of man.” Sir John Lubbock is quite up with Lyell; indeed, we may say, quite up with Huxley. The relative facts of geology “impress us with a vague and overpowering sense of antiquity. . . . But it may be doubted whether even geologists yet realize the great antiquity of our race.”[360] Lubbock believes in

miocene man, but rather as an implication of evolution than from any discovered sign of his presence in that ancient geologic age.[361] Wallace is comparatively very moderate, but reaches out for a long time. “We can with tolerable certainty affirm that man must have inhabited the earth a thousand centuries ago, but we cannot assert that he positively did not exist, or that there is any good evidence against his having existed, for a period of ten thousand centuries.”[362] We have given a few instances. Many scientists of like views might be added to the list.

[357]Antiquity of Man, p. 399.

[358]Principles of Geology, vol. ii, p. 570.

[359]Man’s Place in Nature, p. 184.

[360]Lubbock:Prehistoric Times, p. 419.

[361]Ibid., p. 423.

[362]On Natural Selection,p. 303

3. Review of Alleged Proofs.—The sources of evidence for a high antiquity of man are well defined, and appear with much uniformity in the fuller treatment of the question. However, the treatment is often partial, when the evidence from only a few sources, perhaps from only one, is adduced. This is the method of Huxley, who treats the question simply in view of fossil remains of man, particularly of fossil skulls.[363] A summary of the sources of evidence in a comprehensive treatment is given by Southall,[364] and also by the Duke of Argyll.[365] These summaries, while varying in words, are much the same in their facts. The comprehensive discussions of the question by Sir Charles Lyell[366] and Sir John Lubbock[367] are substantially in the method of these classifications.

[363]Man’s Place in Nature, p. 140.

[364]The Recent Origin of Man, p. 86.

[365]Primeval Man, pp. 76-78.

[366]Antiquity of Man.

[367]Prehistoric Times.

We may state the evidences of a high antiquity of man in the following order: 1. History, with special reference to the antiquity of nations. 2. Archeology, including many forms of fact which show the early presence and agency of Man 1:3. Geology, with special reference to drift deposits. 4. Language—the time necessary for its growth and multiplication into so many forms. 5. The distinction of races in color and feature. Our brief review cannot fully adhere to this order. The evidence from history centers in the proof of an early existence of separate nations or kingdoms. Contemporary with the earliest history of Abraham, twenty centuries before the Christian era, Chaldea and Egypt appear as strong and flourishing kingdoms. Kings with separate realms are already numerous, mostly with small dominion, but some perhaps, as appeared a little later in the case of Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, with broad sway. So much may fairly be gathered from the Scriptures (Genesis 11-14).The evidence of history and archeology seems conclusive that in the

time of Abraham Egypt was a strong kingdom, with a high form of civilization. Such a kingdom could not be the growth of a few years; and we may add an antecedent history of from five to seven centuries. Renouf would add many more,[368] but the number named will suffice. There were other kingdoms and civilizations, the Babylonian, Persian, Indian, and Chinese, of about the same antiquity. They also came into history about the time of Abraham, but, with Egypt, required previous centuries of growth. “So far, then, we have the light of history shining with comparative clearness over a period of two thousand years before the Christian era. Beyond that we have a twilight tract of time which may be roughly estimated at seven hundred years—a period of time lying in the dawn of history, at the very beginning of which we can dimly see that there were already kings and princes on the earth.”[369] [368] The Religion of Ancient Egypt, lect. ii.

[369]Argyll:Primeval Man, p. 95.

It thus appears that history, with its clear implications, carries the existence of distinct nations back to the time of the flood—as that time is usually reckoned. We have three alternatives: either a narrow limitation of the flood, or a plurality of human origins, or an extension of our biblical chronology anterior to the call of Abraham. No sufficient limitation of the flood is permissible. If consistently with the Scriptures we might in this mode account for the existence of the distant nations of India and China, we could not so account for the equally early, rather earlier, nations in the regions of the Tigris and the Euphrates. These regions could not have escaped the flood. A plurality of human origins is contrary to the Scriptures and to the facts of science, and inconsistent with the deepest truths of Christian theology. The third alternative may be accepted without the slightest hesitation. There is no fixed chronology of the Scriptures before the time of Abraham. Hence there is nothing against the addition of all the time—say two or three thousand years—which the facts of human history may require.

Many facts adduced in evidence of a high antiquity of man may be grouped under the heads of archeology and geology. In some classifications the two terms represent distinct sets of facts. The distinction, however, is but slight, and may be omitted in our brief discussion. Under these headings we have several classes of facts, and many particulars of each class—altogether too many for present notice. We may name as classes—megalithic structures and tumuli; lake-dwellings; shell-mounds; peat-bogs; bone-caves; drift-deposits. The point of the argument in each is that the remains of man and the products of his agency appear in conditions which prove his high antiquity.[370] This argument is fully elaborated by the authors named.

[370]Lubbock:Prehistoric Times; Lyell:Antiquity of Man; Jeffries:Natural History of the Human Races; Quatrefages:The Human Species, pp. 139-153.

We shall give a very brief reply in the words of an eminent scientist. “The calculations of long time based on the gravels of the Somme, on the cone of the Tiniere, on the peat-bogs of France and Denmark, on certain cavern deposits, have all been shown to be more or less at fault; and possibly none of these reach further back than six or seven thousand years which, according to Dr. Andrews,[371] have elapsed since the close of the bowlder-clay deposits in America. . . . Let us look at a few facts. Much use has been made of the ‘cone’ or delta of the Tiniere, on the eastern side of the Lake of Geneva, as an illustration of the duration of the modern period. This little stream has deposited at its month a mass of debris carried down from the hills. This being cut through by a railway, is found to contain Roman remains to a depth of four feet, bronze

implements to a depth of ten feet, stone implements to a depth of nineteen feet. The deposit ceased about three hundred years ago, and, calculating 1,300 to 1,500 years for the Roman period, we should have 7,000 to 10,000 years as the age of the cone. But before the formation of the present cone another had been formed twelve times as large. Thus for the two cones together a duration of more than 90,000 years is claimed. It appears, however, that this calculation has been made irrespective of two essential elements in the question. No allowance has been made for the fact that the inner layers of a cone are necessarily smaller than the outer; nor for the further fact that the older cone belongs to a distinct time (the pluvial age already referred to), when the rainfall was much larger, and the transporting power of the torrent greater in proportion. Making allowance for these conditions, the age of the newer cone, that holding human remains, falls between 4,000 and 5,000 years. The peat-bed of Abbeville, in the north of France, has grown at the rate of one and a half or two inches in a century. Being twenty-six feet in thickness, the time occupied in its growth must have amounted to 20,000 years; and yet it is probably newer than some of the gravels on the same river containing flint implements. But the composition of the Abbeville peat shows that it is a forest peat, and the erect stems preserved in it prove that in the first instance it must have grown at the rate of about three feet in a century, and after the destruction of the forest its rate of increase down to the present time diminished rapidly almost to nothing. Its age is thus reduced to perhaps less than 4,000 years. In 1865 I had an opportunity to examine the now celebrated gravels of St. Acheul, on the Somme, by some supposed to go back to a very ancient period. With the papers of Prestwick and other able observers in my hand, I could conclude merely that the undisturbed gravels were older than the Roman period, but how much older only detailed topographical surveys could prove ; and that taking into account the probabilities of a different level of the land, a wooded condition of the country, a greater rainfall, and a glacial filling of the Somme valley with clay and stones subsequently cut out by running water, the gravels could scarcely be older than the Abbeville peat. . . . Taylor[372] and Andrews[373] have, however, I think, subsequently shown that my impressions were correct.

[371]Transactions, Chicago Academy, 1871.

[372]Journal of Geological Society, vol. xxv.

[373]Silliman’s Journal, 1868.

“In like manner, I fail to perceive—and I think all American geologists acquainted with the prehistoric monuments of the western continent must agree with me—any evidence of great antiquity in the caves of Belgium and England, the kitchen-middens of Denmark, the rock-shelters of France, the lake-habitations of Switzerland. At the same time, I would disclaim all attempt to resolve their dates into precise terms of years. I may merely add that the elaborate and careful observations of Dr. Andrews on the raised beaches of Lake Michigan—observations of a much more precise character than any which, in so far as I know, have been made of such deposits in Europe—enable him to calculate the time which has elapsed since North America rose out of the waters of the glacial period as between 5,500 and 7,500 years. This fixes at least the possible duration of the human period in North America, though I believe there are other lines of evidence which would reduce the residence of man in America to a much shorter time. Longer periods have, it is true, been deduced from the delta of the Mississippi and the gorge of Niagara; but the deposits of the former have been found by Hilgard to be in great part marine, and the excavation of the

latter began at a period probably long anterior to the advent of man."[374] [374] Dawson:Story of the Earth and Man, pp. 292-296. In this brief survey instances of the several classes of archaeological and geological facts adduced in proof of a high antiquity of man are reviewed. Among them are instances regarded as most decisive of the question. The criticism of Dawson at least places their conclusiveness in uncertainty; and if it is not proved beyond question that the time of man's presence in the world must be limited to from 8,000 to 10,000 years, neither is it proved that his time is greater. In his elaborate discussion of this question Southall reviews all these instances, and finds them inconclusive of a high antiquity of man.[375] Such, likewise, is the conclusion of Winchell from the same facts.[376] [375] The Recent Origin of Man.

[376]Pre-adamites, pp. 421-426. The argument from the growth of language is far less in use than others. Argyll distinctly names it in his classification, as previously given by reference, but the use he makes of it is rather to prove the unity than the antiquity of man. He points out the now familiar fact that comparative philology furnishes a law by which widely diverse races may be traced back to a common ethnic unity.[377] There is still an indirect argument for the high antiquity of man. With the unity of the race through a common parentage, there was originally but one language. Hence there must be time in the existence of the race for the formation of this original language, and of all the languages in the use of man.

[377]Primeval Man, pp. 109-112. The doctrine of evolution requires a brutal character of primitive man, with the merest rudiment of that rationality which came with his higher development. Such a man might well be accounted speechless; and the creation of a language would indeed require a long time. But the evidence of such a brutal character of primitive man is still wanting. The facts in the case refuse to satisfy the exigency of the doctrine.

There is nothing in science to discredit the Mosaic account of man's origin. In the sense of this account he was created in the maturity of manhood, and in respect to his whole nature. A mature body and an infantile mind would have made him a monstrosity, with the slightest chance of survival. His mind was created in the same maturity as his body, and with mental powers as ready for normal action as the physical. It is also entirely consistent with this account—indeed, we think it a rational requirement—that primitive man was supernaturally aided in his mental acquirements. He did not have to wait upon the slow process of experience, but by divine inspiration came quickly to a knowledge of nature and language. In this rational view, the original acquisition of language required no measure of time which must push back the origin of man into a high antiquity. The immediate offspring of Adam acquired language in the same manner as children of the present day, and in as brief a time. Such continued to be the law through all the antediluvian centuries. Under the same law the post diluvian race started anew. Language was already a possession, and continued to be a transmission from generation to generation. In all divisions into separate communities each division went out with a language. Hence the multiplication of languages was by variation, not by origination. There are no facts in the history of the race which require the pure originality of more than one. Comparative philology clearly traces many widely variant languages back to a few sources, and might reach a common source of all did not the marks of an ultimate unity become invisible in the dimness of antiquity. It thus appears that the assumption of a vast extent of time as necessary to the successive originations of many languages is utterly groundless.

Languages, however, are very many, and there must have been Time in the existence of the race for their formation. But m estimating the necessary time we must not overlook the distinction between origination and variation. In the former case we assume a speechless community in an infantile mental state. With such facts, the necessary time could hardly be measured. Even the possibility of a purely human creation of language in such a state is not yet a closed question. In the other view, which accords with Scripture and is without the opposition of scientific facts, language was a speedy acquisition through a divine inspiration, with such mental development as must go with the knowledge and use of language. All were thus early in the possession of rational speech. Henceforth the formation of new languages was by variation. This is often a rapid process, as the facts of history prove. There are exceptional cases. With a common education, a common literature, and a free intercourse in the use of a common speech, there may be little change through long periods of time. It is not under such conditions that languages have been multiplied. It is when a larger community, with a common language, separates into distinct communities, and each begins a new life under changed conditions, that through a process of variation the one language is soon multiplied into as many as these separate communities. The facts of history show that this process is often a rapid one. No long age is required for the formation of a new language. The formation of many may proceed at once. The relative facts are sufficiently presented by Lyell,[378] and also by Southall.[379] It is worthy of note that the two are in substantial agreement respecting these facts, though the former maintains a high antiquity of man, and the latter a recent origin. The material point in which they agree, and which the facts verify, is that under changed conditions new languages are rapidly formed. Thus on the breaking up of the Roman Empire and the distribution of the people into separate nationalities their common language was soon transformed into the Romance—such as the French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese. These languages, now spoken by so many peoples, are not a thousand years old, and only the fraction of a thousand was required for their formation. This is simply one instance out of many given by the authors named.

[378]Antiquity of Man, chap, xxiii.

[379]Recent Origin of Man, pp. 25-30. This rapid formation of new languages is the material fact of the question. It is the conclusion of Southall that of some five thousand languages now spoken only a half-dozen are a thousand years old. If such is the work of ten centuries, the formation of languages requires no stretch of time conclusive of a high antiquity of man.

Another argument is based on the distinction of races. It does not require a detail of all the facts open to its use, but may be given in its full strength on such general distinctions of race as the Caucasian, Mongolian, and Negro. The argument is in two alleged facts: first, that such distinctions appear with the dawn of history; second, that only a very long time could have produced them. Greater apparent strength must be conceded to this argument on the theory of a unity of the human race. With a plurality of origins such distinctions might have existed from the beginning, and no time would be required for their origination, while with the unity of the race the necessary time must be conceded. The early date of such distinctions cannot be disputed. For instance, the Negro, with his clearly marked characteristics, appears in Egyptian archeology fifteen or twenty centuries before the Christian era. It must be agreed that many other facts are adduced which prove the first part of the argument—a very early appearance of race distinctions.[380]

[380] Lyell:Antiquity of Man, pp. 385, 386; Lubbock:Prehistoric Times, pp. 587, 588; Argyll:Primeval Man, pp. 97-102; Winchell:Pre-adamites, chap. xiii. The second part, that only long ages could produce such variations, is disputed. Many facts in natural history prove the contrary. Fortunately, such facts have fallen within historic times, particularly in the settlement of America, where the process of change could be more accurately measured. “In the domesticated races of animals, and the cultivated tribes of plants, the phenomena of variation have been most remarkably displayed.”[381] Dr. Prichard cites many instances which illustrate and verify his position. The discussion runs through many pages. [382]The force of these facts is not affected by their limitation to domesticated animals and cultivated plants. The domestication and cultivation merely furnish the new conditions under which these changes naturally arise. Further, such instances are more readily open to observation; and their selection is for this reason and not because they exemplify any peculiar susceptibility to change.

[381]Prichard:Natural History of Man, p.

[382]Ibid., pp. 23-50.

It is a rational inference, and one supported by the strongest analogies, that under new conditions man is subject to like change, and in many respects, as the new conditions may greatly vary. “Races of men are subjected more than almost any race of animals to the varied agencies of climate. Civilization produces even greater changes in their condition than does domestication in the inferior tribes. We may therefore expect to find fully as great diversities in the races of men as in any of the domesticated breeds. The influence of the mind must be more extensive and powerful in its operations upon human beings than upon brutes. And this difference transcends all analogy or comparison.”[383] [383] Prichard:Natural History of Man, p. 75. Nor could the conditions of physiological variation be wanting in the earlier state of man. As the race multiplied, broader territories would be required for its occupancy. Besides, the natural disposition of many would anticipate this exigency and push them out into new and distant regions. It appears, accordingly, in the beginning of history, and back of this in the relative facts of archeology, that at a very early day men occupied extensive readies of territory. With this wide distribution there were great changes of climate and new habits of life. Thus at a very early day there were all the new conditions necessary to the variations which appear in the distinctions of race.

Physiological changes have occurred in historic times, and in comparatively brief periods.[384] There are many such instances, They do not equal some of the deeper race distinctions, but, with the brevity of their own period, are sufficient to discredit the assumption of vast ages as necessary to such variations. Hence we need no vast time to account for the distinctions of race which appear in the early history of man. A permissible extension of biblical chronology to eight or ten thousand years will suffice for the whole account.

[384]Southall:Recent Origin of Man, pp. 20-28.

4. Relation of the Question to Theology.—The antiquity of man concerns the Scriptures in the matter of chronology. The question might thus become one of exegesis or apologetics. However, with the uncertainty of the earlier data for a biblical chronology and the absence of any authoritative doctrine, there is little occasion for such a question, except in issue with extreme assumptions respecting the antiquity of man. The question mostly concerns doctrinal theology

through its relation to the unity of the race. Theology is deeply concerned in this question, and, therefore, in the question of antiquity with which it is very closely connected. With a limit of six thousand years for the time of man on the earth, the unity of the race cannot be maintained. This is rendered impossible specially by the very early appearance of some of the deepest variations of race. Only a plurality of origins could account for these early distinctions. It is hence fortunate that the data of biblical chronology do not commit us to a period so limited. The higher the antiquity of man, the more certain is the unity of the race. This position will scarcely meet with any scientific dissent. Therefore the evidences of a higher antiquity than the usual reckoning of biblical chronology, instead of causing anxiety, should be accepted with favor. It thus appears that the antiquity of man is specially related to theology through the unity of the race. “And precisely in proportion as we value our belief in that unity ought we to be ready and willing to accept any evidence on the question of man’s antiquity. The older the human family can be proved to be, the more possible and probable it is that it has descended from a single pair. My own firm belief is that all scientific evidence is in favor of this conclusion ; and I regard all new proofs of the antiquity of man as tending to establish it on a firmer basis.”[385] [385] Argyll:Primeval Man, p. 138.

070. III. The Unity Of Man.

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1. Question of a Unity of Species.—As the unity of man is definitely the question of a unity of species, we require for its proper treatment a definite view of species. Seemingly, this is no easy attainment, for definitions greatly vary. However, we may pass with slight notice the polemics of the question, and present in a brief statement all that our own discussion requires. For any true sense of species we require its fundamental idea or ideas. This principle will hardly be questioned; and yet it cannot bring definitions into unity, for the reason that these ideas differ in the view of different minds. We appropriate the following: “Species is a collection of individuals more or less resembling each other, which may be regarded as having descended from a single primitive pair by an uninterrupted and natural succession of families.”[386] There are in this definition two fundamental facts—resemblance and genetic connection. We should state more strongly the principle of filiation or genetic connection, but not more strongly than the author holds it, as appears elsewhere.

[386]Quatrefages:The Human Species, p. 36. The doctrine of species varies as it makes more fundamental the one or the other of these ideas, or as it omits the one or the other. There are both forms of variation; but mostly both ideas are embodied in definitions. After a statement of the definitions by Ray and Tournefort, that of the former embodying only the principle of filiation, and that of the latter only the principle of resemblance, Quatrefages proceeds to say: “Ray and Tournefort have had from time to time a few imitators, who, in their definition of species, have clung to one of the two ideas. But the immense majority of zoologists have been aware of the impossibility of separating them. To convince ourselves of this fact it is only necessary to read the definitions which they have given. Each one of them, from Buffon and Ouvier to MM. Chevreul and C. Vogt, has, so to speak, proposed his own. Now, however they may differ in other respects, they all agree in this. The terms of the definitions vary, each endeavors to represent in the best manner possible the complex idea of species; some extend it still further, and connect with it the idea of cycle and variation; but in all the fundamental idea is the same.”[387] This is the statement of an author at once learned and candid, and who writes in open view of the modern theories of evolution.

[387]The Human Species, p. 36.

Professor Gray holds the same doctrine of species, and also sets it forth as the more common doctrine of naturalists. We may cite a few of his statements: “The ordinary and generally received view assumes the independent, specific creation of each kind of plant and animal in a primitive stock, which reproduces its like from generation to generation, and so continues the species.”[388] “According to the succinct definition of Jussien—and that of Linnaeus is identical in meaning—a species is the perennial succession of similar individuals in continued generations. The species is the chain of which the individuals are the links. The sum of the genealogically-connected similar individuals constitutes the species, which thus has an actuality and ground of distinction not

shared by genera and other groups which were not supposed to be genealogically connected."[389] Such is the doctrine of species held by Professor Gray, and which he sets forth as the more common doctrine of naturalists. His learning and candor, which no one will question, give weight to his statements. Any favorable view of evolution which Professor Gray may hold does not really affect his doctrine of species. His theism is thorough and devout, and for him evolution would simply represent the mode of the divine agency in the origin of species. This would be a variation from the view of an immediate creation of the progenitors of species, but a variation which would not change the fundamental ideas of the doctrine.

[388]Darwiniana, pp. 11, 12. For the same doctrine of species Gray cites the definition of Linnaeus: "Species tot sunt, quot diversas formas ab initio produxit Infinitum Ens; quae formae, secundum generationis inditas leges, produxere plures, at sibi semper similes."

[389]Darwiniana, pp. 163, 164.

While the ideas of genetic connection and resemblance are both regarded as fundamental in the doctrine of species, they are not so in Just the same form or measure. The deeper idea is that of genetic connection. It is the ground of likeness among the individuals. The likeness may be widely variable, while the genealogical connection must be constant and complete. With this connection the species abides, however slight the resemblance.

2. Theory of Unity with Plurality of Origins.—It is now a familiar fact that Louis Agassiz, a very eminent scientist of our own country, held distinct origins of the human races. Indeed, he held the same doctrine respecting different races in all the lower forms of life. However, the doctrine of Agassiz had no connection with the Darwinian evolution, for to that he was openly opposed. In his view the several human races originated in separate divine creations. Thus, instead of one original creation of a single pair as the common parentage of man, there were several such creations as the heads of the several races. The doctrine is most thoroughly theistic, and the extreme of supernaturalism respecting the origin of man, and, indeed, of all the lower forms of life. With such separate creations, the human races might still be one in all the facts distinctive or constitutive of species, except the one fact of genealogical connection. Without this connection God could so constitute the several races that they should possess in common all other characteristics distinctive of species. So far the unity of man could consist with a plurality of origins.

Some naturalistic evolutionists hold to separate origins of the several human races. If such an origin of man is possible, there may have been a plurality of origins. If the requisite natural conditions could meet in one point, so might they in several, or even in many. In such a case, however, there could be no account of the unquestionable unity of the several races in specifical facts. Such origins are assumed to be widely separated in time and place, and hence an exact identity of natural conditions could not be the remotest probability. But if the environment is a strongly molding force over all the forms of organic life, the widely different conditions of human evolutions must have caused wide differences in the products. Hence such plurality of human evolutions is disproved by the specifical unity of the several races. This consequence cannot be voided by alleging the distinctions of the several races as the whole account of the different natural conditions of their separate evolutions. These distinctions are merely superficial or incidental, and fully accounted for by differences of environment in the actual life, while in all the intrinsic and constitutive facts of mankind the several races are without distinction.

Mostly such plurality of origins is maintained as a necessary account of the distinctions of race. It might be held as simplifying the question respecting the distribution of mankind, but, with the present knowledge of facts, can no longer be claimed as necessary to its solution. With the profoundest students of the natural sciences, and particularly of anthropology, a unity of origin makes no serious difficulty in accounting for that distribution. Some of the most diverse and widely separated races are easily traced back to an earlier connection, while decisive facts warrant the inference of an original unity. With such facts already in hand, we need not be perplexed with any questions of distribution which may still wait for their interpretation.

3. Distinctions of Race and the Question of Unity.—The distinctions of race constitute the chief objection to the specific unity of mankind. There are wide variations of human type, particularly in size, form, and color. Hence the question is, whether such variations are consistent with a common parentage, or whether the several races require separate origins. This is largely a question of science, and so far we must look to scientists for its proper treatment. At least we are dependent upon them for the requisite facts. Scientists are not agreed in a common doctrine. Some hold a plurality of human origins. With such, however, there is no agreement respecting the number, and the scale runs from four or five up to sixty or more. The weight of scientific authority is for a unity of origin. The question of species is common to the manifold forms of vegetable and animal life. Hence on the ground of analogy the variation of types, as related to the unity of species, is properly studied these broader spheres. If variations of race appeared only in the case of man, a fixity of type in the many other species would largely discredit his unity. If in those species there were many variations of type, but only slight in comparison with the distinctions in man, such a difference would place his specifical unity in uncertainty. On the other hand, if variations of type are common to all species, and are often as great or even greater in the spheres of botany and zoology than in the distinctively human sphere, then the objection to the unity of man on the ground of the distinctions of race is discredited and denied all logical force. In the light of natural history many such variations are open and clear. It is in the use of such facts that scientists easily obviate the chief objection to the specifical unity of man. The tendency of species to diverse and wide variations, and the actuality of such variations, are clearly pointed out by Professor Gray.[390] We may cite two brief passages out of the references. “As to amount of variation, there is the common remark of naturalists that the varieties of domesticated plants or animals often differ more widely than do the individuals of distinct species in a wild state: and even in nature the individuals of some species are known to vary to a degree sensibly wider than that which separates related species.” “But who can tell us what amount of difference is compatible with community of origin?” Community of origin is with this author the deepest fact of species. The instances which he adduces as illustrative of actual variation clearly show that a very wide range is compatible with unity of species. Hence the variety of human races is compatible with the specific unity of man.

[390]Darwiniana, pp. 26, 27, 97, 111, 203.

Quatrefages treats the question in the same method, and reaches the same result; only, his treatment is much fuller, and, by so much, with higher cumulative force. He thus states his own method: “Any one really desirous of forming an opinion upon the unity or multiplicity of the human species should therefore discover what are the facts and phenomena which characterize races and species in plants and animals; then turn to man and compare the facts and phenomena there

presented with those which botanists and zoologists have observed in the other kingdoms. If the facts and phenomena which distinguish the human groups are those which, in other organized and living beings differentiate species, he will then legitimately infer the multiplicity of human species; if, however, these phenomena and facts are characteristic of race in the two former kingdoms, he must conclude in favor of specific unity."[391] In this legitimate method the question is fully discussed. Many facts are adduced as instances of wide variations of type within well-known species. It is clearly pointed out that in animal and plant races variations attain limits never exceeded, and rarely reached, by the differences between human groups.[392] Such variations are pointed out in all the particulars of size, color, and form, and are shown to be equal to such as appear in the differences of human races. The conclusion of the author is fully warranted: "The several facts which I have here enumerated seem to me sufficient to justify the proposition which I asserted at the commencement of the chapter, namely, that the limits of variation are almost always more extensive between certain races of animals than between the most distinct human groups. Consequently, however great the differences existing between these human groups may be, or may appear to be, to consider them as specific characters is a perfectly arbitrary estimation of their value. It is, to say the least, quite as rational, quite as scientific, to consider these differences only as characters of race, and even on that account to refer all the human groups to a single species."[393] If the specific unity of man is not thus fully proved, the chief objection which it encounters in the distinctions of race is thoroughly obviated. But only the full discussion of this author can give the full force of his argument.[394] [391] The Human Species, pp. 41, 42.

[392]The Human Species, pp. 43, 43.

[393]Ibid., p. 55.

[394]Ibid., chaps, 4-6.

Against this account of the distinctions of race, it is alleged that the varieties of type are as remarkable for their fixity for their early appearance; that through all the centuries of history and the changes of environment they remain the same. From this alleged persistence of human types it is inferred that they could not have originated in differences of environment. On the validity of this inference, it would follow that each race is a distinct species, with its own separate origin.

There is a persistency of human types through long periods of history, and under great changes of climatical condition. So much is readily conceded. However, this concession falls very far short of all that is claimed in the above argument for a plurality of species. That the several types undergo no change, or only the slightest change, is not at all conceded. Many variations have occurred in historic times, and even in comparatively recent times. A selection of such instances is given by Dr. A. H. Strong.[395] The brevity of his summary renders it very suitable for citation: "Instances of physiological change as the result of new conditions: The Irish, driven by the English two centuries ago from Armagh and the south of Down, have become prognathous like the Australians. The inhabitants of New England have descended from the English, yet they have already a physical type of their own. The Indians of North America, or at least certain tribes of them, have pornuinently altered the shape of the skull by bandaging the head in infancy. The Sikhs of India, since the establishment of Babel Nina's religion (1500 A. D.) and their consequent advance in civilization, have changed to a longer head and more regular features, so that they are now distinguished greatly from their neighbors, the Afghans, Thibetans, Hindus. The Ostiak savages

have become the Magyar nobility of Hungary. The Turks in Europe are, in cranial shape, greatly in advance of the Turks in Asia from whom they descended. The Jews are confessedly of one ancestry; yet we have among them the light-haired Jews of Poland, the dark Jews of Spain, and the Ethiopian Jews of the Nile valley. The Portuguese who settled in the East Indies in the sixteenth century are now as dark in complexion as the Hindus themselves. Africans become lighter in complexion as they go up from the alluvial river-banks to higher land, or from the coast; and on the contrary the coast tribes which drive out the Negroes of the interior and take their territory end by becoming Negroes themselves."

[395]Systematic Theology, pp. 242, 243. From such facts it is reasonably inferable that there is no fixity of human types which disproves their origin in climatical conditions. It is true that m the instances cited there are no variations equal to the deeper distinctions of race; but this lack is fully compensated by the difference of time. In the one case we have, at most, only a few centuries; in the other, thousands of years. If in the shorter time such physiological variations could arise from changes of environment, the deeper distinctions of race could so arise in the vastly longer time.

Admitting the slightness of variation under great climatical change, as claimed in many instances, there is an interpretation which obviates all inference against the origin of race distinctions from natural causes. This interpretation lies in the fact that, with great climatical change, there is in many modern instances but slight exposure to the natural causes of physiological change. "There are some reasons which make it probable that changes of external condition, or rather of country, produce less effect now than was formerly the case. At present, when men migrate they carry with them the manners and appliances of civilized life. They build houses more or less like those to which they have been accustomed, carry with them flocks and herds, and introduce into their new country the principal plants which served them for food in the old. If their new abode is cold they increase their clothing, if warm they diminish it. In these and a hundred other ways the effect which would otherwise be produced is greatly diminished."[396] The facts were very different in many early migrations. Without agriculture or domestic animals, without homes for shelter, with only the rudest weapons, men were wholly dependent upon natural resources, and would be without protection from the natural causes of physiological change in any new climatical conditions. It is thus obvious that such change would be more rapid and extensive than in many modern migrations. It follows that the slightness of change in such modern instances cannot disprove the origin of race distinctions from natural causes under the early conditions of full exposure to their force.

[396]Lubbock:Prehistoric Times, p. 589. This question is placed in yet another view. It is the view that the infancy of a species is the time of its most rapid variation into races or types, that such variations soon reach their limit, after which the several types become so fixed as to suffer little further change. Respecting the Negro—the standard instance of an early and persistent type: "What it does prove is a fact equally obvious from the study of post-pliocene mollusks and other fossils, namely, that now species tend rapidly to vary to the utmost extent of their possible limits, and then to remain stationary for an indefinite time."[397] It appears in these statements that such laws are not assumptions to meet a doctrinal exigency, but scientific inductions on the ground of facts. Nor are such facts limited to the human species and races, but are found broadly in natural history. With this wider sphere of inductive facts, the more certain are these laws. Their relation to the distinctions of race is obvious. They account for the variation of species into these distinctions

on natural grounds; for the early appearance of the several human races; and also for their permanence. It follows that neither the early appearance nor the permanence of the several human types is any disproof of their origin in natural causes. Neither fact, therefore, is any disproof of the specifical unity of mankind.[398] [397] Dawson:Story of the Earth and Man, p. 360.

[398]Prichard:Natural History of Man, sec. xlviii; Whedon:Methodist Quarterly Review, 1878, p. 565.

4. Scientific Evidences of Specifical Unity.—A sufficient account of the distinctions of race in natural causes is not in itself conclusive of a specifical unity of mankind. Its direct logical value is in the refutation of the argument from these distinctions for a plurality of species. There is, however, a large indirect value for the doctrine of unity. In the history of relative facts there is no call for the agency of God in repeated original creations of mankind. Hence a single original creation is the only rational inference. Beyond this inference there is a further value in the refutation of that chief argument for a plurality of species: it clears the way for all the more direct evidences of the unity of man. A summary of these evidences must now be given.

There is a oneness of races in physical characteristics. The distinctions are superficial, and the result of local influences. The oneness in all intrinsic facts of the physical constitution is as real as. in any animal species. The human body is intrinsically one among all races: one in chemical elements; one in anatomical structure; one in physiological constitution; one in pathological susceptibilities.[399] [399] Quatrefages:The Human Species, book ix; Prichard:Natural History of Man, pp. 477-486.

There is among all the different races a oneness of psychological endowment. This oneness appears as the result of a thorough analysis of the facts concerned in the question. Superficially, differences are many and obvious. It is easy to set in wide contrast the barbaric Negro and the cultured. Christianized Caucasian. There are, however, instances of little less difference between one and another of the Caucasian race. But in this case the difference is understood to be only accidental or superficial, while there is still a oneness in all the intrinsic facts of mind. A thorough analysis gives the same result respecting all the races of men. The mental differences are accidental or superficial, while the intrinsic facts of mind are the same in all. There are the same sensibilities, with their marvelous adjustment to the manifold relations of life; the same intellectual faculties, which constitute the rationality of mind; the same moral and religious nature, which, while it may sink to barbarism and idolatry in the Caucasian, may rise to the highest moral and Christian life in the Mongolian and Negro.[400]

[400] Quatrefages:The Human Species, pp. 431-498; Dorner:System of Christian Doctrine, vol. ii, pp. 92, 93; Prichard:Natural History of Man, pp. 486-546.

Prichard carries the discussion of these questions through many pages, and with his characteristic lucidity and candor. Widely diverse races are brought into view, that their oneness in the essential facts of mind may be fairly tested. Any one who follows the author with a mind open to the truth must find it most difficult to reject his conclusion: “We contemplate among ail the diversified tribes, who are endowed with reason and speech, the same internal feelings, appetencies, aversions ; the same inward convictions, the same sentiments of subjection to invisible powers, and, more or less fully developed, of accountableness or responsibility to unseen avengers of wrong and agents

of retributive justice, from whose tribunal men cannot even by death escape. We find every-where the same susceptibility, though not always in the same degree of forwardness or ripeness of improvement, of admitting the cultivation of these universal endowments, of opening the eyes of the mind to the more clear and luminous views which Christianity unfolds, of becoming molded to the institutions of religion and of civilized life: in a word, the same inward and mental nature is to be recognized in all the races of men. When we compare this fact with the observations which have been heretofore fully established as to the specific instincts and separate psychical endowments of all the distinct tribes of sentient beings in the universe, we are entitled to draw confidently the conclusion that all human races are of one species and one family."[401] [401] Prichard:Natural History of Man, pp. 545, 546. The sexual union of the most distinct races is just as fruitful as that within the purest and most definite race. The progeny of such union are entirely free from hybridity. Their fruitfulness is permanent and without decrease. If in some instances it may be less, in others it is greater, so that there is a full average. Here are facts utterly unknown in all the crossings of animal species. It is only from the union of closely allied species that there is any produce. There is only the most limited fruitfulness of such offspring; never a permanent fruitfulness. Here is the law of hybridity; a law which is the chief guide of science in the analysis and classification of species. But this law is wholly unknown among human races. It follows that human races are not separate species, but simply varieties of one species. The law of hybridity which limits the production of a permanently fruitful progeny to the species, and so denies it to the crossing of species, is one of the most obvious laws of natural history. A mere statement of the relative facts must make this plain. "The law of nature decrees that creatures of every kind shall increase and multiply by propagating their own kind, and not another. If we search the whole world, we shall probably not find one instance of an intermediate tribe produced between any two distinct species, ascertained to be such. If such a thing were discovered it would be a surprising anomaly. The existence of such a law as this in the economy of nature is almost self-evident, or at least becomes evident from the most superficial and general survey of the phenomena of the living world: for if, as some have argued, there were no such principle in operation, how could the order, and at the same time the variety, of the animal and vegetable creation be preserved? If the different races of beings were intermixed in the ordinary course of things, and hybrid races were reproduced and continued without impediment, the organized world would soon present a scene of universal confusion ; its various tribes would become every-where blended together, and we should at length scarcely discover any genuine or uncorrupted races. It may, indeed, be said that this confusion of all the living tribes would long ago have taken place. But how opposite from such a state of things is the real order of nature! The same uniform and regular production of species still holds throughout the world; nor are the limits of each distinct species less accurately defined than they probably were some thousands of years ago. It is plain that the conservation of distinct tribes has been secured, and that universally and throughout all the different departments of the organic creation."[402] It thus appears that the very possibility of a natural science is conditioned on the law which limits the production of a permanently fruitful progeny to the species. Hence the fact of such a science is the fact of such a law. The presence of this law is ever the proof of specifical oneness, however wide the variations of race. It follows that the several human races, among which this law is without any limitation, are one species.

[402]Prichard:Natural History of Man, pp. 12, 13.

“The infertility, or, if you will, the restricted and rapidly limited fertility between species, and the impossibility of natural forces, when left to themselves, producing series of intermediary beings between two given specific types, is one of those general facts which we call a law. This fact has an importance in the organic world equal to that rightly attributed to attraction in the sidereal world. It is by virtue of the latter that the celestial bodies preserve their respective distances, and complete their orbits in the admirable order revealed by astronomy. The law of the sterility of species produces the same result, and maintains between species and between different groups in animals and plants all those relations which, in the paleontological ages, as well as in our own, form the marvelous whole of the organic empire. Imagine the suppression of the laws which govern attraction in the heavens, and what chaos would immediately be the result. Suppress upon earth the law of crossing, and the confusion would be immense. It is scarcely possible to say where it would stop. After a few generations the groups which we call genera, families, orders, and classes would most certainly have disappeared, and the branches also would rapidly have become affected. It is clear that only a few centuries would elapse before the animal and vegetable kingdoms fell into the most complete disorder. Now order has existed in both kingdoms since the epoch when organized beings first peopled the solitudes of our globe, and it could only have been established and preserved by virtue of the impossibility of a fusion of species with each other through indifferently and indefinitely fertile crossings.”[403] [403] Quatrefages:The Human Species, pp. 80, 81. The doctrine here is the same as that given from Prichard. These eminent authors did not rest the question with such summary statement, however decisive in itself. Each carefully and thoroughly studied the relative facts in natural history, and found them in full accord with the doctrine as summarily stated. We have the same conclusion as previously given. With the narrowly limited fruitfulness of all specifical crossings, the unrestricted fruitfulness between all the human races is conclusive of their specifical unity. So far, we have simply stated as a fact the average and permanent fruitfulness of the progeny from the union of the most distinct human races. No proof has been offered. There is little need of any formal argument. The fact is too open and too well known to be seriously questioned. It is verified by innumerable instances in modern history. These instances arise specially in the intercourse of Europeans with the Negro and the Indian or Redskin of America. The produce of such intercourse is fruitful without any stint. Hence every-where mixed races have arisen. Their permanence is conclusive of their freedom from the hybridity which suffers only a temporary existence to the progeny of specifical crossings. The facts are amply given, and with scientific clearness, by the authors recently cited.[404] It will suffice to give their conclusion. “It appears to be unquestionable that intermediate races of men exist and are propagated, and that no impediment whatever exists to the perpetuation of mankind when the most dissimilar varieties are blended together. We hence derive a conclusive proof, unless there be in the instance of human races an exception to the universally prevalent law of organized nature, that all the tribes of men are of one family.”[405] Quatrefages, having also reviewed the relative facts, says: “Thus, in every case crossings between human groups exhibit the phenomena characteristic of mongrels and never those of hybrids. Therefore, these human groups, however different they may be, or appear to be, are only races of one and the same species and not distinct species. Therefore, there is but one human species, taking this term species in the acceptation employed when speaking of animals and plants.”[406] This author is fully warranted in these concluding words: “Now I wish that candid men, who are free from party spirit or prejudices, would follow me in this view, and study for themselves all these facts, a few of which I have only touched

upon, and I am perfectly convinced that they wall, with the great men of whom I am only the disciple—with Linnaeus, Buffon, Lamarck, Cuvier, Geoffrey, Humboldt, and Midler—arrive at the conclusion that all men belong to the same species, and that there is but one species of man."

[404]Prichard:Natural History of Man, pp. 18-26; Quatrefages:The Human Species, pp. 85-87.

[405]Prichard:Natural History of Man, p. 26.

[406]The Human Species, pp. 87, 88.

Comparative philology is a witness for the specifical unity of man. This recent science is already a chief light in the study of ethnology. Affinities of widely separated races are thus discovered, and these races are traced back to a common origin and a primary ethnic unity. The existence of the same words in different languages is the proof of a primary connection and a common original. No principle of the inductive sciences is more valid. The primary unity of such languages carries with it the ethnic unity of the races which use them. "It is absolutely certain from the character of the French, Spanish, and Italian languages that those nations are in large measure the common descendants of the Latin race. "When, therefore, it can be shown that the languages of different races or varieties of men are radically the same, or derived from a common stock, it is impossible rationally to doubt their descent from a common ancestry. Unity of language, therefore, proves unity of species because it proves unity of origin."[407] [407] Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, p. 89.

Comparative philologists have thus been able to bring" back into a primary unity many widely separate and widely diverse peoples. The affinity of languages leads up to a primary unity of language, and hence to the unity of man. "The universal affinity of language is placed in so strong a light that it must be considered by all as completely demonstrated. It appears inexplicable on any other hypothesis than that of admitting fragments of a primary language to exist through all the languages of the Old and New World."[408] "Much as all these languages differ from each other, they appear, after all, to be merely branches of one common stem."[409] "As far as the organic languages of Asia and Europe are concerned, the human race is of one kindred, of one descent." "Our historical researches respecting language have led us to facts which seemed to oblige us to assume the common historical origin of the great families into which we found the nations of Asia and Europe to coalesce. The four families of Turanians and Iranians, of Khamites and Shemites, reduced themselves to two, and these again possessed such mutual material affinities as can neither be explained as accidental nor as being so by a natural external necessity; but they must be historical, and therefore imply a common descent." "The Asiatic origin of all these [American] tribes is as fully proved as the unity of family among themselves."[410] We may add one more testimony: "The comparative study of languages shows us that races now separated by vast tracts of land are allied together, and have migrated from one primitive seat. . . . The largest field for such investigations into the ancient condition of language, and, consequently, into the period when the whole family of mankind was, in the strictest sense of the word, to be regarded as one living whole, presents itself in the long chain of Indo-Germanic languages, extending from the Ganges to the Iberian extremity of Europe, and from Sicily to the North Cape."[411] The sense is that the inheritance of all these languages from a common source proves the original unity of the many widely different peoples which they represent.

[408]Klaproth.

[409]Schlegel:The Philosophy of History, p. 92, London, 1847.

[410]Bunsen:Philosophy of Universal History, vol. ii, pp. 4, 99, 112; the last three authors as cited by Macdonald:Creation and the Fall, p. 381.

[411]Humboldt:Cosmos, vol. it, p. 111.

Comparative philology thus makes it clear and sure that peoples widely separated in place, and representing very distinct racial types, were originally one family and one blood. What is thus proved to be true of a part may be true of the whole. Indeed, in the absence of all disproof, the only rational inference is that all human families were originally one family. More and more is the wider study of comparative philology pointing to this truth. The results already attained render groundless the distinctions of race for a plurality of origins, and prove beyond question that more or less of the several species as held by polygenists are mere varieties of the one species.

5. The Scripture Sense of Unity.—The whole human race is lineally descended from Adam and Eve. There is hence a genetic connection of all mankind. This is the obvious sense of the Scriptures. It appears in the more definite statements respecting the origin of man and the peopling of the world, and also in various incidental and doctrinal references to the race. There is the creation of a single pair as the beginning of the human species and the progenitors of all mankind. It was for them to be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth (Genesis 1:27-28). Such was the order of Providence, and the multiplying people down to the time of the flood were in unbroken genetic connection with them (Genesis 5:1-2). The repeopling of the world was from the sons of Noah, who clearly stand in lineal descent from Adam and Eve (Genesis 10:1; Genesis 10:32). All these facts are openly given in the earlier chapters of Genesis. The notable words of Paul to the Athenians must mean the genealogical oneness of mankind. “And (God) hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth” (Acts 17:26). The New Version drops the word blood; so that in its rendering we read simply, “And he made of one every nation of men.” The weight of critical authority is against the genuineness of α■μα in the Greek text. This was the reason for the new rendering. The change strengthens the sense of a genealogical unity. While the words “of one blood”—εξ ■νος α■ματος—clearly point to such a unity, they might be claimed to express simply a oneness of nature which is consistent with a plurality of origins. The new rendering is in no sense open to such a claim. We cannot so supplement the words “made of one” as to read, “made of one nature or kind.” Of one man, of one father, or of one parentage, is the only permissible rendering. There was reason with Paul for the utterance of such a truth in the presence of his Greek audience. On the notion of autochthonism the Athenians claimed for themselves a distinct origin, and thereon the distinction of a special superiority over other nations. Now as on this great occasion Paul declares all men by their creation to be the offspring of God (Acts 17:28), so he declares all to be mediately the offspring of a common parentage. This is the meaning of the words, “And he made of one every nation of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth.” This is the deepest unity of man; not only that of a specifical oneness of nature, but also that of a genealogical oneness.

There are other words of Paul which give the same sense (Romans 5:12; Romans 5:17-19; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22). In the passages given by reference both the prevalence of sin with all men

and the death of all are traced back to a connection with the sin of Adam. These facts involve doctrinal questions which more properly belong to another division of the subject, but irrespective of this have special significance for the present point. The common sinfulness of the race could not in the deep sense of Paul be consequent on the sin of Adam without a common genealogical connection with him. Neither could there be the consequence of death as common to all without such a connection. So much may be said with the fullest warrant, and quite irrespective of certain doctrinal grounds of such consequences as set forth in theology.[412]

[412] Van Oosterzee:Christian Dogmatics, vol. i, pp. 363, 364; Macdonald:Creation and the Fall, p. 373; Dorner:System of Christian Doctrine, vol. ii, p. 89.

6. A Special Theory of Pre-adamites.—This theory is the same in principle as the polygenism which holds a plurality of origins for the more distinct races. It is peculiar in claiming for itself entire consistency with the Scriptures, and even that it is necessary to their proper interpretation. For many centuries there was no question in the Church respecting either the unity of man or the true primariness of Adam. The new theory was initiated by Peyrerius, a Romish priest. His first work[413]—a disquisition on Romans 5:12-14—appeared in 1655. The existence of men before Adam is maintained as the sense of the passage named. The next year this work was followed by another from the same author, with a fuller discussion of the same theory. The theory encountered strong opposition, and soon sank into silence. This silence continued for two centuries, when the question was revived.

[413]Pre-adamites, etc. The occasion for the new discussion was furnished in the discovery of facts which seemingly point to an antiquity of man far beyond the reach of biblical chronology. The aim is to adjust the alleged facts to the limitations of this chronology. The method is to regard Adam, not as the first man, but as the first of a distinct race, which appears in the opening of biblical history. This Adamic race falls within the limits of biblical chronology, while the facts which point to a much higher antiquity of man must be interpreted on the theory of earlier races. The existence of such races is in the fullest consistency with the Scriptures. Such is the theory.

While the advocates of this theory agree that the Adamic race is distinct from others, and of later origin, they are not agreed as to its ethnic composition. For instance, the Adamic race is with Peyrerius simply the Hebrew race; with McCausland, the Caucasian in distinction from the Mongolian and Negroid; with Winchell, the Mediterranean or white race, but as including Japhetites, Semites, and Hamites.[414] [414] Pre-adamites, p. 52. As this theory claims to be thoroughly scriptural, very naturally the proof of it is sought in the Scriptures. Its later advocates go beyond the Scriptures into such facts of ethnology, geology, and archaeology as are usually adduced in proof of a high antiquity of man. In this, however, we need not here follow them, as we have previously considered these facts. It could not be overlooked by thoughtful writers who appeal to the Scriptures for proof of this theory that it is in seeming collision with fundamental truths of Christian anthropology and soteriology. Nor could all endeavor toward a reconciliation be omitted. Here the theory encounters insuperable difficulty, as we shall point out in the proper place. Later advocates of the theory on scriptural grounds very properly omit the argument of Peyrerius from the notable passage of Paul in the Epistle to the Romans (Romans 5:12-14). So far from being the ground of an argument, the reconciliation of the passage with the new theory is above the power of its advocates.

Much use is made of familiar incidents in the life of Cain. He is a fratricide and a fugitive, and suffers the remorse of sin and the severity of the divine judgment. He is seized with the dread of vengeance: “Every one that findeth me shall slay me.” God in pity sets upon him a seal of protection, “lest any one finding him should slay him.” So Cain went forth from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden. He next appears in married life. There is born to him a son, whom he names Enoch. He builds a city and calls it after the name of this son (Genesis 4:8-17). In view of such facts the argument for pre-adamites is easily constructed. On the face of the narrative, Adam and Eve and Cain at this time composed the whole Adamic family. Who then were the slayers whose vengeance Cain so dreaded? And where did he find a wife? And how could he so soon build a city without the co-operation of people already existing? And why should a city be built, except for the occupancy of such people? The interpretation of these facts requires the existence of pre-adamites.[415] [415] McCausland:Adam and the Adamite, pp. 194-197; Winchell:Pre-adamites, pp. 188-193. The argument is plausible, and seemingly possesses much force. It might be deemed conclusive, if the question hinged entirely upon the incidents here narrated. Such, however, is not the case. Many other facts concern the question, and such as are more decisive of the issue. For any conclusiveness, the argument requires an unwarranted assumption of fullness in this early Adamic history. For aught we know, the family of Adam may have already multiplied to a very considerable number, at least to one sufficient for the incidents in the life of Cain. The birth of only Cain and Abel previous to that of Seth is, in view of the time given by the manhood of both before this event, an unreasonable supposition. The omission of other names is nothing against the assumption of other births. Neither is the formal naming of the three, which no doubt was for special reasons. Thus, on the reasonable supposition of a considerable increase in the family of Adam beyond the names given, the incidents in the life of Cain are sufficiently provided for without the existence of pre-adamites. In view of very decisive facts of Scripture against this theory, we very much prefer the above solution of the questions arising from such incidents. The unity of man by genealogical descent from Adam and Eve implies the marriage of brothers and sisters in the initial history of the race; and much account is made of the fact by the advocates of this pre-adamite theory. It is a case in which strong words may be used. Strong words are used.[416] The only avoidance of so repugnant a consequence is in the existence of pre-adamites, with whom the children of Adam might unite in lawful marriage. Such is the view.

[416]Winchell:Pre-adamites, pp. 190, 191.

How would Professor Winchell account for the initial multiplication of the race without the implication which he so strongly reprobates? On his theory, only the coincident evolution of two human beings, respectively male and female, could meet the lowest requirement for the inception of a human race. It might be said that such man and woman, even if born of the same animal parentage, would not be brother and sister, because such a relation has no sufficient ground in such a parentage. However, their children would be brothers and sisters, and there would still be no provision for a human race without their intermarriage. Hence the theory must assume the coincident evolution of distinct human pairs, and, reasonably, from distinct animal parentages, so as to provide for marriage without the consanguinity of brother and sister. Such evolutions must be assumed to be coincident in both time and place; for otherwise their children could never meet in wedlock, and the lawful requirements for a human race would still be wanting. A coincident

creation of distinct human pairs, if such were the divine order, would be entirely responsive to rational thought; but such opportune evolutions to meet the exigencies of this pre-adamitism are not responsive to such thought. It thus appears that this theory has for itself no escape from the implication which it so strongly repels, except through the most unwarranted assumptions. The requirement of pre-adamites in order to provide lawful marriage for the children of Adam carries with it serious difficulties in the question of ethnology and the distinctions of race, while the implication so strongly objected to the Adamic origin of man still cleaves to this theory. On this theory, the distinctions of race are from separate origins or evolutions, not from differences of environment. Such is the law for the deeper distinctions of the Negroid, Mongoloid, and Caucasian races. The Negroid is held to be the oldest. There must be an oldest, and the case is the same whichever be the race. “We proceed on the supposition of the Negroid. For a beginning, the theory requires the coincident evolution of a Negroid man and woman. But how shall the race be propagated without the marriage of brothers and sisters? There are no pre-negroidites with whom they might intermarry. If the deeper distinctions of race are original, the Negroid must be original, without any mixture of blood by the marriage of its first family of sons and daughters with an older race. Otherwise, it is impossible to identify any original race, and the ethnology of this theory becomes an utter tangle. Whence the Mongoloid? Some have thought him the mongrel child of the Negro and the Caucasian. If such be his origin, the Caucasian race is older than the Mongoloid, while the latter is clearly of lower grade. Therefore this view is out of accord with the theory of evolution, which cannot allow the antecedence of a higher race to a lower. Nor can it agree with many of the alleged proofs of pre-adamites. Hence Professor Winchell consistently rejects it.[417] On his own theory of the evolution of distinct races, the Mongoloid must be a new type by evolution from the Negroid stock. How shall the new type be perpetuated except by propagation within itself? If the first offspring of the newly evolved type must intermarry with the original stock, it can have no permanence. But the propagation within itself, as necessary to its perpetuation as a distinct race, requires the intermarriage of brothers and sisters. Adam appears as a ruddy white man. His origin is by evolution from an older stock, not by direct creation. He is the beginning of the Caucasian or white race.[418] How is this new type to be propagated so as to preserve its distinction as the Caucasian race? The children of Adam must not inter- marry. For its avoidance the pre-adamites must be on hand. Cain married a Mongoloid.[419] Other children of Adam, at least the earlier, must have done the same. So the theory requires. It is the union of a very few with a race already numerous. The slight infusion of white blood will readily be absorbed without any noticeable or abiding variation of the Mongoloid type. It cannot be so with the new type. The grandchildren of Adam are half-Mongoloid, and each succeeding generation must be still more conformed to that type. There is here no parentage for the propagation of the distinct Caucasian race. Nor could there be any distinct Adamic race.

[417]Pre-adamites, p. 189.

[418]Ibid., p. 294.

[419]Pre-adamites, p. 295.

While such difficulties cleave to this theory, nothing is gained by thus recasting the traditional interpretation of Scripture. There is in it no avoidance of the special objection under review. On the initiation of a human race without the intermarriage of brothers and sisters, science sheds not a

ray of light. Hence pre-adamites should not hastily and dogmatically urge such an objection against the primariness of Adam. Any relief for his family can be gained only at the cost of an earlier family. On any theory, there must have been a beginning of mankind; and at that beginning, whenever placed, such pre-adamites must find their own objection on hand, and with all its force against themselves. For purely naturalistic evolutionists the question has no concern, but for theistic evolutionists it has profound concern; and it is far better that they should modestly and reverently leave it with the providence of God. Surely the ordering of the matter was wholly within his prerogative. Nor should we judge the question out of our present feelings. The case may have been very different in the first family of the race. God may have given to the sons and daughters of Adam a conjugal cast of the affectional nature rather than a brotherly and sisterly cast. On the ground of theism there is no perplexity in such a view. In the constitution of man nothing is more remarkable than the adjustment of his affectional nature to his manifold relations. It is an instance of the purest divine teleology. Nor shall we hesitate to believe that in like manner God could easily provide for any exigency arising in the initial history of the race.

7. Doctrinal Interest in the Question of Unity.—Polygenism, or an original plurality of races, in whatever form of the theory, is in opposition to fundamental doctrines of Christian theology. We instance anthropology and soteriology. The Adamic origin of mankind; the sin and fall of the primitive pair; the consequent moral lapse and ruin of the race; the redemption of the race by Jesus Christ: the inclusion of all men in the race so ruined and redeemed—these are clear truths of Scripture. A few texts will suffice for the proof. The most explicit is the great passage of St. Paul (Romans 5:12-19). It affirms the facts of anthropology and soteriology which we summarily stated. Through the sin of Adam all men suffer the consequence of depravity and death. Then for all men so ruined by the Adamic fall there is a common redemption in Jesus Christ. There is another text which, with its profound implications, gives the same truths: “For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Corinthians 15:21-22). It thus appears again that the death of all men is a consequence of Adamic sin, and that for all as so involved there is a common redemption in Christ.

Neither polygenism in general nor pre-adamitism in particular can adjust itself to these truths of Christian theology. Of course, the attempt is made; but its futility is easily exposed. How could races existing long before Adam, and out of all genealogical connection with him, suffer the consequences of his sin? Any affirmative answer must assume a retroaction of Adam’s sin. Such retroaction is assumed. The position of Peyrerius is thus stated: “Death entered the world before Adam, but it was in consequence of the imputation ‘backward’ of Adam’s prospective sin; and this was necessary, that all men might partake of the salvation provided in Christ”[420] McCausland regards the pre-adamites as sinners on their own account, and finds in the words of Paul, not the universality of Adamic sin, but the universality of the redemption in Christ: “The Saviour redeemed Adam and his race, as the apostle states; but the redemption extends from the highest heaven to the lowest Hades—from Abel, Enoch, and Noah to ‘the spirits in prison,’ who were not of Adam’s race.”[421] The equivalence of great facts, as given in the comparison of Paul, is thus annulled. In this view the redemption in Christ immensely transcends the extent of Adamic sin and death, while in the sense of Paul the two are of the same extent.

[420]Winchell:Pre-adamites, p. 458.

[421]Adam and the Adamite, p. 294.

Professor Winchell's own argument for the consistency of pre-adamitism with Christian doctrine is mostly put in certain questions: Why could not antecedent races share with Noah and Abraham in the plan of salvation? If the atonement was retroactive for four thousand years or more, why not a few thousand years farther? If it reached Adam, why not his ancestry? Why should the limitations of Hebrew knowledge limit the flow of divine grace?[422] These questions might all be answered in the implied sense of the author, and yet be valueless for the proof of his theory, because, at most, they could give only the inference of a possible extension of redemptive grace, while the real question concerns the actual facts of sin and redemption as given in the Scriptures.

[422]Pre-adamites,pp. 285, 286.

Professor Winchell gives prominence to certain utterances of Dr. Whedon, which, however, were confessedly only tentative or hypothetic, and were subsequently withdrawn.[423] There was a time when the evidences of a high antiquity of man seemed to Dr. Whedon very strong, and when he thought it possible that further disclosures might prove an antiquity beyond the reach of biblical chronology. In forethought of such a contingency he suggested the admission of pre-adamites as probably the best mode of adjusting Christian doctrine to such antiquity: "Why not accept, if need be, the pre-adamic man? If Dr. Dawson admits an Adamic center of creation, why not admit, if pressed, other centers of human origin? The record does not seem to deny other centers in narrating the history of this center. The atonement, as all evangelical theology admits, has a retrospective power. It provides, as St. Paul says, 'remission for the sins that are past'—that is, for those who lived and sinned before Christ died; and who received 'remission' from God in anticipation of the atonement. It was thus that Abraham was justified by faith, through the Christ that had not yet made the expiation. The atonement thus may throw responsibility and propitiation for sin over all past time, all terrene sections, and all human races. So, too, the sin of Adam may bring all past misdoings of earlier races under the category of sin and condemnation—that is, under the inauguration of a system of retribution which otherwise would not have taken existence. Some theologians have held that the atonement throws its sublime influence over other worlds than ours; why not then over other human races? Here, as often elsewhere, science, that seemed to threaten theology, does but open before it broader fields and sublimer elevations. It contradicts our narrow interpretations, and reads into the text worlds of new meaning. With this provisional view we have not the slightest misgiving as to the effect of the demonstration of the pre-adamite man upon our own theology."[424] [423] Ibid., pp. 286-289, 470, 471.

[424]Methodist Quarterly Review, 1878, pp. 369, 370.

We cannot share the confidence of Dr. Whedon in such a mode of adjustment, in case the exigency should ever arise. We think the mode discredited by the assumptions which it requires. These assumptions were previously indicated, and now more fully appear in the above citation. One is the retroaction of Adamic sin; the other, the retroaction of redemptive grace. In both cases the retroaction must be such as to reach pre-adamic races. In itself considered, the latter assumption involves no serious perplexity. The atonement was in the plan of God the provisional ground of salvation for the Adamic race from the beginning, and, on the existence of prior races, might have been made available for them. So far, however, the putting of the case is purely hypothetic, while such an extension of redemptive grace is purely a question of fact. The other

assumption of a retroaction of Adamic sin which brings pre-existent races “under the category of sin and condemnation” seems to us utterly inadmissible. The full consequence of Adam’s sin upon his own race in genealogical descent from himself is full of perplexity. Without the genealogical connection any such consequence must be purely arbitrary, and the product of an immediate providential agency. This implication is not avoidable by a derivative connection of the Adamic race with earlier races, as held by Professor Winchell. The reason is obvious. Genealogical relations have no retroactive power. Heredity ever moves forward, never backward. It remains true that any involvement of earlier races in the sin of Adam must have been a purely arbitrary determination. Such a mode of guilt and retribution has no consistency with Christian theology—certainly none with an Arminian system. With Dr. Whedon himself, in his final view, we think it better not yet to accept the pre-adamite, and not to provide for him until his actual coming.[425] [425] Methodist Quarterly Review, 1878, p. 567. The idea of a broader relation of the atonement than to mankind often appears in theological discussion. It was easy, therefore, for Professor Winchell to cite numerous instances.[426] Any service of the idea to the theory of pre-adamites must depend upon its content. Rarely has it been maintained that the atonement is for other sinners than those of mankind.

[426]Pre-adamites, pp. 289-293. When viewed as more broadly related, it is simply as a fact of paramount interest, as a lesson of profoundest moral significance, to all intelligences. Such is the whole content of the idea in its usual theological expression. We find nothing more in the instances cited by Professor Winchell. In most of them it is beyond question that this is all. We read nothing more in the citations from Bishop Marvin;[427] nothing more in that from Dr. Chalmers.[428] Indeed, we know that he meant nothing more. The citation from Hugh Miller[429] means simply the familiar idea of an original inclusion of redemption in the divine plan of creation and providence, without any intimation of an atonement for other than human sinners. Any further sense of Sir David Brewster must be a mere inference from an hypothetic interrogation.[430] With Professor Winchell we also could heartily appropriate the words long ago uttered by Bentley: “Neither need we be solicitous about the condition of those planetary people, nor raise frivolous disputes how far they may participate in Adam’s fall, or in the benefits of Christ’s incarnation;”[431] but they shed no light upon this pre-adamitism. There is no ground in Scripture for any notion of a retroaction of sin and grace in the ruin and recovery of pre-adamic races. Nor can we see how the views of authors, as above stated, could be thought of any value in the support of such a theory.

[427]The Work of Christ, pp. 10, 70, 74, 78, 137.

[428]Astronomical Discourses, discourse iv, p. 134.

[429]Foot-prints of the Creator, p. 326.

[430]More Worlds than One, English edition, pp. 166, 167.

[431]Boyle Lectures, 1724, p. 298.

071. Chapter 2: Primitive Man.

Chapter 2

Primitive Man. The man we here study is the man of the Mosaic narrative, not the first man of evolution. The two are widely different. If man came by evolution he was in the beginning of brutish mold, and a savage. It is not proved that man so came. Nor are we here concerned to review the question of his origin, which we previously discussed. We begin the study of man as presented in the narrative of Moses. In such a study the first question concerns the narrative itself, whether it should be interpreted according to a literal sense or be treated as mythical or allegorical. Only in the former sense can it give us any clear light on the question of primitive man. However, the interpretation must be determined, not by the exigency of light, but by the evidences in the case. We previously considered the question respecting the Mosaic narrative of creation; and as the narrative respecting primitive man is a part of that broader history it requires the less separate discussion.

072. I. Literal Sense Of Mosaic Narrative.

I. Literal Sense Of Mosaic Narrative.

1. Historic Style of the Narrative.—When the style is purely historical the contents must be accepted as literal, unless there be determining reasons for a different sense. This is a familiar and fully accepted principle of interpretation. Murphy states it thus: “The direct or literal sense of a sentence is the meaning of the author, when no other is indicated; not any figurative, allegorical, or mystical meaning.”[432]The law is just as valid for an extended narrative as for a sentence. The account of primitive man is clearly historic in style. There is no contrary intimation nor any thing in the contents to discredit the literal sense. Therefore the narrative must be accepted as historic. This conclusion cannot be discredited by regarding the narrative simply as the philosophic speculation of some devout Jew on the origin of moral evil. Such a view has gained more or less currency, particularly in German thought. “But we cannot adopt this hypothesis, for it requires a much later date to be assigned to the narrative than the language in which it is written—allowing the utmost latitude that modern criticism demands admits. It would, moreover, be very difficult to understand how the profound piety of a Jew, in dwelling upon the sacred traditions of his people concerning the progenitors of the race, could allow him to represent his theorizings as real history; or how, contrary to his purpose, such a misapprehension could arise.”[433] [432] On Genesis, pp. 13, 14. For a very full and able treatment of the question see Holden:The Fall of Man, chap. iii.

[433]Muller:Christian Doctrine of Sin, vol. ii, pp. 347, 348.

2. Historical Connections of the Narrative.—The narrative of primitive man is not an isolated part of Genesis, but a part thoroughly interwoven with its contents. If the facts which compose the body of the book are historical, so are the facts respecting man. All have a common ground. Any departure from historic verity is a surrender of the whole to allegoric uncertainty. “No writer of true history would mix plain matter of fact with allegory in one continued narrative, without any intimation of a transition from one to the other. If, therefore, any part of this narrative be matter of fact, no part is allegorical. On the other hand, if any part be allegorical, no part is naked matter of fact; and the consequence of this will be that every thing in every part of the whole narrative must be allegorical. . . . Thus the whole history of the creation will be an allegory, of which the real subject is not disclosed; and in this absurdity the scheme of allegorizing ends.”[434] With a simple historic style, with nothing to discredit an historical sense, with no intimation of any other, and with such consequences of any departure from that sense, we must adhere to the true historical character of this narrative.

[434]Bishop Horsley:Biblical Criticism, vol. i, p. 9. Cited by Holden:The Fall of Man, pp. 21, 23.

3. Uncertainty of a Figurative Interpretation.—This account of primitive man must have been intended for the communication of important truth. In this again it stands in inseparable connection with the fuller contents of Genesis. One may deny such an intention for the whole, but only at the cost of reducing the book to the grade of a mere romance or groundless speculation. The cost is

too great. Nor is there any compensation. The book itself would become utterly inexplicable. It could have no rational account as to either its origin or aim. Such a book must have an aim, and the only rational aim is the communication of important truth. With a literal sense such truth is given; without it, only myth or romance remains.

4. Scripture Recognition of a Literal Sense.—This recognition is given in clear references to leading events of the narrative. There is such a reference in the words of our Lord respecting the unity of husband and wife—such a unity as must bar all divorcement, except for the one reason which he allows (Matthew 19:4-6.). The reference is determined beyond question by a citation from the Mosaic narrative (Genesis 2:24). There could be no reference to such events, and particularly as the ground of so important a doctrine, without the reality of the events themselves. Such also is the reference to the serpent as the instrument in the temptation of Eve (2 Corinthians 11:3). Another instance is in the reference to the order of succession in the formation of Adam and Eve, and also to the facts that the woman was deceived and first in the transgression (1 Timothy 2:13-14). How could these events be made the ground of such a lesson of economical order unless they were regarded as real? There are references to still deeper truths. One is to the introduction of sin and death into the world by the sin of Adam (Romans 5:12-19). His sin and fall are thus brought into vital relation to the deepest truths of Christianity. Even the redemptive mediation of Christ is conditioned on the reality of these events. Without as much fullness of statement, there is the implication of the same deep truths in another reference of Paul (1 Corinthians 15:21-22). The historic character of the Mosaic narrative respecting primitive man thus stands clearly in the recognition of the Scriptures. This recognition, with the other evidences adduced, is conclusive of a literal sense.

073. II. Primary Questions Of Mosaic Narrative.

II. Primary Questions Of Mosaic Narrative. The simple narrative of creation, even from the beginning, moves on in sublime strain; but when the creation of man is reached a deeper tone is heard. Up to this stage there is for rational thought no completeness of nature. The same stars are in the sky; the same sun illumines the world; there are the same living orders, with all the wonders of organic constitution; but there is no mind within this scale of nature for the rational cognition of these orderly forms of existence; none which may rise in thought to a divine Mind as their only true and sufficient original. “Within their own limitation no sufficient reason for their existence can be given. Their end is not in themselves.[435] This deficiency is the prophecy of a rational culmination, and the prophecy is fulfilled in the coming of man. That distinct and deeper tone is first heard in the narrative of his creation, and signifies his true headship (Genesis 1:26-28). Such completion of the scale is the satisfaction of rational thought.

[435]Dwight:Theology, vol. i, pp. 348, 349; Watson:Theological Institutes, vol. ii, p. 8. A few particulars of the Mosaic narrative require brief attention before we come to the deeper questions of doctrinal anthropology.

1. Constituent Natures of Man.—On the face of the sacred narrative there are two distinct natures, body and mind, in the original constitution of man. This fact itself decides nothing respecting the theory of trichotomy, but is so far the obvious truth of the Mosaic narrative. Man is certainly dichotomic. “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Genesis 2:7). There must here be the sense of two distinct natures. The body is material like the earth out of which it is formed. The chemical elements combined in its constitution belong to the same earth. The body can easily be resolved into these common elements. Such a resolution is in constant process, as certain particles, having fulfilled their use, are ever being eliminated, while others are ever taking their place by a process of assimilation. While the body possesses all the qualities of matter, it is subject to the same methods of chemical and mechanical treatment. Its purely material nature is thus at once the clear sense of the Mosaic narrative and the determination of physical facts. In the formation of Adam there was no such divine operation as man must put forth in working a batch of clay into a human form. There was no divine manipulation of material. So crude a notion never entered into any clear theistic conception. Yet we find such a notion urged as an objection to the origin of man in an immediate divine formation. “Pre-adamitism . . . admits that Adam was ‘created,’ but substitutes for manual modeling of the plastic clay the worthier conception of origination according to a geneticmethod.”[436] Whether put as an objection to the orthodox conception of man’s creation, or as an argument for his evolution, the answer is already given: the crude notion of a “manual modeling of the plastic clay” never appears in that conception. The divine agency in this case, as in all others, is in the energizing of the divine will. The immediate formation of primitive man through this agency is the whole truth of the orthodox theory.

[436]Winchell:Pre-adamitesp. 385. The formation of the body was only a part of the divine work in the creation of man. There followed the divine inbreathing: God “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” The body might have been complete in its organic constitution without the living state, and this divine inbreathing might primarily signify its vitalization, with the inception of respiration as necessary to the maintenance of life. Some expositors find this lower sense in the plural form of the original text, as signifying “the breath of lives.” There is, however, in this distinct view of vitalization a trichotomic implication which seems mostly to have been overlooked. In the deeper sense the divine operation must mean the creation of the rational mind. The divine inbreathing signifies this creative agency. However, there is no outward form of action. So far the expression is anthropomorphic. The deep and true meaning is none the less clear. There is no impartation of divine essence as constitutive of the human soul. It is an immediate creation in the most originative sense of the term. This is the deeper meaning of the divine inbreathing in the creation of man.

Rational mind is the distinction of man as an order of existence. Without this distinction he must be classed merely as an animal. He might still be the highest grade, but could not be a distinct order. The utmost exaltation, exaggeration even, of animal intelligence leaves it in an infinitely lower plane than that of rational mind. The characteristics and achievements of human intelligence are the sufficient proof. The reality of mind is given with its faculties. Such faculties must have a ground in being. The essential distinction of the mind and the body is given in the profound distinction of qualities. In the one we find the properties of matter, with their complete subjection to chemical and mechanical laws; in the other, the faculties of intelligence and personal agency under a law of freedom. The two classes are in such thorough distinction, contrariety even, that they cannot have a common ground in being. Otherwise properties signify nothing as to the nature of their ground. But if they have no meaning for its nature, neither have they any for its reality. “We should thus fall into the most abject phenomenalism or positivism. Reason, however, still asserts, and will forever assert, the reality of being as the ground of properties, and equally asserts a distinction of grounds in accord with the fundamental distinction of properties. Thus reason affirms the reality of spiritual being as the ground of mental faculties. Hence the divine inbreathing was the creation of a spiritual nature in man.

2. The Question of Trichotomy.—Trichotomy is the doctrine of three distinct natures in man—body, soul, spirit—ς■μα, ψυχ■, πνε■μα. Body and spirit are defined and discriminated in the same manner as in the dichotomic view. There is unavoidable indefiniteness respecting the soul when thus held as a nature distinct from each of the others. We can readily define and differentiate material and mental natures by their respective and essentially different qualities, but we cannot so treat a nature which is neither, and is without definitive and differentiating qualities of its own. Dr. Bush, with others, designates it as a tertium quid, and assumes to find the evidence of its reality in a set of qualities in man which are neither material nor mental in any distinctive sense. These qualities appear in what constitutes the animal life in man in distinction from the intellectual or rational life.[437] The use of the indefinite tertium quid for the designation of this intermediate nature fully concedes its indefiniteness. Mere indefiniteness, however, is not conclusive against its reality. A thing is definite as its qualities are open to our mental cognition, and indefinite when they are not open. With hidden qualities there might still be the reality of being; though in such case we could not affirm the being. Whether the qualities of the animal or sentient life of man require as

their ground a tertium quid, a nature neither physical nor mental, is far from self-evident. It may not be possible to prove the contrary. It follows that the question of trichotomy cannot be decided in this mode.

[437]Bush:Anastasis, p. 78. In the early history of the Church trichotomy flourished mostly in the school of Alexandria, and was introduced into Christian theology through the Platonic philosophy. For a while it seemed fairly on the way to a common acceptance, when adverse influences checked its progress and brought it into disrepute. Tertullian strongly opposed it, and his influence was very great. Even the seeming indifference of Augustine was indirectly much against it; for his influence was so great on all doctrinal questions that nothing without his open support could hold a position of much favor in the more orthodox thought of the Church. Besides these facts, trichotomy was appropriated in the interest of the Apollinarian Christology and the Semi-Pelagian doctrine of sin. Very naturally, though not very logically, the strong antagonism to these heresies turned all its force against the trichotomy so appropriated.[438] The doctrinal relation of trichotomy to these heresies is worthy of brief notice. The pointing out of this relation requires a statement of the heretical elements of the doctrines concerned.

[438]Delitzsch:Biblical Psychology, p. 106; McClintock and Strong:Cyclopaedia, “Trichotomy.” The Christology of Apollinaris denied to Christ the human mind in its distinct rational sense, and provided for its functions in his personality by the presence of the Logos as the divine reason. Such a view requires the trichotomic anthropology, for the presence of the Logos in the place of the rational mind could not account for the sensibilities of Christ in the likeness of our own. In the absence of the rational mind, the soul must have been present as the ground of the manifold affections which lie below the purely rational life. Therefore the soul must be a distinct existence, for otherwise it could not be thus present in the absence of the rational mind. Such being the facts in the case, the only relation of trichotomy to the Apollinarian Christology is that it is the requirement and the possibility of such a Christology. On the other hand, this heresy is in no sense the logical implication or consequence of the trichotomy. Hence, with entire consistency, many trichotomists are thoroughly orthodox in their Christology. It follows that this heretical appropriation of trichotomy is no evidence against its truth, and no reason for the disrepute which it suffered in consequence. The Semi-Pelagian doctrine of original sin, while holding much truth as against pure Pelagianism, fell far short of the Augustinian doctrine. It specially differed from the latter, and fell short of it, in excepting the purely spiritual nature of man from the effect of Adamic sin. Yet his mere physical nature could not be the ground of all that was suffered. The soul as a distinct nature is necessary to such sufficient ground. Hence it must exist in man as a real nature in distinction from his purely spiritual nature. It thus appears that trichotomy is related to the Semi-Pelagian doctrine of sin precisely in the manner of its relation to the Apollinarian Christology. If the spiritual nature is excepted from the effect of Adamic sin, trichotomy must be true because it is the requirement of facts in the case of such exception. This exception, however, is no logical implication of the trichotomy. Hence trichotomy has no direct doctrinal concern with the Semi-Pelagian doctrine of original sin. Indeed, it does not seriously concern any important doctrine of Christian theology. It is a question of speculative interest in biblical psychology, but has no doctrinal implications decisive of either its truth or falsity. A dichotomic view of man is clearly given in the Scriptures. We give by reference a few texts out of many (Ecclesiastes 12:7; Matthew 10:28; 1 Corinthians 6:20; James 2:26). The dust and the spirit, body and soul, body and spirit are the

terms of these texts, which seem at once inclusive of the whole man and thoroughly distinctive of his natures. In this view man is only dichotomic. Yet we can hardly regard these texts as decisive of the question; and for the reason that, even with an intermediate nature, the very profound and specially open distinction between our bodily and spiritual natures justifies their designation in the same comprehensive sense as if really constitutive of our whole being. It is not the manner of the sacred writers, as it is not that of any writer, to be always thoroughly analytic. In the treatment of subjects it mostly suffices that chief characteristics be set forth, and the more prominent distinctions be made. Usually this is the actual and the better method. This may be the method in these formally dichotomic texts, and hence they are not conclusive against trichotomy.

There are also trichotomic texts—such at least in form. Two are in special favor with the advocates of trichotomy (1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 4:12). In the first we have the three distinctive terms “spirit, and soul, and body;” in the other, “soul and spirit,” with other terms, “joints and marrow,” which clearly signify the body. In this prayer of Paul for the Christians of Thessalonica the central and ruling idea is the entireness of their sanctification and their blameless preservation therein. With his usual force and fullness of expression, naturally, in such a case he would use words comprehensive of the whole man as the subject of the gracious sanctification and preservation. The intentional meaning of three distinct natures in man is no necessary part of such comprehension. Indeed, such a formal analytic view is hardly consistent with the intensity of the ruling idea of a complete wholeness. Such is the case in the great commandment (Luke 10:27). With the simple idea of loving God with our utmost capacity of loving, this commandment receives its greatest force; while, on the other hand, it must suffer loss of force by any analysis of heart, soul, and mind into ontological distinctions. The other text is open to similar observations. Soul and spirit are here viewed, not as essentially distinct, but as together the seat of thought and affection. In this view a third term, heart, has the same meaning as the other two. As the word of God is quick and sharp, and pierces even to the sundering of soul and spirit, so it comes to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart. This substitution of the one term heart for the two terms soul and spirit denies to them any ontological distinction ; for otherwise we must allow a third distinction for the heart, and the three, with the body, would give us a tetrachotomous division of natures in man. Such an outcome would itself be fatal to trichotomy.

If the original terms, ■■■■■ and ψυχ■, on the one hand, and ■■■■■ and πνε■μα, on the other, were used with uniformity of discrimination, the former for the ground of the animal life and the latter for the ground of the rational and religious life, the fact would constitute a strong argument for trichotomy. Such, however, is not the case. Indeed, the contrary is the fact. The former two often signify the ground of the rational life, while the latter two often signify the ground of the animal life. A few references may suffice for the verification of this position. We give the leading meanings of ■■■■■: Life (Genesis 1:20; Genesis 1:30); life or spirit (Genesis 35:18; 1 Kings 17:21); intellect, as manifest in its predicates or functions: joyful love (Isaiah 42:1); gladness (Psalms 86:4); piety toward God (Psalms 103:1-2); sinning (Leviticus 4:2); faculty of knowledge (Psalms 139:14; Proverbs 19:2); the personal self (Leviticus 5:1-2; Leviticus 5:4; Leviticus 5:15; Leviticus 5:17; Job 9:21; Psalms 3:2; Isaiah 51:23). It is thus made clear that this term has no restricted lower sense which can serve the interest of trichotomy, but is freely used in the highest sense of personal mind. We find the same meanings in the use of ■■■■■: breath (Job 4:9); animal life (Job 12:10); the one life and spirit respectively of man and beast (Ecclesiastes 3:19;

Ecclesiastes 3:21); the intellect, understanding (Isaiah 29:24); the immortal spirit (Ecclesiastes 12:7). It thus appears that, while the former term rises to the highest sense of the latter, the latter sinks to the lowest sense of the former. This absence of all distinction in their application to the animal and rational sides of human life denies to their use any support of trichotomy. It will not be questioned that πνε■μα often signifies the highest nature of man. Instances of such use are many and clear. With the spirit we rejoice in God our Saviour (Luke 1:47). Ourspirit witnesses jointly with the Holy Spirit to our gracious sonship (Romans 8:16). The glorified saints are spirits made perfect (Hebrews 12:23). Only as the personal mind can the πνε■μα be the subject of such predications. This same term, however, means breath or breathed air (2 Thessalonians 2:8); also the wind (John 3:8). On the other hand, ψυχ■ rises to the highest meaning of πνε■μα. The soul is the man, the personal self (Acts 2:43; Acts 3:23; Romans 2:9). With the soul we must love God supremely (Matthew 22:37), which is the highest form of personal action. The martyrs already with God aresouls (Revelation 6:9; Revelation 20:4). We thus find a concurrence of meanings in the Scripture use of soul and spirit which precludes any essential distinction between them.

It was previously stated that a uniform distinction of Hebrew and Greek terms for the designation of the animal and the rational life of man would constitute a strong argument for trichotomy. In the total absence of such discrimination there is no such argument. On the other hand, the indiscriminate and interchanging use of these terms may fairly be claimed as an argument for the dichotomic view of man. We do not think it conclusive. It follows that we have reached no dogmatic conclusion on the question of trichotomy. We are not concerned for the attainment of such a result, and for the reason previously stated, that the question does not seriously concern any important truth of Christian theology.[439] [439] Heard:Tripartite Nature of Man; Beck:Biblical Psychology; Delitzsch:System of Biblical Psychology, pp. 103-119.

3. Original Physiological Constitution.—This question must be determined in the light of relative facts as given in the Scriptures. In this view it is clearly seen that in chemical elements, in physiological constitution, and in the provision for subsistence, the body of Adam was much like our own. There must have been lungs for respiration, an alimentary system for the digestion and assimilation of food, an organism of veins for the circulation of the blood, and of nerves for sensation and locomotion. With these facts there must have been the same osteological and muscular systems.

It is a pure gratuity to think that such a body could be naturally exempt from the susceptibilities and liabilities of our own. With the highest degree of bodily perfection in Adam, he must still have been naturally liable to the ordinary casualties of our physical life. His bones could be broken, his blood poisoned, his flesh suffer lesion. He would have suffered from any excess of either fasting or eating. Such a bodily constitution is naturally liable to suffering and death. Any exemption in either case must depend upon a specially providential economy. Such an exemption was no doubt available for Adam on the condition of obedience to the divine will. In accord with these views suffering and death are accounted to man through the sin of disobedience (Genesis 2:17; Romans 5:12).

4. Intellectual Grade of Primitive Man.—Here again the truth is to be sought in a rational interpretation of relative exaggerated facts. The popular view has been molded rather by the views extravagance of Milton than by the moderation of Moses. The theological mind has not been free

from much exaggeration. “An Aristotle was but the rubbish of an Adam.”[440] In this manner the vigorous South expresses his lofty conception of the mental endowments of primitive man. Mr. Wesley is not less extravagant in his view, that Adam reasoned with unerring accuracy—if he reasoned at all. The supposition is that he possessed the faculties of immediate insight into all subjects, and was in no need of either experience or reasoning as a means of knowledge. No doubt he possessed a faculty of immediate insight into primary truths, but there is no evidence of any such insight into truths which we can acquire only through experience and reasoning. We may concede him a very high grade of mental powers, yet they were merely human, just like our own in kind, and operative under the same laws.

[440]South:Sermons, vol. i, p. 25.

There is nothing in the naming of the animals which, on any proper interpretation, contradicts this moderate view of Adam’s mental powers (Genesis 2:19-20). The perplexity of this case need not be aggravated by the assumption of an absolute universality in the term which designates the number of animals brought to Adam for naming. “The Hebrew word ■■■, kol, it is well known, does not invariably mean all in the largest sense, but sometimes many or much; and that it was designed to be received with some limitation in the instance under review is evident from the fishes of the sea not being specified, and from the inutility of making a vocabulary of such animals as were to inhabit distant regions of the globe, and which Adam would never see again after his nomination of them. It is also uncertain whether the assemblage consisted of those only which were within the precincts of the garden of Eden, or included others; inasmuch as the expressions, ‘every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air,’ may only denote of the field and climate of Paradise.”[441] Another mode of limitation may be cited, which obviates the chief objection urged against the narrative when taken in a universal sense: “It will be more satisfactory, however, if it can be shown that the objection rests only on a misapprehension of the narrative, which by no means affirms that all the creatures, or even many of them, were congregated before the man. ‘Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and fowl of the air,’ and ‘brought to the man,’ not ‘brought them,’ as in the English version, but ‘brought to the man,’ which is evidently equivalent to brought of them, the universalevery referring only to the formation. Should it, however, be objected that the next verse adds, ‘the man gave names to all cattle,’ etc., this will admit of easy explanation, for the correct rendering of the passage is, ‘to all the cattle,’ evidently to as many as were thus brought before him.”[442] [441] Holden:The Fall of Man, pp. 98, 99.

[442]Macdonald: Creation and the Fall, p. 367. With this restricted sense, however, the naming of the animals remains much the same as it respects the original faculties of Adam. The names given might be viewed either as arbitrary or as descriptive. In the former case they would signify nothing respecting the nature of the animals, while in the latter case they would express severally the natures of the different classes. For an arbitrary naming the requirements would be simply a sufficient vocabulary and a ready use of words. Adam could have had no such qualifications through his faculties, unless we postpone this event for many years after his creation. Language is not gained by intuition. The ready use of words in articulate speech is gained only through long practice. What Adam might have done through divine inspiration is a question quite apart from the present one which concerns his own capacities. By common agreement of the best thinkers the origination of language is a difficult problem; and not a few have found its sufficient source only in the divine agency.[443] It was simply impossible for Adam in the mere exercise of his own faculties

to acquire almost instantly the vocabulary and the use of words necessary to the naming of the animals, however much we may restrict their number. In the view of descriptive names, all the previous difficulty, as it respects the natural ability of Adam, remains, while very much is added. The giving of such names required an insight into the nature of the various animals. Such an immediate insight has been freely attributed to Adam. We give a single instance: “Adam gave names; but how? From an intimate knowledge of the nature and properties of each creature. Here we see the perfection of his knowledge; for it is well known that the names affixed to the different animals in Scripture always express some prominent feature and essential characteristic of the creatures to which they are applied. Had he not possessed an intuitive knowledge of the grand and distinguishing properties of those animals he never could have given them such names.”[444] It is hardly thinkable that such intuition can belong to any finite mind. To attribute it to Adam is to place him out of all proper homogeneity with ourselves. It must mean that the highest and most distinctive power of primitive man is entirely lost to his race. There is no such original unlikeness, no such loss of original faculty; and it is far more consistent with all the relative facts to account this naming of the animals to a divine inspiration. “To suppose it otherwise, and to imagine that Adam at the first was able to impose names on the several tribes of animals, is to suppose, either that he must from the first have been able to distinguish them by their characteristic marks and leading properties, and to have distinct notions of them annexed to their several appellations, or that he applied sounds, at random, an names of the animals, without the intervention of such notions. But the latter is to suppose a jargon, not a language; and the former implies a miraculous operation on the mind of Adam, which differs nothing in substance from the divine instruction here contended for.”[445] [443] Magee:On the Atonement, dissertation liii.

[444]Clarke:Commentary, in loc.

[445]Magee:On the Atonement, dissertation liii.

We thus find in Adam no evidence of a superhuman mental grade. However high his intellectual powers, they were not other in kind than our own; and, if left to himself, his progress, even in the rudiments of empirical knowledge, must have been very slow. There is no evidence that he was so left; and it is far more rational to think that he was divinely instructed and helped forward, that he might the sooner be prepared for the throne of the world assigned him (Genesis 1:26-28).

5. Created in the Image of God.—In the divine ideal of man as a purposed creation he was to be the image of God. “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” (Genesis 1:26) The record of such an actual creation immediately follows (Genesis 1:27).

Very naturally differences of opinion respecting the likeness of man to God early appeared in Christian thought. With a common agreement that man himself was the image of God, there was still the cardinal question as to what really constituted man. Some could not dispense with the body as an essential part, and therefore assumed for it a likeness to God. This required the assumption of some form of corporeity in God; for it is not to be thought that a physical nature can bear the likeness of a purely spiritual being. With the burden of such an assumption, the notion of a bodily similitude could not command a wide acceptance; and the prevalent opinion placed the image of God in the spiritual nature of man. Opinions also divided on the question whether image and likeness, or the original words so rendered, have different meanings or only serve conjunctly to intensify the expression of the one truth. Occasion was found for a distinction of meanings. “As

there is a great difference between the mere natural dispositions and their development by the free use of the powers which have been granted to men, several writers, among whom Irenaeus, and especially Clement and Origen, distinguished between the image of God and resemblance to God. The latter can only be obtained by a mental conflict (in an ethical point of view), or is bestowed upon man as a gift of sovereign mercy by union with Christ (in a religious aspect)."[446] Such a view is utterly discredited by the fact that this likeness of man to God was an original creation, not any subsequent attainment through either the free agency of man or the sovereignty of divine grace. A distinction of meanings in the two original terms is again discredited by the fact that in other places only one is used, sometimes one and sometimes the other, and in a manner to give to each the full meaning of both in the primary instance of their conjunct use (compare Genesis 1:27; Genesis 5:1; Genesis 9:6).

[446]Hagenbach:History of Doctrines, vol. i, p. 157.

It should be distinctly noted, and the fact should be emphasized, that man was originally made in the image of God. Hence this image must be in what he was originally, just as he came from the creative hand of God. We thus exclude every thing extraneous to the man himself, and equally every thing subsequent to his creation, whether from the divine agency or as the fruit of his own action. We thus exclude the dominion assigned to man (Genesis 1:28), which has often been set forth as the great fact of his likeness to God. Man was constituted in himself, not in his dominion, the image of God himself, not of his dominion. His dominion was an assignment subsequent to his creation in the image of God, which image constituted his fitness for such dominion.

We may find the true sense of this image rather in a complex of facts than in a single fact. The spiritual nature of man is the deepest fact of this likeness—the deepest because necessary to all other facts of likeness. But we should not place it so deep that it shall stand related to the divine likeness in man Just as the canvas is related to the painting which it bears, or merely "as precious ground on which the image of God might be drawn, and formed."[447] The spiritual nature was itself of the original likeness of man to God. Ontologically, spirit is like spirit, though one be finite and the other infinite. The intellectual and moral endowments of primitive man constituted a measure of his likeness to God. Again we are face to face with the profound distinction between the finite and the infinite; but such distinction does not preclude a profound truth of likeness. In God there is an intellectual, an emotional, and a moral nature. Such qualities of nature were in primitive man; in these facts he was the image of God. Personality is the central truth of man's original likeness to God. As a person he was thoroughly differentiated from all lower orders of existence, and in the highest sense lifted up into the image of God.

[447]Witsius:The Covenants, vol. i, p. 34. The original image of God in man no doubt had the implicit sense of holiness. Hence in the New Testament it came to signify holiness. This appears in the fact that the regeneration of man, his transformation from depravity into holiness, is represented as a recreation in the image of God after which he was originally made (Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10). But this question of primitive holiness so deeply concerns important doctrinal issues that it requires a separate treatment.

074. Chapter 3: Question Of Primitive Holiness.

Chapter 3 Question Of Primitive Holiness. As previously noted, this question deeply concerns important doctrinal issues. The Pelagian anthropology, with its manifold doctrinal implications, takes its place on the one side; the Augustinian anthropology, with all its implications, takes its place on the other. The profoundest dissent from the former does not require the full acceptance of the latter. It is true that any doctrinal anthropology which may be scientifically wrought into a system of evangelical theology must be in open issue with the Pelagian anthropology; but there is sure ground for such a theology without the extremes of the Augustinian anthropology.

075. I. Nature Of Holiness In Adam.

I. Nature Of Holiness In Adam.

1. Determining Law of Limitation.—Holiness is here viewed as a primitive quality of Adam, such as he possessed in the beginning of his existence. Therefore it must have been simply a quality of his nature, or such as might be an accompanying gift of his creation. It certainly could possess no proper ethical element, such as can arise only from free personal action. This is a determining law of limitation respecting the nature of primitive holiness. To pass this limit is to fall at once into the error of thinking that an ethical holiness may be divinely created in man. Directly following this is the error of thinking that a mere nature, the nature with which we are born, can be the subject of an ethical sinfulness and demerit—just such sinfulness and demerit as arise from personal violations of the divine law. An observance of this law of limitation will protect us against such errors.

2. Fundamental Distinctions of Holiness.—In a true godly life, such as that of Daniel, in a true Christian life, such as that of Paul, there is personal holiness, the holiness of character, with the ethical qualities of righteous action. Such holiness has ethical worth before the divine law. The quality of holiness and the moral worth arise from free moral action in obedience to the divine will. In such a godly or Christian life there is an inner life answering to the outer; an inner life of holy aspirations and aims, which indeed are the inspiration and true worth of the outer life. But in these inner activities there is still the free use of personal faculties, and therefore the truest form of ethical action. The holiness of such an inner life is of the truest ethical character, and therein profoundly different from the possible holiness of a primitive nature.

Below this inner life there is the nature, with its spontaneous tendencies. As matter has its properties, so mind has its powers and tendencies. However metaphysical the distinction between the nature and its tendencies, it is yet real for thought. Tendencies of nature are specially exemplified in the animal orders. The natural disposition is the determining law of the animal life. The distinctions of life are from differences of natural tendency. We thus note, at once, the reality and the differences of natural tendency in the lion and the lamb. In like manner we may note the reality, and the differences, of natural tendency in men whose lives are morally opposite. With the one the spontaneous disposition is to the good; with the other, to the evil. Such is the difference between a regenerate or sanctified nature and a nature yet corrupt and vicious. We thus find differences of moral tendency. On the ground of moral tendency we allege a moral quality of the nature; on the differences of such tendency, we qualify the one nature as good and the other as evil, but only in the sense in which a nature may be good or evil. With a spontaneous disposition to the good the nature is holy. There is such a subjective holiness in distinction from all holiness really ethical in its character.

3. Nature of Adamic Holiness.—After the previous analysis, the truth in this question is close at hand. The holiness of Adam, as newly created and before any personal action of his own, was simply a subjective state and tendency in harmony with his moral relations and duties. But such a

state, however real and excellent, and however pleasing to the divine mind, could not have any true ethical quality, or in any proper sense be accounted either meritorious or rewardable. A deeper analysis which reaches the most determinate moral principles must eliminate from theology the ideas of ethical character without free personal action. This question should not be confused by any difficulty, or inability even, to fix the exact line where spontaneous tendency passes over into ethical action. Nor should this line be ignored in order to place such quality in something back of it. Theological speculation is not free from such mistakes.

“Adam was brought into existence capable of acting immediately, as a moral agent, and therefore he was immediately under a rule of right action; he was obliged as soon as he existed to act right. And if he was obliged to act right as soon as he existed, he was obliged even then to be inclined to act right. . . . And as he was obliged to act right from the first moment of his existence, and did do so till he sinned in the affair of the forbidden fruit, he must have had an inclination or disposition of heart to do right the first moment of his existence; and that is the same as to be created or brought into existence, with an inclination, or, which is the same thing, a virtuous and holy disposition of heart.”[448] Not only is there here an overlooking of all distinction between purely spontaneous tendency and proper ethical action, but it is attempted to prove an original ethical holiness of Adam from its necessity to the moral obligation which was instant upon his existence. The assumption of such instant obligation is a pure gratuity. The requisite knowledge was not a product of the divine action which gave existence to Adam. Even the gift of mature powers is not the gift of such knowledge. Whether he was at once so endowed, or placed under training and gradually inducted into the moral sphere, we do not know. On these questions the Scriptures are silent. Reasonably, there was sufficient time for the knowledge and sensibility necessary to moral obligation. The assumption of an active disposition so instant upon the very existence of man as to be beforehand with an instant obligation, and not only the same in ethical quality as a free moral act, but a necessity to any holy volition, is far more replete with metaphysical subtlety than psychological and ethical analysis. The profound distinction between mere spontaneous tendency and personal action under obligation and law still remains. It is as real as the deepest ethical principles. It is none the less real for any inability to fix the exact line of distinction, xi mere initial tendency to the good in Adam could have no ethical character. It could not become an active disposition until duty in some form was presented. Simply as spontaneously active it could constitute only a motive, not an ethical action. Else to be tempted is to sin, and in every instance of temptation. Motive, whether to the good or the evil, takes on ethical character only where approved or entertained. Here it is that personal agency comes into action. Previous to this there is no ethical character, and the subtleties of Edwards are futile for the proof of the contrary.[449] [448] Edwards: Works, vol. ii, p. 385 [449]Full argument of Edwards: Works, vol. ii, pp. 381-390.

Both Whedon and Bledsoe very fully and very ably discuss the principles of this question, and both conclude against the possibility of any moral character, such as involves either merit or demerit, previous to free moral action.[450] The application of these principles to the present question is in this manner: “We may suppose a being, like Adam, created with soul perfectly right. His preferential feelings anterior to action accord with the divine law. His sensibilities are so under easy volitional control, his mind is so clear and pure, that all in its primitive undisturbed state is right. His will is able to hold his whole being in subordination to the moral imperative. He is, in his grade of being, perfectly excellent; and his excellence is not mechanical merely or aesthetical, but

ethical. It is moral excellence; it is created moral excellence, and perfect in its kind, yet wholly unmeritorious."[451] [450] Whedon Freedom of the Will, pp. 375-396; Bledsoe:Theodicy, pp. 113-151.

[451]Whedon:Freedom of the Will, p. 391. A primitive Adamic holiness is not an impossibility because Adam could not, simply as created, be holy in any strictly ethical or meritorious sense. In the fundamental distinctions of holiness we found a sense which is applicable to a nature in distinction from a personal agent. It lies in a spontaneous tendency to the good. The subjective disposition answers to the good on its presentation. It answers as a spontaneous inclination or impulse toward holy action. This is all that we mean by the nature of Adamic or primitive holiness.

4. Possibility of Holiness in Adam.—There may be holiness of the moral nature previous to free moral action. If not, such a quality of the nature must forever be impossible. Whatever it might become by good conduct, such it might be constituted in its original creation. This must be clear if we still hold in view the fundamental distinctions of holiness. In ethical character we become by free personal action what we could not be constituted by the divine agency. Only in the former mode can moral merit or demerit arise. The case is different respecting the nature in distinction from the personal agent. Whatever quality the nature might possess subsequent to holy action, or as consequent to such action, with such quality it could be originally endowed. Otherwise all moral quality must arise from personal conduct, and must belong to man as a personal agent, without any possible application to his nature.

It would follow that moral beings, however opposite their lives, differ only in deeds, not at all in their natures. Some may love and worship God, while others blaspheme and hate, but such is the only difference between them. Nero may be cruel and vile, and Paul consecrated to the best and noblest life, but they are without any difference in subjective quality. There cannot be any difference in respect to holiness, because such quality can have no place in the nature. Under such a law even God could not be holy in his nature. A theory with such implications must be false. With opposite habits of moral life there must be a difference of natures. In the one case the spontaneous tendency is to the good; in the other, to the evil. The tendency to the good we call subjective holiness—holiness of the nature in distinction from holiness of the life. With such a nature Adam could be created. The determining principle of this question is clearly given in the words of our Lord: "Either make the tree good, the tree and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit" (Matthew 12:33). In distinction from the fruit the tree has a quality in itself, for otherwise the quality of the tree could not determine the quality of the fruit. Nor could there be any meaning in making the tree good and its fruit good, or the tree corrupt and its fruit corrupt. For the common intelligence, and for the most critical as well, there is very real meaning in such facts. We know the quality of a tree by the quality of its fruit. The principle is the same in the case of man. This indeed is the meaning and application of these words of the Master. The deeds of men, as good or evil, answer to their moral nature and express its quality as good or evil, just as in the case of the fruit and the tree. The same idea of a moral quality of our nature is present in many texts which set forth the facts of regeneration. The transformation of the life is through a renewal of the moral nature. That renovation of the nature is a moral purification, and imparts to it a quality of holiness (Psalms 51:7; Psalms 51:10; Ezekiel 36:25-27; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15; Ephesians 4:23-24; Colossians 3:9-10). It thus appears that the question of primitive holiness is not a merely speculative one, but one which

vitally concerns the deepest truth and reality of regeneration. If there be no moral quality of our nature regeneration loses its meaning for the Christian life. Its profound reality carries with it the reality of such a quality. Hence Adam as newly created could be holy in his nature.

076. II. Proofs Of Primitive Holiness.

II. Proofs Of Primitive Holiness.

1. Implication of the Moral Nature.—Man is a moral being, and was so constituted in the beginning. Conscience, and moral reason, and the sense of God and duty are no mere acquisition through a process of evolution or the association of ideas, but are as original to man as intelligence and sensibility. Without a moral nature man is not man. Such a nature must have moral tendencies. The notion of its indifference as between the ethically good and evil is irrational, and contradictory to all relative and analogous facts. Mind is spontaneously active. The sensibilities which so wonderfully adjust us to our manifold relations are thus active. This activity is in the form of tendency or disposition, of inclination or aversion. There is either an outgoing of the sensibility toward its appropriate object or an aversion from it, and the notion of indifference is excluded. There is no indifference as to society, or country, or kindred, or home. In such objects there is a spontaneous interest. There may be instances of repugnance or aversion; but there are none of indifference. What is thus true of the sensibilities in general is equally true of the moral nature. It must be either spontaneously disposed to the good or inclined to the evil. The facts of observation and experience affirm the truth of this position. A state of indifference would betray an abnormal condition. What is thus ever true of man was equally true of Adam in his primitive state. There were spontaneous tendencies or inclinations of his moral nature. But the new Adam was just what God made him. His spontaneous tendencies were immediately consequent to his nature as divinely constituted. Hence his moral inclination must have been to the good in preference to the evil. Such inclination is at once the characteristic fact and the proof of subjective holiness.

2. Primitive Man Very Good.—That primitive man was very good is more than an implicit fact of the Mosaic narrative. “And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good” (Genesis 1:31) It is true that these words are general, and are not specifically applied to man, as in other instances like words were so applied to other parts of the new creation (Genesis 1:10; Genesis 1:12; Genesis 1:18; Genesis 1:21; Genesis 1:25); but, as they immediately follow the account of the creation of man, they must as really and fully apply to him as they could in the most direct and specific manner. Any limitation, therefore, which excludes the moral nature of man from this application is contrary to the clear sense of Scripture.

Yet such a limitation is assumed: “And as to the divine declaration that ‘every thing was very good,’ it expressly refers to all that God had made, and is quite compatible with the idea of a germ of sin lying hid in man, and having its origin only in man and not in God. It is also plain that the declaration refers to God’s non-intelligent creation as well as to man, so that it expresses the general fitness of every thing for the purpose designed, and not moral good.”[452] Only in this way could the author attempt a reconciliation of his theory of a germ of sin in primitive man with his divine characterization as very good; but no such reconciliation is possible. We cannot thus turn away from a specific sense of “very good” to a general sense which shall exclude moral good in the case of primitive man. Every part of creation has its purpose after its own kind, and, if fitted to

its purpose, must be good in its kind. Muller really admits this principle; and it must be just as true in the case of primitive man as in application to any other part of creation. But man was morally constituted, and divinely purposed for moral ends. God created man for communion with himself, and for blessedness in his own holy service. If originally good, he must have been morally good, for only therein could he have been good in his kind, and fitted for such divine ends. We could as well omit the luminosity of the sun from its characterization as “very good” as to omit the morally good from a like characterization of primitive man.

[452]Muller:Christian Doctrine of Sin, vol. ii, p. 350.

3. Further Scripture Proofs.—Under this head we present a few texts which clearly contain the truth of a primitive holiness. “Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions” (Ecclesiastes 7:29). The service of the text for the present question hinges upon the sense of upright. In the frequent use of this term three senses appear: rectitude of posture or form; rectitude of conduct; rectitude of the moral nature. The first can have no place in the present text. The context is a disquisition upon man purely in his moral aspects, not at all in his organic structure. The evil inventions of men, so sharply contrasted with an original uprightness, can have no such distinction from a mere bodily rectitude. The second meaning—rectitude of conduct—is more than the term can here admit. In making man upright God did not make for him an upright life. As previously shown, such a life requires man’s own personal agency. It thus appears that neither the first nor the second meaning gives the proper sense of upright in the present text. A third sense remains, and must be the true one. The term has a deeper meaning than the deeds of an upright life. It reaches down to the personal agent, and to the principles which underlie his action. Thus the moral nature with its spontaneous tendencies is reached. Such is the deeper meaning of upright in its application to God (Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalms 25:8; Psalms 92:15). Such, too, is its deeper sense in application to man (Job 1:1; Job 1:8; Job 23:7; Psalms 11:7; Psalms 37:37). This is the proper meaning in the text under treatment. In such a sense man was originally constituted holy.

“And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” “And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him” (Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10). These texts are so much alike that we may properly place them together. We require only the points which concern the question of primitive holiness. The central truth of the texts is the transformation of man from an evil to a good life. This transformation is deeper than the life of personal action, and includes a renovation of the moral nature. The old man with his deeds, which must be put off, is both a corrupt nature and a vicious life; and the new man, which must be put on, is both a holy nature and a good life. Hence it is that this moral transformation requires a renewal in the spirit of the mind and a creation of the new man. Here is an inner work of the Holy Spirit, a purification of the moral nature by his gracious and mighty agency. This purification is a renewal of the soul in the image of God in which man was originally created. Clearly this is the thought in the mind of Paul. His words more than imply it. The fact of such a thought is not in the least discredited by the use of words—such as righteousness and knowledge—which carry a sense beyond the moral nature into the actual life. No exact parallelism is attempted. With an intense practical aim, the apostle connects with the inner purification the good life which should spring from it; but it is still true to his thought that this inner purification is a renewal of the soul in the original image of God. Hence in that imago there is the

truth of a primitive holiness.

4. Error of Pelagianism.—In the great contention between Augustine and Pelagius, each went to an extreme: the former in the maintenance of original sin in the sense of native demerit; the latter in the denial of native depravity. Both failed to make the proper distinction between moral character from personal conduct and the subjective moral state. With an omission of the proper analysis, such as we have previously given, to bring out the clear distinction of the two, native depravity was with Augustine native sin and demerit. On the other hand, Pelagius, equally overlooking that distinction, and holding the impossibility of demerit without one's own personal conduct, denied the truth of native depravity. With the proper analysis, the former might have maintained the whole truth of native depravity without the element of sinful demerit; while the latter might have held the same truth of depravity, and yet have maintained his fundamental principle, that free personal conduct absolutely conditions all sinful demerit. We thus point out the opposite extremes, and the opposite errors, of the two parties in this great contention.

Other errors followed in logical consistency. If all men might be sinners, with the desert of punishment, by virtue of an inherited depravity, Adam could have the moral worth and rewardableness of an eminent saint simply by virtue of an original creation. The anthropology of Augustine both with himself and his many followers tends strongly to this view. On the other hand, the denial of primitive holiness on the part of Pelagius was logically consequent to his denial of Augustine's doctrine of original sin. Failing to analyze this doctrine into its separate elements, his denial of native sin carried with it the denial of native depravity. On such a principle there can be no moral quality of a nature, and therefore no primitive holiness. This was the outcome with Pelagius, as may be seen in his own words. "From the first book of Pelagius on free-will, Augustine quotes the following declaration of his opponent (De Pec. Orig., 13): 'All good and evil, by which we are praise or blameworthy, do not originate together with us, but are done by us. We are born capable of each, but not filled with either. And as we are produced without virtue, so are we also without vice; and before the action of his own will, there is in man only what God made.'"[453] This denies all change in the moral state of the race as consequent to the Adamic fall. In his moral nature man is still the same as in his original constitution. Adam was endowed with freedom and placed under a law of duty, but was morally indifferent as between good and evil. We have previously shown that the notion of such indifference in a being morally constituted is irrational and contradictory to decisive facts. The denial of primitive holiness is not a merely speculative error. The principle of this denial carries with it a denial of the Adamic fall and the depravity of the race, and therefore leaves no place for a system of evangelical theology. There is no longer any need of atonement, or regeneration, or justification by faith, or a new spiritual life in Christ.

[453]Wiggers:Augustinism, and Pelagianism, p. 85.

077. III. Elements Of Primitive Holiness.

III. Elements Of Primitive Holiness. The acceptance of primitive holiness as a truth does not necessarily determine the view of its elements or nature. Hence in the history of the doctrine opposing views appear. The issue thus arising has been much in debate, and not as a question of merely speculative interest, but as one which deeply concerns the nature of the Adamic fall, of original sin, and of regeneration. Such implications will sufficiently appear in the statement of these opposing views.

1. The Romish Doctrine.—The Romish anthropology is so far Augustinian as to accept the truth of a primitive holiness, but widely diverges from the latter respecting the nature or content of that holiness. What is specially distinctive of the Romish doctrine is that the primitive holiness was purely a supernatural endowment or gift. As such it must have been extraneous to the nature of Adam, and conferred subsequently to his completed creation. “The first peculiarity of the papal anthropology consists in the tenet that original righteousness is not a natural, but a supernatural, endowment. The germ of this view appears in one of the statements of the Roman Catechism —a work which followed the Tridentine Canons, and is of equal authority with them in the papal Church. ‘Lastly,’ says the Catechism,[454] ‘God formed man out of the clay of the earth, so made and constituted as to his material body that he was immortal and impassible, not indeed by the force of nature itself, but by a divine favor. But as to his soul, he formed him after his own image and likeness, endowed him with free will, and so tempered within him all the emotions of his mind and his appetites that they would never disobey the rule of reason. Then headded the admirable gift of original righteousness, and decreed that he should have the pre-eminency over other animals.’”[455] It thus appears that in the papal anthropology the likeness and image of God in primitive man carried the sense of a similarity in the nature and personality of mind, but not the sense of holiness. Place was thus left for primitive holiness as a supernatural endowment.

[454]Catechismus Romanus, P. I, Cap. ii, Q. 18.

[455]Shedd:History of Christian Doctrine, vol. ii, pp. 142, 143.

Consistently with this view of original righteousness, the papal anthropology could admit, and did admit, certain imperfections of man as originally constituted. As consisting of flesh and spirit, the appetences of the former might war against the rational dictates of the latter, and thus render difficult a prudent and good life. There was thus in the very beginning, and before any lapse of man, a profound moral need of the supernatural endowment of grace which the doctrine maintains. And, further, the primary purpose of this endowment was for the relief of this exigency. So Bellarmin, a master in papal theology, states the facts. “In the first place it is to be observed that man naturally consists of flesh and spirit. . . . But from these diverse or contrary propensities there arises in one and the same man a certain conflict, and from this conflict great difficulty of acting rightly. . . . In the second place, it is to be observed that divine providence, in the beginning of creation (initio creationis), in order to provide a remedy for this disease or languor of human nature which arises from the nature of a material organization (ex conditione materiae), added to

man a certain remarkable gift, to wit, original righteousness, by which as by a sort of golden rein the inferior part might easily be kept in subjection to the superior, and the superior to God; but the flesh was thus subjected to the spirit, so that it could not be moved so long as the spirit was unwilling, nor could it become a rebel to the spirit unless the spirit itself should become a rebel to God, while yet it was wholly in the power of the spirit to become or not become a rebel to God. . . . We think that this rectitude of the inferior part was a supernatural gift, and that, too, intrinsically, and not accidentally, so that it neither flowed nor could flow from the principles of nature (ex naturae principiis)."[456] [456] Bellarminus:Gratia Primi Hominis, C. v. Cited by Shedd:History of Christian Doctrine, vol. ii, pp. 143, 144.

These views are open to criticism, and are sharply criticized from the side of the Augustinian anthropology. Such original imperfections of man have no warrant in the Scriptures. Nor is there any ground for the exclusively supernatural character of primitive holiness. Further, the doctrine implies that the fall of man was simply a lapse into his primitive state. The fall in its effect upon man, apart from personal demerit, was simply a deprivation of the supernatural endowment of righteousness. His own nature was the same after the fall as before it. But his own nature, while without holiness before the fall, was equally without depravity, and must have remained the same, after the fall. This is a very superficial and false view of the actual state of man in consequence of the Adamic fall. The consequence of that fall was not only a deprivation of the divine communion, but a depravation of the nature of man. For the present we are not concerned with another objection urged against this papal view on the part of the Augustinian anthropology, that by implication it denies the actual sinfulness and demerit of human nature as fallen. Any view of regeneration in accord with this papal anthropology must be superficial and false. It must mean simply a restoration of original righteousness as a supernatural endowment. 8uch limitation must omit the interior work of the Holy Spirit in the renewal and purification of the moral nature, which is the central reality of regeneration. Finally, as this anthropology allows the actuality and the innocence of a certain measure of concupiscence in primitive man, so it must allow the same in regenerate man.

2. The Augustinian Doctrine.—By the doctrine so designated we mean, not limitedly any definite view of Augustine himself respecting the nature of primitive holiness, but rather the central view of the Augustinian anthropology as interpreted and maintained in the Calvinistic Churches. In this view original righteousness was an intrinsic quality of the nature of man, not something added to his nature. By the divine creative act he was constituted holy, and there was not only no subsequent act, but no separate act by which he was so constituted. It should not be overlooked that we give this as the central or prevalent view, and without any notice of individual divergences. As against the papal view, "the reformers generally, and especially Luther, had strenuously contended that this original righteousness was a quality of man's proper nature, and necessary to its perfection and completeness, and not a supernatural gift."[457] Also in dissent from the papal view of a superadded holiness, "the reformers most justly assert, in opposition to this mechanical view, that 'justitia originalis' was an original and actual element of our nature as it came from the hand of the Creator."[458] [457] Cunningham:Historical Theology, vol. i, p. 518.

[458]Van Oosterzee:Christian Dogmatics, vol. i, p. 370. Also Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 104, 105. On this question the Augustinian doctrine thus takes the opposite extreme to the papal view. This was quite natural to the protestant attitude of the reformers and the intensity of

their antagonism to much of the papal anthropology. Further, their doctrine of sin logically carried them to this view of original righteousness. As in this doctrine the very nature of man in his fallen state is actually sinful, or sinful in a sense deserving of God's judicial wrath, so the nature of primitive man in itself and without any gracious endowment could be ethically righteous. The rejection of the papal view does not logically require the acceptance of this Augustinian view. In this case, as in many others, the truth may lie between the extremes.

3. Elements of the True Doctrine.—The first element of primitive holiness was the moral rectitude of the Adamic nature as newly created. In our previous discussions fully maintained the possibility and the reality of such holiness, and set forth the definite idea of its nature or content. That position holds true against the papal denial of such holiness. We agree with the prevalent Augustinian anthropology respecting the reality of primitive holiness, but dissent respecting any proper ethical character of that holiness, and also respecting its 'limitation to a mere quality of the Adamic nature. In that anthropology Adam often appears in the very beginning, and before any personal action, with the moral worth of ethical righteousness, with the activities of holy affection in the fear and love of God.[459] We omit all this from the content of primitive holiness. The activities of holy affection may be spontaneous to the moral nature, but must be subsequent to its own constitution. Nor can they be the immediate product of the creative agency which constitutes the nature. A thorough analysis must distinguish between the activities of the moral nature in Adam and that nature itself simply as divinely created. That nature was so constituted as to be responsive to the claims of a prudent and good life, not in the sense of a necessary fulfillment of such claims, but in the sense of a spontaneous inclination or disposition toward such fulfillment. This is all that we can properly mean by holiness as a quality of the primitive nature of man.

[459]Edwards: Works, vol. ii, pp. 386, 387; Wiggers:Augustinism and Pelagianism, p. 142.

There was a second element of primitive holiness in the presence and agency of the Holy Spirit. We have previously presence of dissented from the Augustinian limitation of that holiness to a mere quality of the Adamic nature. We have also dissented from the papal doctrine of its purely supernatural character; but the weighty objection, that it implies serious defects in the nature of man as originally constituted, is valid only against so extreme a view. The presence of the Holy Spirit as a constituent element of primitive holiness has no such implication. The Adamic nature could be holy in its own quality and tendency, and yet need the help of the Spirit for the requirements of a moral probation. Augustine himself held this view. "God had given man an assistance, without which he could not have persevered in good if he would. He could persevere if he would, because that aid (adjutorium) did not fail by which he could. Without this, he could not retain the good which he might will."[460] Hence the divine plan might include the presence of the Spirit as an original and abiding element in the holiness of man. We need this truth for the proper interpretation of human depravity. The fall of man was not only the loss of holiness, but also the corruption of his nature. This corruption we may not ascribe to any immediate agency of God, but may interpret it as the consequence of a withdrawment of the presence and influence of the Holy Spirit. This is the doctrinal meaning of "depravation from deprivation." The most thorough Augustinians so interpret the corruption of human nature, and thus concede the presence of the Holy Spirit as an element of primitive holiness.[461] [460] Cited by Wiggers:Augustinism and Pelagianism, p, 142.

[461]Cunningham:Historical Theology, vol. i, p. 526.

We thus combine the two elements in the true doctrine. The second element brings the doctrine into full accord with the fact that in the Christian life the Holy Spirit is not only the agent in the primary renewal and purification of the soul, but also an abiding presence in aid of its renewed powers. And we are pleased to think of the immanence of the Spirit in all holy life whether human or angelic.

078. Chapter 4: The Primitive Probation.

Chapter 4 The Primitive Probation.

Probation is a state of trial under a law of duty. The law in the case is the test of obedience. The duty imposed is enforced by the sanction of rewards. The rewards determine for the subjects of probation permanent states of good or evil; so that probation is a temporary economy. The central reality of probation is responsibility for conduct under a law of duty. Such was the primitive probation; and it should be studied in the light of these facts.

079. I. Probation A Reasonable Economy.

I. Probation A Reasonable Economy. This proposition is not intended for universal and perpetual application. It is true in application to primitive man. Possibly a primitive state might be so perfect as neither to require nor admit any testing law. Such will be the state of confirmed blessedness. Probably no primitive state is such. Certainly that of man was not. For him trial was naturally incident to duty. Obedience, however, was easily within his power, and a moral obligation, while a law of duty was the imperative requirement of his moral constitution and relations. With the truth of these facts, the primitive probation was a reasonable economy. The facts require a fuller and more orderly statement.

1. Trial as Naturally Incident to Duty.—The fact of such trial arose from the constitution of primitive man. With a holy nature, there were yet in him susceptibilities to temptation. In temptation there is an impulse in the sensibilities adverse to the law of duty. This is true even where it finds no response in the personal consciousness. Yet, in the measure of it, such impulse is a trial to obedience. Such trial was naturally incident to duty in primitive man. The proof of it is in a primitive constitution with sensibilities which might be the means of temptation; also in the actuality of such temptation. These facts are entirely consistent with the primitive holiness which we have maintained. In such a state primitive man began his moral life. The only way to confirmed blessedness was through a temporary obedience. But obedience requires a law of duty; and, with the natural incidence of trial and the possibility of failure, such a law must be a testing law. It thus appears that a probationary economy was the only one at all suited to the state of primitive man.

2. Complete Ability for Obedience.—Ability for obedience is a rational requirement under a testing law of duty. The question of such ability in primitive man needs no elaborate discussion, and the mere statement of relative facts will suffice. The reality of such ability lies in the rectitude of his moral nature as originally constituted. “With susceptibility to temptation through the sensibilities, his spontaneous disposition was yet toward the good and averse to the evil. In this there was strength for obedience. Nor can we rationally think of any divine imposition of duty in this case above the ability of fulfillment. When responsibility with moral inability is maintained, it must be on the ground of a responsible forfeiture of moral ability. There was no such forfeiture in the case of man when duty was originally imposed upon him. God was at once the author of both his nature and the law of his probation, and therefore could not impose any duty which should transcend his strength of obedience. Further, this strength is fully manifest in view of the special test of obedience divinely instituted. If the moral constitution of primitive man was what the Scriptures warrant us to think it, the fulfillment of that duty was easily within his power.

3. Obedience a Reasonable Requirement.—As the subject of such munificent endowments, the recipient of so rich an estate and a provisory heirship to eternal blessedness, primitive man owed the consecration of all his powers in holy obedience and love to the Author of all his good. Every principle of reason and duty so determines. With the deepest emphasis, therefore, does every such principle determine the obligation of the probationary duty imposed upon him.

4. Moral Necessity for a Law of Duty.—With far less unreason might we object to the creation of man as a moral being than to his probationary trial under a law of duty. As morally constituted and related, with the obligations of holy obedience and love, and with the possibilities of both good and evil action, a law of duty was for him an imperative requirement.

If we now combine the four facts presented under the head of this section it must be clear that for primitive man probation was a reasonable economy.

080. II. The Probationary Law.

II. The Probationary Law.

1. A Matter of Divine Determination.—The assignment of duty to primitive man in the form of precept or commandment was purely the prerogative of God. Adam could not determine his own duties, for he knew not sufficiently either himself or the claims of his Creator. Some duties, such as the love and worship of God, might stand in a clear light, and be seen as by intuition; but what in the way of restraint might be requisite to his best moral and religious development could not thus be known. These things could be known only to God; and the whole right of commandment was his. He might impose any duty or any restraint consistent with his own wisdom. When we say consistent with his own wisdom we mean that the perfections of God are a law unto himself, so that he could impose nothing contrary to his own wisdom. This fact, however, does not bring down the ways of God to the measure of our own minds. We cannot judge him as we judge men, for we stand on the same plane with them, while God is in the infinite heights above us. There is here a place for our trust in God, and an infinite warrant for it, even when the light of his wisdom is hidden from our view. Such trust is far wiser in us than any unfriendly criticism of the law whereby he tested the fidelity of primitive man.

2. The Law as Divinely Instituted.—This law is plainly given in the sacred narrative: “But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Genesis 2:17). Respecting the knowledge of good and evil, the sense is not that the fruit of this tree could by any virtue of its own give the knowledge of good and evil, but rather that man, as obedient or disobedient to its divine interdiction, should prove himself good or evil, or come to know in his own experience the good or the evil. Such a sense best accords with the testing function of the law.

We can hardly think that this one commandment constituted the sum of duty for primitive man. There are moral laws which must exist for all moral beings. From the beginning it must have been the duty of Adam to love and worship God. Such a religious life requires habits of thought and disposition which in themselves fulfill religious duties. Nor is there in the words of that one commandment any exclusion of other duties. There was this specific commandment, and the first sin was in its violation. So far the sacred narrative is clear. There were other duties; but whether of a proper testing character, or whether in case of fidelity under this first trial other tests might have been instituted—on all such questions that narrative is silent. With the obligation of other duties, the fidelity of Abraham was yet specially tried by a positive command. Such was the manner of trial in the primitive probation; and, so far as the Scriptures give us any clear light, such was the law of that probation.

3. A Proper Test of Obedience.—This law of the primitive probation was a positive law in distinction from a moral law. The obligation of a moral law is intrinsic and absolute: the obligation of a positive law arises from a divine commandment. Such a ground of obligation is in no contradiction to the reality of fundamental principles of ethics. Nor is such obligation grounded

purely in authority. A divine command always means to the enlightened religious consciousness a sufficient reason for the duty imposed, however hidden that reason may be. There is thus a place for faith as the practical power of obedience. The case of Abraham is an illustration. No reason was given for the command to offer up his son. His faith, found the reason for obedience, not in an absolute arbitrary authority of God, but in the wisdom and goodness of his providence. Such is the real ground of obligation in a positive command. For the religious consciousness such obligation is absolute. A positive command of God is not the dictum of an arbitrary will, but the expression of his wisdom and love. Nor is obedience to a positive command any abject submission to an arbitrary absolute will. No such submission could constitute a true obedience. At most it could be only a conformity of outward action to the positive mandate. Such conformity is not in itself obedience, because without the motives of piety. Such was the case under this probationary law. True obedience to its mandate required the motives of religious reverence and love; and disobedience could arise only with an irreligious revolt of the soul from God. It thus appears that a positive command of God is no arbitrary mandate of an absolute will, indifferent to morality and piety, and which the most servile outward observance will satisfy, but the expression and requirement of his infinite wisdom and goodness as our moral Ruler, and which can be fulfilled only with the truest obedience of a devout mind and a loving heart. So closely one in obligation and fulfillment is a positive law of God with a moral law. With the inexperience of primitive man as he entered the sphere of probation, a positive law may have best suited the purpose of a moral trial. There were sufficient reasons to the divine Mind for its institution, and, as we shall point out, it was most favorable to obedience. After a long experience of Abraham and the practical development of his moral and religious life, God found reason to test his obedience through a positive command. Clearly, then, there might be sufficient reason for such a trial of primitive man, whose conception of moral principles was as yet without any development through experience.[462] Such a command was given him—a command which addressed itself to the deepest moral and religious consciousness, and required for its proper observance the truest motives of a good life. Further, it embodied the great religious lessons, that the will of God is the supreme law of duty, and that the highest good of man must be found in his loving favor, not in any pleasures of sense. Such facts constituted this law of the primitive probation a proper test of obedience.

[462]Dorner:Christian Doctrine, vol. ii, p. 81; Henry B. Smith:Christian Theology, p. 261.

081. III. Favorable Probationary Trial.

III. Favorable Probationary Trial. A few words will suffice to make it clear that the testing law of the primitive probation was most favorable to obedience. We require simply a brief statement of the leading facts concerned in the question.

1. Law of Duty Open and Plain.—There was nothing occult or perplexing in the meaning of the duty enjoined. No philosophic acumen or insight was necessary to the fullest comprehension of its meaning. It was simply the duty of abstinence from the fruit of a tree definitely noted. There could be no plainer mandate of duty.

2. Complete Moral Healthfulness of Man. —As yet there was no impulse of vicious or inordinate passion; no clouding or perversion of the moral reason ; no evil habit which might fetter all endeavor toward the good. There was still the full strength of the primitive holiness, with its spontaneous disposition to the obedience of love.

3. Ample Sources of Satisfaction.—The garden which God prepared for man in the eastward of Eden was rich in beauty and plenty. There grew in it “every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food” (Genesis 2:9). There was all that could please the eye and gratify the taste, all that could nourish the physical life. Above all, there was the open presence of God and the privilege of communion with him. Surely the forbidden fruit was no necessity to the completest satisfaction of man.

4. Most Weighty Reasons for Obedience.—This law of the primitive probation was directly and openly from God, whose authority and majesty went forth with its mandate for the enforcement of obedience. Man already knew God in his presence and glory, and must have been deeply sensible to the obligation of obedience to his will. Then the issues of life and death hung on the contingency of obedience or disobedience. Such consequences were the revealed sanctions of the law, and must have been somewhat apprehended in their profound import—surely sufficiently to render them weighty reasons for obedience. With such sanctions of a divine mandate, such weighty reasons for its observance, the soul should be the stronger against the solicitations of temptation, and full and prompt obedience most easy.

If now we combine the four facts set forth in this section, and view them in their relation to the primitive probation, it must be manifest that that probation was most favorable to obedience.

082. Chapter 5: Temptation And Fall Of Man.

Chapter 5 Temptation And Fall Of Man.

There was a temptation and fall of primitive man, with a consequent fall of the race. These facts do not rest simply upon the Mosaic narrative, but are fully recognized in the later Scriptures, and especially in the New Testament. So far the questions of the temptation and fall seem open and plain; but there are perplexities for both exegesis and apologetics in the details of the Mosaic narrative. In consequence of this we have a diversity of interpretations, and some of them specially shaped for the relief of these perplexities. This is permissible so far as it may be consistent with a proper adherence to the historic character of the narrative, and such adherence may allow some variation in the interpretation of certain items. However, caution must be observed, or the whole narrative will be so marred as to lose its historic character. We shall not take much time with questions which must remain obscure, and which belong to apologetics and exegesis rather than to systematic theology.

083. I. The Primitive Temptation.

I. The Primitive Temptation.

1. Concerning an Instrumental Agency.—On the face of the narrative nothing seems plainer than the fact of an instrumental agency in the temptation—that is, something used as the instrument of a higher agency. There is, indeed, no mention of a higher agency in the narrative itself, but the facts clearly require such an agency (Genesis 3:1-5). If the serpent which appears in the temptation is to be taken in the literal sense of an animal, there is still no satisfactory identification of it. “Who was the serpent? of what kind? In what way did he seduce the first happy pair? These are questions which remain yet to be answered.”[463] It is no wrong to the good doctor to say that, after his own learned endeavor to identify this “nachash” with the ape order, they still remained in the same unanswered state. There is a widely prevalent tradition of the serpent as concerned in a temptation and fall of man, which in some instances is in close accordance with the Mosaic narrative.

[463]Clarke: Commentary, in loc. With the literal sense of an animal in the temptation, the use of speech encounters strong objection, because there is wanting the necessary organ. In order to avoid this difficulty the part of the serpent, or other animal, has been interpreted as purely pantomimic in its mode. There is no relief in this view. Such representative action is as much above the endowment of an animal as the power of articulate speech. As the mere instrument of a higher agency, an animal could be used in the latter mode quite as easily as in the former.

There is another view which may be stated. It is, that serpent is a symbolical term for the designation of Satan himself. With this interpretation there is no literal serpent or other animal with any part in the temptation, but Satan is the immediate and only agent, and the subject of the penal infliction. It is very difficult to adjust the items of the sacred narrative to this view. It is further suggested that if no animal was present in the temptation Satan might still have appeared in the semblance of one.

2. A Higher, Satanic Agency.—As an animal could be only an instrument in the temptation, so the facts of intelligence embodied therein evince the presence of a higher agency. There is knowledge of the divine command, reasoning about God, the nature of good and evil, and the virtues of the forbidden fruit. These facts are possible only to a rational intelligence. Even without the signs of the deepest craft, there is still the full evidence of such an agency.

There is no open reference to a satanic agency in the narrative of the temptation. The devil is not named therein, but there is the manifestation of a malignance and craft which clearly points to his agency. The scriptural characterization of the devil and the evil works attributed to him affirm the same fact. He is the enemy that sowed the tares among the good seed which the Son of man cast into the field of the world (Matthew 13:37-39.). He is a murderer and a liar from the beginning, and there is no truth in him (John 8:44). He is “that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world” (Revelation 12:9). In mentioning the serpent as beguiling Eve the

thought of Paul cannot rest with the mere instrument in the temptation, but must include the agency of the devil under the same designation (2 Corinthians 11:3).

3. Manner of the Temptation.—Under this head we need no longer any distinction between the instrument and the real agent in the temptation. For the manner of the temptation we need little more than the facts as grouped in the sacred narrative. The subtlety of the devil appears through the whole process of the temptation. There was craft in beginning with Eve in the absence of Adam. The two together would have been stronger than either alone; and presumably Eve was understood to be the more susceptible to temptation. The divine command is inquiringly approached, with the stealthy suggestion of an unnecessary restriction of privilege. Then with cunning boldness the penalty of disobedience is denied: “Ye shall not surely die.” Suspicion of divine duplicity is insinuated: God himself knows that, instead of evil, only good shall come of eating the interdicted fruit (Genesis 3:1-5). Thus the apprehension of death and the strength of religious reverence and love were greatly weakened, while the forbidden fruit was set in such false lights as to excite a very strong desire to partake of it.

084. II. The Fall Of Man.

II. The Fall Of Man. For the present we need only a brief statement of the more open facts of the fall. The deeper questions of depravity and sin will receive their special treatment further on in our discussions.

1. Entering Into the Temptation.—The mental process through which Eve entered into the temptation is much more fully given than in the case of Adam. On a collocation of the temptation and the result, her own mental movement becomes obvious. The former we have already considered. The latter is seen in the new light in which the prohibited fruit appeared to her. Through the illusive coloring of the temptation it seemed beautiful to the eye, good for food, and desirable to make one wise. Through the impulse of the appetence thus begotten she took of the fruit, and did eat (Genesis 3:6). It was an open violation of the divine command.

She “gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.” This is the sum of the account in the case of Adam (Genesis 3:6; Genesis 3:12; Genesis 3:17). Yet it is hardly to be thought that, without any hesitation or questioning, he at once accepted the fruit simply on the proffer of his wife. There may be omitted facts. Otherwise the entrance of Adam into the temptation is far stranger than that of Eve.

2. Penalty of the Sinning.—Death is the penal term of the probationary law, and signifies the punishment of disobedience to the divine command (Genesis 2:17). There is in the law no explanation of the penal term, and we must find its full meaning in a proper view of man as its subject, and in its subsequent use in Scripture. Nor should that primary sense be modified by any partial or provisory arrest of judgment upon the intervention of a redemptive economy. The announcement of such an economy preceded the judicial treatment of the primitive sin (Genesis 3:15).

There is a threefold sense in which man may be the subject of death, and also a corresponding meaning of the term in its Scripture use.

It is the clear sense of Scripture that perpetual life was the provisory heritage of man. Obedience would have secured his providential exemption from death. This was provided for and pledged in the tree of life—probably through a sacramental use of its fruit, rather than by any intrinsic virtue which it might possess. By the divine judgment, and by expulsion from the tree of life, penalty in the form of physical death was inflicted upon man (Genesis 3:19; Genesis 3:22-24). St. Paul confirms this sense of physical death in the original penalty of disobedience (Romans 5:12).

There is also a spiritual death in distinction from the spiritual life—such as man originally possessed (John 4:24; Romans 8:6; 1 John 3:14). This death is inseparably connected with sin, and must have been the immediate consequence of sin in Adam (Romans 8:2; Ephesians 2:1; Colossians 2:13). His spiritual life was fully realized only in union with the Holy Spirit. Sin was the severance of that union, with the consequence of spiritual death. Such was now the state of Adam and Eve. With the full execution of the penalty this death must have been utter. But it is reasonable

to think that in this case, as in that of physical death, there was a partial arrest of judgment, or an instant gift of helping grace, through the redemptive mediation already instituted.

There is still a third sense of the penal term—that of eternal death. This is not the place for the discussion of the question concerning the ultimate doom of sin. Eternal death is the final penal allotment of the unsaved. Beyond this fact of penal allotment, it is rather the full intensity and perpetuity of spiritual death than a distinct form of death. In view of the nature of man as morally constituted and endowed with immortality, and in view of the final doom of sin as revealed in the Scriptures, the penal term in the probationary law meant eternal death.

3. Fall of the Race.—This question arises only incidentally in the present connection. The race is fallen and morally corrupt through the sin and fall of its progenitors. These consequences, however, must be interpreted in a sense consistent with determining facts in the case. But for the immediate intervention of a redemptive economy the penalty of death must have been promptly executed according to its own terms. This execution must have precluded the propagation and existence of the race. This preclusion as an actuality could not have been a penalty, because a never-existent race could not suffer a penalty. Hence the race was not liable to the original penalty in the same manner as its progenitors who transgressed the law; yet it is in a state of moral depravity and subject to death in consequence of their sin and fall. This is the sense of the Scriptures. The law of these results is for later treatment.

085. III. Freedom Of Man In Falling.

III. Freedom Of Man In Falling. The question of freedom is here treated simply in relation to our progenitors in the primitive sin. It will be presented in the light of a few facts which seem conclusive of its reality.

1. Probationary Obedience a Divine Preference.—This position seems most sure. The infinite holiness and goodness of God affirm his good pleasure against the sin and misery of the fall. Therefore the probationary obedience which was the necessary condition of their prevention must have been his preference. Further, he must have electively preferred obedience to his own command. The contrary is not to be thought, for God's preference of obedience must always go with his command. Obedience to this primitive command would have secured the standing of our progenitors in holiness and happiness. Therefore that standing must have been a divine preference.

2. Divine Gift of the Power of Obedience.—No one can wish any action of another without wishing him the requisite ability. This law must be real for God. If he wished the obedience, holiness, and happiness of our progenitors, he must have washed them the power of obedience as the necessary condition of these blessings. Therefore they must have possessed the power of obedience as a divine endowment. In this probationary trial they were just what God made them. He ordained the law of their duty, with perfect knowledge of their constitution, and in full foresight of their trial. It follows that, with an elective preference of obedience, he must have given them the power of obedience.

3. Power of Obedience Intrinsic to Probation.—The progenitors of the race were placed on probation under a testing law of obedience. The probationary character of that economy is above question. The power of obedience to the testing law of duty is essential to such an economy. There can be no testing of fidelity under a law of duty where there is not the power of obedience. As it is truly said "that a state of trial supposes of course a capability of falling, and cannot exist without it,"[464] so with equal truth it may be said that a state of trial supposes of course a capability of standing, and cannot exist without it. Thus again the power of obedience in the Adamic probation is manifest.

[464]Dwight:Theology, vol. i, p. 414

4. The Facts Conclusive of Freedom in Falling.—The facts treated in this section are conclusive of the power of obedience in the primitive probation. With this power there must have been freedom in the falling,

086. IV. Sinning Of Holy Beings.

IV. Sinning Of Holy Beings.

Whatever the perplexities of this question, they are not peculiar to revelation, but must equally concern, every philosophy or religion which admits the reality of moral evil. The Mosaic narrative of the sin and fall of man is not the cause of the prevalent moral evil, but simply the account of its origin in the human race. There is no more rational account. The denial of this account abates nothing of either the reality or the magnitude of moral evil.[465] Either man was originally constituted evil, or he has lapsed into evil from a higher and better state. Such a state must have been one of primitive holiness, as previously set forth. As morally constituted in his creation, man could not have been indifferent as between good and evil. A moral nature must have moral tendencies. There is surely no relief of perplexity in the supposition of original evil tendencies. On the rejection of this view, we must accept the only alternative of an origin of moral evil in a race primarily holy. This implies the sinning of holy beings.

[465]Sherlock: Works, vol. iv, p. 156.

1. The Question in the Light of the Facts.—Conceivably, a primitive state might be such that sinning would seem to be a moral impossibility. With entire freedom, not only from inner tendencies, but also from outward solicitation toward evil, with strong inner tendencies toward the good, and with all exterior influences acting in full harmony with the inner tendencies, holy action would seem to be thoroughly assured. The origin of sin in such a state could have no rational explication. Even the moral possibility of it is beyond the grasp of rational thought. Such, however, was not the primitive state of man. While Adam and Eve were constituted holy in their moral nature, the spontaneous tendencies of which were toward the good, yet in their complete constitution there were susceptibilities to temptation which might be followed into sinful action. The present question concerning the sinning of holy beings must be treated in the light of these facts.

2. Primitive Susceptibilities to Temptation.—In the sensibilities of primitive man there was a ground of temptability. Through these sensibilities there could be solicitations, awakened appetencies, not directly toward sinful action as such, but toward forms of action which might be sinful, and even if known to be such. We have an illustration in the case of Eve. Appetencies are awakened for the forbidden fruit as it is set forth in the false light of the temptation. So far as purely spontaneous, these active sensibilities were innocent and entirely consistent with the primitive holiness. Sin could arise only as their solicitations were unduly entertained or followed into some voluntary infraction of the law of probation. But as purely spontaneous, and while yet within the limit of innocence, they could act as an impulse toward a voluntary infraction.

3. Moral Forces Available for Obedience.—In the constitution of primitive man there were certain moral forces which might act as a restraint upon any tendency toward evil-doing. If these forces were sufficiently strong, and exerted their full strength in a purely spontaneous mode, they would so fully counteract all tendency toward evil, and so enforce obedience, that sinning might still seem

to be a moral impossibility. They were sufficiently strong, and spontaneous under proper conditions, but not irrespective of such conditions. It follows that they were not in any purely spontaneous mode determinative of obedience. The whole question can be set in a clearer light by application to two leading forces in support of obedience—love and fear. The love of God, for which the soul was originally endowed, is a practical power of obedience. It is an impulse to ward obedience, and, unless in some way counteracted, must secure obedience (John 14:23). Hence it might fully restrain all tendencies toward disobedience. It was so available against the primitive temptation. But love is so operative only when in an active state. This state is conditioned on a proper mental apprehension of God. No object can quicken the correlate affection into an active state except when livingly in the grasp of thought. The constitution of primitive man did not necessitate such a constant apprehension of God. A temporary diversion of thought was possible, and without sin. The temptation led to such a diversion, and so clouded the vision of God as to prevent the practical force of love. In this state love could no longer counteract the impulses of awakened appetence, and disobedience might follow.

We named fear as another leading practical force. It is here viewed, not in the sense of religious reverence, but as the apprehension of penalty. The fear of penalty may act as a restraint upon any tendencies toward evil. But its practical force is conditioned on the same law as love, and hence in the same manner may fail of practical result. This is illustrated in the case of Eve. The temptation first engendered doubt of the penalty, and then occupied the attention with the attractions of the forbidden fruit. In this mental state fear could not act as an effective restraint upon the impulses of awakened appetite. Even a partial doubt or forgetting would void its practical force. In such a state the solicitations of temptation might be followed into disobedience.

4. The Sinning Clearly Possible.—The sinning of Adam and Eve is a truth of the Scriptures. The facts presented in this section clearly show the possibility of this sinning, notwithstanding the original holiness of their nature. We thus have in the Scriptures a thoroughly consistent account, and the most rational account of the origin of sin in human history.[466] [466] Butler:Analogy, part i, chap, v, sec. iv.

087. V. Divine Permission Of The Fall.

V. Divine Permission Of The Fall.

Moral evil is the common lot of man, whatever its origin. Its existence is a question of profound perplexity. A denial of the Scripture account of its origin in the Adamic fall neither voids its reality nor in the least mitigates its perplexity. We shall long wait for a theodicy. We do not think such an attainment possible in our present state. The divine permission of the Adamic fall was not in any sense An expression of consent or the granting of a license. The deed of sin by which man fell was definitely forbidden, and under the weightiest sanctions. Hence the meaning of the divine permission must be simply that God did not sovereignly and effectively interpose for the prevention of the fall. It has often been said that he could not have so interposed consistently with the moral freedom of man. There is truth in this, but not such truth as fully resolves the question. Other questions are thus raised respecting the creation and probationary trial of personal beings endowed with responsible moral agency. If God could not consistently interfere with the free action of primitive man, so as to prevent the fall, could he rightfully constitute man a free moral agent and place him on a probationary trial? These are the questions which first of all concern the divine permission of the fall. If there be for us any present light, it must come with the answer to these questions.

1. The Creation of Moral Beings Permissible.—A being personally constituted and endowed with free moral agency must be under law to God, and responsible for his conduct. On the truth of theism and the reality of absolute moral principles, this must be so. Even God could not release such a being from moral duty and responsibility. Yet the creation of such a being must be permissible in God. To deny this permissibility is to restrict the creative agency of God to the spheres of material and impersonal existences. Or, if the highest grade might reach the capacity of rational intelligence, there must be no supreme endowment of a moral nature. Only in such a being is the true likeness of God reached; and yet in no creative fiat must he say, “in our image, after our likeness.” Only a most arrogant and daring mind could prescribe such limitations for God, or deny him the rightful privilege of creating moral beings capable of a worshipful recognition of himself.

2. Permissiblity of a Probationary Economy.—Probation is a temporal, testing economy. There is a law of duty, with the sanction of rewards. For disobedience there must be at least a withholding of some attainable good; for obedience, the bestowment of some blessing. The state of probation may be longer or shorter, with less or greater trial. No exact limit of duration or measure of trial is intrinsic to such an economy. The essential fact of probation under a testing law of duty is moral responsibility. Such was the essential fact of the Adamic probation. If we declare that probation inconsistent with the divine providence, it will be most difficult, impossible indeed, to reconcile any known facts of moral responsibility with such a providence. We should thus deny the permissibility of a moral system under the providence of God. Yet there is such a system, and the moral consciousness of the race is witness to its reality. We are under a law of moral duty and

responsibility. We cannot deny the consistency of this law with the providence of God. Therefore we must admit the permissibility of the Adamic probation.

3. Permissibility of the Fall.—With the reality of moral obligation and responsibility, the punishment of sin must be just. If the punishment is just, the permission of the sin cannot be unjust. We cannot say less respecting the primary Adamic sin. We have previously pointed out how favorable the primitive probation was to obedience. If justice or even goodness required the divine prevention of sin in such a state, no state is conceivable in which it might be permitted. Then all sin must be prevented; and such a requirement must forbid the creation of personal beings endowed with free moral agency. There can be no such requirement. It is entirely consistent with the providence of God that spiritual good us well as secular good should be conditioned on proper conduct in man. The providential means of subsistence are conditioned on a proper industry and prudence. If through idleness and improvidence any come to want, they have no right to impeach this economy. Plentiful industry and beggarly laziness are under the same providential economy. If that economy is just to the one it cannot be unjust to the other. The obedient who reap the rich harvest of spiritual good and the disobedient who suffer the penalty of sin are under the same moral economy. If that economy is right to the one it cannot be wrong to the other. If the moral economy be righteous there can be no requirement of providence sovereignly to prevent the sin which may forfeit its blessings.

4. The Event Changes Not the Economy.—If Adam had rendered obedience to the law of his probation, retained his innocence and rich inheritance, and risen to the fuller reward of his fidelity, even the most querulous could hardly object to the economy under which he was placed. That he sinned and fell alters not in the least the character of that economy. If good in the standing and the perpetuated blessedness, it could not in itself be other in the falling and the forfeiture of blessedness.

5. Redemption and the Permission of the Fall.—We have omitted some facts usually set forth for the vindication of providence in the permission of the fall. Among all these facts the chief on is this: God permitted the fall of man that he might provide a redemption for the race so ruined, and through its infinite grace and love bring a far greater good to the moral universe, and especially to the human race. Mr. Wesley strongly supported this view, and thought it quite sufficient to clear the question of the fall of all perplexity, so far as it concerned the divine wisdom and goodness.[467] The argument is that through the atonement in Christ, rendered necessary by the fall, mankind has gained a higher capacity for holiness and happiness in the present life, and also for eternal blessedness. This higher capacity arises with the broader spheres of religious faith and love which the atonement opens. By this revelation of the divine goodness both faith and love may reach a measure not otherwise attainable. Also the sufferings which came with the fall provided a necessary condition for the graces of patience, meekness, gentleness, long-suffering, which contribute so much to the highest Christian life. In a like manner there is for us a higher blessedness in heaven.

[467]Sermon 64

There is some truth in the facts so presented, but not enough for the conclusion so confidently asserted. Besides, there are other facts which deeply concern the main question that are entirely overlooked. It is not to be questioned that the gift of the Son for our redemption is the highest

manifestation of the divine goodness, and therefore the fullest warrant of faith and the intensest motive of love. But is it not equally true that through the fall we have suffered loss in our capacity for both faith and love? There is in our fallen nature an alienation from God, and so strong that often the weightiest motives of his love are persistently resisted. Further, if it be true that all who accept the grace of salvation are raised to a measure of love and blessedness not attainable in an unfallen state, it is equally true that the fall is the occasion of final ruin to many. The point we make is, that, if this question is to be brought into rational treatment, account must be taken of all these facts. When this is done it cannot seem so clear that the fall is the occasion of an infinite gain to the race.

Any such attempt, not only to vindicate the divine justice, but even to glorify the divine love in the permission of the perplexing fall, must proceed on the assumption of its possible prevention consistently with the freedom of man. On such an assumption, the fall itself must have been completely within the disposition of the divine providence; and, if still permissible for the sake of a greater good to the race, why might it not have been procured for the same end? The theory must thus appear in open contrariety to the divine holiness. This result discredits it; for not even the love of God must be glorified at the expense of his holiness. Nor is it within the grasp of human thought that sin, the greatest evil, can be necessary to the greatest good of the moral universe. It is still true that an immeasurable good will arise from the atonement in Christ; but it is not the sense of Scripture that the fall was any part of a providential economy for the sake of that good. The Scriptures glorify the love of God in the redemption of the world, but ever as a love of compassion for a sinful and perishing world, not as an anterior benevolence which must accept moral evil as the necessary condition of its richest blessings. We may surely say that the providential perpetuation of the fallen race without the redemptive mediation of Christ could not be reconciled with the righteousness of God, and so far we have in redemption an element of theodicy, but we have therein no rational account of the divine permission of the fall.

6. Question of the Fall of Angels.—The fact of such a fall is clearly the sense of Scripture (John 8:44; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6.); but there are no details which give us any insight into the nature of their temptation or the manner of their entering into it. So far, the fall of angels stands in much greater obscurity than the fall of man. Yet for the possibility of a fall some facts are obvious. The primary state of such angels must have been probationary. There must have been for them a state of trial under a testing law of duty, and also some form of susceptibility to temptation. It may have been very different from that in primitive man, but must have been equally a reality, for otherwise there could have been no fall. Whatever the nature of this susceptibility, it must have been such that it could be consistent with primitive holiness, for, as the immediate creation of God, all angels must have begun their moral life with a holy nature. They must have been endowed with the power of obedience to the requirements of the divine will, for otherwise they could have had no proper moral trial, nor could their penal doom be a just retribution. So far we must find in the fall of angels the same principles which we found in the fall of man. There is one distinction which should be noted. The fall of primitive man was in a profound sense the fall of the race. There was no such race-connection of angels. Each angel that fell must have fallen by his own personal sin. It is entirely consistent with this fact, and the most rational view of the case, that some one led in a revolt from God and by some mode of temptation induced the following of others.

088. Chapter 6: Doctrine Of Native Depravity.

Chapter 6 Doctrine Of Native Depravity.

089. I. Formula Of Original Sin.

I. Formula Of Original Sin.

1. Analysis of the Formula.—Original sin, as a doctrinal formula, is common to the orthodox creeds for the expression and characterization of native sinfulness. Augustine first brought it into prominence for this purpose, but it is older than Augustine, and its first doctrinal use is ascribed to Tertullian. For any doctrinal formula so long in use, and so fundamental, might claim a prescriptive authority. Such formulas, however, are human creations, and, while entitled to most respectful consideration, must be open to questioning respecting the doctrines for which they stand. Especially must their interpretation in doctrinal discussion be open to questioning, for often several questions of doctrine are treated as one question, or as inseparable questions, which a proper analysis and method must separate and treat separately. This is necessary to clearness of doctrinal view. There has been much neglect of such method in the treatment of original sin. In the Augustinian anthropology, and in the creeds which formulate a doctrine of sin according to that anthropology, original sin includes a common guilt of Adam's sin, a common native depravity as the consequence of that guilt, and a sinfulness of the depravity which in all men deserves both temporal and eternal punishment.[468] It is further maintained by Augustinians that native depravity is itself a punishment inflicted upon all men on the ground of a participation in the sin of Adam. This account of depravity as a retribution of the divine justice makes that retribution a part of the doctrine of original sin. We thus find in this formula several questions of fact which are without any such logical or scientific connection that the truth of one must carry with it the truth of any other, much less the truth of all the others. It is for the reason of this unification of distinct questions that the doctrinal formula which represents them requires thorough analysis. The jumbling method of treating these several questions as one truth of original sin should give place to their separation and separate treatment. Clearness of view and truth of doctrine are not otherwise attainable.

[468]Augsburg Confession, article ii; Belgic Confession, article xv; Articles of the Church, of England, article ix; Westminster Confession, chap. vi. In Schaff:Creeds of Christendom, vol. iii, pp. 8, 400, 492, 615.

2. Doctrinal Isolation of Native Depravity.—The question of native depravity is simply the question whether man is by nature or birth morally depraved or corrupt, alien from the spiritual life, and inclined to evil. Whether on any ground, or under any law, he is a sharer in the sin of Adam, or in the guilt of his sin; or whether depravity as a fact is a divine punishment justly inflicted on the ground of a common participation in that sin ; or whether depravity itself is of the nature of sin and deserves the eternal retribution of the divine justice—these are questions distinct and apart from the one question respecting native depravity. The truth of this question does not depend upon the truth of the others. In the further treatment of anthropology these questions must be considered. They hold such a place in doctrinal creeds and theological discussions that they could not with any propriety be omitted. Each will find its proper place in our discussion. For the present we are

concerned only with the separate and distinct question of native depravity.

090. II. Doctrinal Sense Of Depravity.

II. Doctrinal Sense Of Depravity.

1. A Subjective Moral State.—Depravity is within us and of us, Not, However, as a physical entity or any form of essential existence, but as a moral condition or state. As such, it is below consciousness, and metaphysical for thought, but reveals itself in its activities. These activities are conclusive of both its reality and evil quality. In its purely metaphysical form it is not easily grasped in thought, but this fact does not in the least hinder the mental apprehension of its reality. Many things are beyond apprehension in their mode, yet fully certain in their reality. We know not the difference in the inner states of the lion and the lamb, but we know that there is a difference which determines the ferocity of the one and the gentleness of the other. There are differences in the lives of men which lead to the certainty of a difference of inner states. Some lives are in the works of the flesh, and others in the fruits of the Spirit, as Paul has drawn the contrast (Galatians 5:19-23). Such differences cannot spring from a common inner state of the soul. What thus appears in different lives is often exemplified in the same life. There are many instances of great change in individual lives. Sometimes the change is from a kind and gracious life into a hard and selfish one, but much oftener a secular, selfish, and evil life is transformed into a spiritual, generous, and good one. With such changes of the actual life there must be like changes of the subjective state. The spontaneous impulses and dispositions must be radically changed. There is no other account of such changes in the habits of life. In the light of such facts we may see the possibility, and in some measure the sense, of a subjective state of depravity, a state of the inner nature which is alien from the spiritual life and inclined to evil.

2. Broadly in the Sensuous and Moral Nature.—Theologians often locate depravity in the will. This is simply a part of the error of treating the will as a person endowed with the powers of personal agency. Thus intellect and sensibility are ascribed to the will, and also many forms of personal action. There is error in the will, and evil impulse and inclination, while it resists the motives to the good and rebels against the law of duty. These are mistaken views. The will is not a person, not in itself an agent, but simply an instrumental faculty of mind, which completes its power of personal action. There is no impulse or inclination in the will itself. All impulse and inclination are from the sensibilities. The motives of action which arise through the sensibilities address their solicitations to the personal agent, and it is not for his will, but for himself in the use of his will, to refuse or accept these solicitations. In the light of such facts it is clearly a mistake to locate depravity in the will. The ground is entirely too narrow for the characteristic facts of depravity. The willing power, especially within the moral sphere, is deeply involved in the depravity of our nature, but rather through the perversion of the sensibilities and the moral nature than by any direct effect upon the will itself. The sensuous nature, as we here use the term, is much broader than the physical nature, and the seat of many other sensibilities than the appetencies regarded as more specially physical. These manifold feelings have their proper functions in the economy of human life. In a healthful tone and normal state of the sensuous nature, these feelings are subordinate to the sense of prudence and the moral reason, and may thus fulfill their functions consistently with the

spiritual life. There may be a disordered state of the sensuous nature, with the result of inordinate sensibilities. Thus arise evil tendencies and vicious impulses and appetencies, inordinate forms of feeling—all that may be included in “the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 John 2:16). There are in human life many instances of such perverted and inordinate sensibilities as clearly evince a disordered state of the sensuous nature. Such a disordered state is a part of the depravity of human nature. The moral nature is the seat of conscience and the moral reason. There may be a disordered state of the moral nature, just as of the sensuous; a state in which the moral reason is darkened or perverted, and the conscience voiceless or practically powerless. In such a state moral duty is neither clearly seen nor properly enforced. God is far away, or so dimly seen that the vision of him has little or no ruling power; for, while in the reality of his existence he might still be apprehended in the intuitive or logical reason, it is only in the apprehension of the moral consciousness that he becomes a living presence. In such a state the soul is morally weak, and the sensibilities, selfish and secular in impulse and tendency, and without proper moral restraint, easily run to excess and dominate the life. There are in human life many instances of such facts. It may be said, and truly, that this moral disorder, especially in its extreme forms, is often the result of vicious habits; but this does not change either the nature or the reality of such a subjective state. So far it has been our special aim to point out the nature and possibility of such a state. There may be, and there is, a disordered condition of our moral nature. Its manifestations often appear so early in life as to evince its congenital character. Such a disordered condition of the moral powers is a part of the depravity of human nature. We thus locate depravity in both the sensuous and the moral nature. There is at once a filthiness of both “the flesh and the spirit” (2 Corinthians 7:1).

3. Meaning of Depravation from Deprivation.—In the discussion of the primitive holiness we fully recognized the presence of the Holy Spirit as the source of its highest form. We did not accept the Papal view, that original righteousness was wholly a gracious endowment, superadded after the creation of man, but held the Adamic nature just as created to be upright in itself. In entire consistency with this view we held the presence of the Spirit as the source of the fuller strength and tone of that holiness. Provision was thus complete for the more thorough subordination of all sensuous impulses and appetencies, and the complete dominance of the moral and spiritual life. As the result of sin there was a deprivation of the Holy Spirit, and in consequence of this loss a depravation of man’s nature. In addition to the more direct effect of sin upon the sensuous and moral nature, there was a loss of all the moral strength and tone immediately arising from the presence and agency of the Holy Spirit. The detriment was twofold, and in consequence the depravation was the deeper. In this view we still find depravity as a disordered state of the sensuous and moral nature.

4. Characteristic Evil Tendency of Depravity.—The orthodox creeds uniformly note an inclination to evil or to sin as a characteristic fact of native depravity. In the words of our own creed, man as fallen and corrupt is “of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually.”[469] In the words of another, we are in consequence of the original corruption of our nature “wholly inclined to all evil.”[470] This evil tendency is often given as the constitutive fact of depravity. Thus: “The corruption of human nature means its tendency to sin.”[471] Again: “Original sin is an inclination born with us; an impulse which is agreeable to us; a certain influence which leads us into the commission of sin.”[472] Midler gives the same view in holding that the evidences of a common

depravity “fully justify the old theological expression peccatum originale, understanding it as simply affirming the existence of an innate tendency or bias toward sin in every human being.”[473] This view is not strictly correct. It proceeds with insufficient analysis, and therefore falls short of scientific accuracy. This inclination to evil is the result of native depravity, not its constitutive fact. Depravity itself lies deeper, and the tendency to evil is a mode of its activity and manifestation. The question of this evil tendency will be further treated in connection with the proofs of depravity. So far we have simply aimed to disconnect the question of depravity from the others associated with it under the formula of original sin, and to give its doctrinal sense as a distinct and separate question.

[469]Article vii.

[470]Confession of Faith, chap, vi, sec. 4.

[471]Chalmers.

[472]Melanchthon.

[473]Christian Doctrine of Sin, vol. ii, p. 268.

091. Chapter 7: Proofs Of Native Depravity.

Chapter 7 Proofs Of Native Depravity. The proofs of native depravity lie mostly in the Scriptures: partly, in the more direct testimony of particular texts; partly, in the impossibility of righteousness and life by the law, and the necessity for the atonement and spiritual regeneration. Further proof lies in the universality of actual sin. Both the Scriptures and the history of the race witness to the truth of this universality, and the common religious consciousness confirms their testimony. Native depravity, with its characteristic evil tendency, is the only rational account of universal actual sin, and thus finds its proof in that universality. The manifold evils of the present life, the mortality of the race in the Scripture account of it, the small success of providential agencies for the moral and religious improvement of mankind, and the common spiritual apathy give further proof of a moral lapse of the race. We have thus briefly outlined the evidences of native depravity which we shall present in this chapter.

092. I. More Direct Scripture Proofs.

I. More Direct Scripture Proofs.

1. Testimony of Particular Texts.—A few out of very many will suffice. In the texts which we shall adduce the truth of native depravity is mostly given as an implication of their contents, rather than in the form of direct statement. There are indeed but few proof-texts of the latter class, but there are very many of the former. The proof in the former is just as conclusive as in the latter.

“And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” “For the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth” (Genesis 6:5; Genesis 8:21). In both texts there is reference to the great wickedness which preceded the flood and provoked its judicial infliction. This wickedness in all its forms of violence and crime is traced to its source in the heart of man, and to the evil tendency of its incipient impulses, its earliest and most elementary activities. Such an account is rational and sufficient only with an inclination to evil which is at once the characteristic and the proof of native depravity.

“Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.” “What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?” (Job 14:4; Job 15:14) The first text may be taken as proverbial. Its principle is that every thing inherits the quality of its source: the stream, the quality of the fountain; the fruit, the quality of the tree. From a corrupt source there can be no pure issue. The principle applies to man. The fountain of the race was corrupted by sin, and depravity flows down the stream of human life. This accounts for the evil tendencies of human nature. The second text illustrates the principle of the first, with special application to man. “What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?” Each man inherits the moral state of the race, and hence is corrupt in his nature because the race is corrupt. Hence the appetence for evil, the relish for sin, the drinking iniquity like water (Job 15:16).

“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.” “The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies” (Psalms 51:5; Psalms 58:3). With a fully awakened conscience, David came to a very deep sense of his recent sins, and in very earnest words expressed his consciousness of their enormity. Only the utmost intensity of expression could do any justice to the reality. Below these actual sins he found the corruption of his inner nature; and hence his earnest prayers: “Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.” “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.” In this intense introspection he carries the view of inner corruption back to the very inception of his existence. It would be easy to call this an exaggeration springing from the whelming intensity of feeling, but we should thus destroy this profound and instructive lesson of penitence, for we might in like manner account its whole expression an exaggeration. The truth of native depravity is clearly given in the first text cited in this paragraph, for otherwise there is nothing to justify or even to render permissible the use of its words. The second text

further expresses the same truth. The only rational sense of a moral estrangement from our birth, and a straying into sin as soon as we are born, lies in the truth of native depravity. This is the only sense consistent with the Scriptures and the relative facts. The words cannot mean an actual sinning from one's birth, and therefore must mean a native depravity, the incipient activities of which tend to evil. This is the only consistent interpretation.

"What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Romans 3:9-13). In this strong passage Paul sums up and applies the arguments conducted in the first and second chapters. He had proved in the first the universal sinfulness of the Gentiles, and in the second the universal sinfulness of the Jews. This proof he assumes in the passage just cited. Instances of personal righteousness, even many such, are entirely consistent with his position of universal sinfulness. The ruling purpose of his argument requires this consistency. As sin is universal there can be no personal righteousness simply by the law; but righteousness is still possible through faith in Christ. All are sinners, but many are thus saved from sin. While many are righteous through grace, it is still true that none are righteous on the footing of nature. Paul confirms his position of universal sinfulness by a citation from the Psalms (Psalms 14:1-3; Psalms 53:1-3), as we see in the passage now in hand. These texts in the Psalms refer directly to the great wickedness just preceding the flood. St. Paul, however, is not attempting a mere parallelism between widely separate ages, but is maintaining the sinfulness of man in all ages. This is the presupposition and requirement of his doctrine of justification by faith. Such a universality of sin must mean, as we shall more fully point out, a native inclination or tendency to sin. The argument of Paul in proving the universality of sin is replete with the evidences of such native tendency.

There are many texts which incidentally but strongly convey the sense of a disordered state and evil tendency of mankind. We cite from a collection by Mr. Watson. "'Madness is in the heart of the sons of men, while they live' (Ecclesiastes 9:3). 'But they like men have transgressed the covenant' (Hosea 6:7). 'If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children' (Matthew 7:11). 'Thou savorest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men' (Matthew 16:23). 'Are ye not carnal, and walk asmen?' (1 Corinthians 3:3.) The above texts are to be considered as specimens of the manner in which the sacred writers speak of the subject rather than as approaching to an enumeration of the passages in which the same sentiments are found in great variety of expression, and which are adduced on various occasions."[474] They fully give the sense of a native quality of evil in man.

[474]Theological Institutes, vol. ii, p. 71.

2. Impossibility of Righteousness and Life by Law.—Full obedience, or the fulfillment of all duty, must be sufficient for both righteousness and life. If the fulfillment of all duty is not sufficient for personal righteousness there must be some divine requirement for righteousness above one's whole duty. This, however, cannot be, for any requirement for righteousness must take its place as one's duty. The fulfillment of all duty must be the very reality of personal righteousness. Such righteousness must be sufficient for life—life in the blessedness of the divine favor. If it should be objected that there is no merit in obedience, it may suffice to answer, that the divine economy of

reward is not commercial in its ground. Full obedience must be sufficient for personal righteousness and life, for otherwise sin and death would be an original necessity with all moral intelligences.

Yet neither righteousness nor life is possible to man by deeds of law. This is the doctrine of Paul, and underlies his doctrine of justification. He finds all men guilty before God, and concludes: “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight” (Romans 3:20). “This is not because the fulfillment of duty is not sufficient for personal righteousness, but because the obedience is wanting and all have sinned. “For if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain” (Galatians 2:21). The very necessity for the atonement in Christ was the impossibility of righteousness under law. “For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law” (Galatians 3:21). But the law could not give life because it could not give righteousness; so that neither righteousness nor life is possible by deeds of law.

Why this impossibility? It must lie in the impossibility of full obedience to the law of duty; for we have previously shown the sufficiency of such obedience for both righteousness and life. We do not mean an absolute impossibility, but an impossibility without the grace of redemption and the office of the Holy Spirit in the ministry of that grace. Why such an impossibility? Either the law of duty must be above the ability of man as originally constituted, or he must be in a state of moral lapse and disability. The former alternative must be excluded; for a primary law of duty above the power of obedience would involve the necessity of sin. We must accept the alternative of a moral lapse, with its moral disabilities. This is the truth of native depravity.

3. Necessity for Spiritual Regeneration.—The ground of this argument is furnished in the doctrine of regeneration as set forth by Christ in his lesson to Nicodemus (John 3:3-7). The passage is familiar, and we may omit its formal citation. The construction of the argument requires little more than an analysis of the passage and a grouping of its leading facts. The nature and necessity of regeneration are set forth in connection. “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.” Regeneration is an inner renovation, a purification of the inner nature. This is its sense as signified by the water of baptism, and by the agency of the Holy Spirit, through whose gracious power the work is wrought. We may trace the idea of this work through the Scriptures, and, while we find it under many forms of expression, we find in all this deeper meaning of an inward renewal and purification. Its necessity to our salvation is declared in the most positive manner. Without it we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. The ground of this necessity lies in a native quality of our nature. This is the clear sense of the words of Christ. After the repeated assertion of the necessity of regeneration to salvation, he adds: “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee. Ye must be born again.” Flesh cannot here be taken in any mere physical sense. Such a sense could neither express the necessity for spiritual regeneration nor allow its possibility. The two ideas are utterly incongruous. Through regeneration the spiritual quality replaces the fleshly quality. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit—in the sense of moral quality. Hence the regenerate, while still physically in the flesh, are in moral quality or subjective state no longer in the flesh but in the Spirit, or the spiritual state produced by the Spirit in the work of regeneration (Romans 8:9; Galatians 5:24-25). It is thus clear that flesh find spirit stand in contrast, the former meaning a depraved state, the latter, a

renewed and holy state. This interpretation is confirmed by the further contrast which the Scriptures draw between the flesh and the Spirit, or the fleshly mind and the spiritual mind, and between the works of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit (Romans 8:1-13; Galatians 5:16-17; Galatians 5:19-24). We thus have the sense of flesh as our Lord used the term in his doctrine of regeneration. It must mean a depraved state, a corrupt nature. The proof of native depravity is right at hand: “That which is born of the flesh is flesh.” On the ground of Scripture this one proof is conclusive. In the proofs of native depravity thus far adduced it is manifest that the question is not a merely speculative one, but one that is fundamental in Christian theology. We have seen that it underlies the necessity for an atonement, for justification by faith, and for spiritual regeneration. These are distinctive and cardinal truths of Christianity. Native depravity is the presupposition of each and all. Without this deeper truth there is no requirement of any one. If these doctrines are true, the fallen state of man must be a truth. “If he is not a depraved, undone creature, what necessity for so wonderful a Restorer and Saviour as the Son of God? If he is not enslaved to sin, why is he redeemed by Jesus Christ? If he is not polluted, why must he be washed in the blood of the immaculate Lamb? If his soul is not disordered, what occasion is there for such a divine Physician? If he is not helpless and miserable, why is he personally invited to secure the assistance and consolations of the Holy Spirit? And, in a word, if he is not ‘born in sin,’ why is a ‘new birth ‘so absolutely necessary that Christ declares, with the most solemn asseverations, ‘Without it no man can see the kingdom of God?’”[475] [475] Fletcher: Appeal, part i.

093. II. Proofs In The Prevalence Of Sin.

II. Proofs In The Prevalence Of Sin.

1. Universality of Actual Sin.—Both sacred and secular history disclose the universal prevalence of sin. Of course it is not pretended that every person of the- race is brought distinctly into view and disclosed in the actual sinfulness of his life. This is not necessary to the utmost certainty of universal sinning. The universality is a warranted generalization from the uniformity in observed individuals. This is the method of science. In no department of nature is it thought necessary to observe and test every specimen or individual in order to the generalization and certainty of the science. After proper observation, the classification is never disturbed by the discovery of new instances so dissimilar as to refuse a scientific incorporation. The method is thoroughly valid in application to man. Now in all the disclosures of history, in all the moral and religious consciousness which has received a frank and open expression, a sinless man has not appeared. Of course we except the Son of man. However, he is not strictly an exception, because his unique character will not allow his human classification simply as a man; and he is as really distinct in his sinlessness as in his unique personality. There is no human exception. It is not assumed that all are equally sinful, nor that each is given to the commission of all sins. Nor is it denied that there have been many good men. The grace of redemption and the work of the Holy Spirit, operative in all ages and among all peoples, have not been without result. Many a soul, taking hold upon this divine help, has been lifted up into a thoroughly good life. Perhaps for the want of the fuller light of heavenly truth this has often been done without full consciousness of the doing. But take the testimony of such men, the truest and best of the race, and not one of them will say that his life has been without sin. No man could claim an entirely sinless life without profound offense to the common moral judgment, and that judgment would pronounce such profession itself a sin. The universality of actual sin is so certain that we need not the details of universal history to confirm it. The Scriptures are in full accord with the testimony of history. The explicit utterances of a few texts may suffice. “For there is no man that sinneth not” (1 Kings 8:46). This must mean, at least, that at some time sin is a fact in every life. “They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one” (Psalms 14:3). Instances of salvation from sin are entirely consistent with these words, but they cannot mean less than the universality of sin. David prays to God: “And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified” (Psalms 143:2). This is the very doctrine of Paul, that no man can be justified by the deeds of the law, because all have sinned. “For we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin.” “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:9; Romans 3:23). As previously shown, this universality of actual sin underlies the Pauline doctrine of justification. As all have sinned, all are under condemnation; for it is the function of the law to condemn the guilty, not to justify or forgive. This is the necessity for the atonement, and for justification by faith in Christ. Paul thus combines the universality of sin with his great doctrines of atonement and justification. In its certainty it stands with these doctrines. “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and

just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (1 John 1:8-10). Again, one may be righteous before God, right with the law, and free from the guilt of sin, but only through a gracious forgiveness of sin. This is a necessity with all, because all have sinned. On this fact the testimony of Scripture is above question.

2. The Proof of an Evil Tendency in Man.—Natural tendency is manifest in a uniformity of results. "We obtain a notion of such a thing as tendency no other way than by observation; and we can observe nothing but events; and it is the commonness or constancy of events that gives us a notion of tendency in all cases. Thus we judge of tendencies in the natural world. Thus we judge of the 'tendencies or propensities of nature in minerals, vegetables, animals, rational and irrational creatures."[476] This is the proper method of reaching the notion of a tendency of nature, and the principle so reached is most certain. There must be a tendency of nature under uniformities of action. This is a valid and necessary principle of science. It underlies physics, and chemistry, and natural history. Without it these sciences would be impossible; and their practical utilities would be impossible.

[476]Edwards: Works, vol. ii, p. 318. The same principle is thoroughly valid for the habits of human life. As in the case of all other things open to scientific treatment, so the tendencies of human nature must be determined according to uniformities of human action. Here, then, is a uniformity in sinful action. All have sinned. With all the differences of temperament, social condition, education, moral training, and religious creed, there is this uniformity of action. Whether we view man as a species, or in the multitude of human personalities, this universality of sin is the proof of an evil tendency of his nature. "For it alters not the case in the least, as to the evidence of tendency, whether the subject of the constant event be an individual, or a nature and kind. Thus, if there be a succession of trees of the same sort, proceeding one from another, from the beginning of the world, growing in all conditions, soils, and climates, and otherwise in (as it were) an infinite variety of circumstances, all bearing ill fruit, it as much proves the nature and tendency of the hind as if it were only one individual tree, that had remained from the beginning of the world, had often been transplanted into different soils, etc., and had continued to bear only bad fruit. So, if there be a particular family, which, from generation to generation, and through every remove to innumerable different countries and places of abode, all died of a consumption, or all ran distracted, or all murdered themselves, it would be as much an evidence of the tendency of something in the nature or constitution of that race as it would be of the tendency of something in the nature or state of an individual, if one person had lived all the time, and some remarkable event had often appeared to him, which he had been the agent or subject of from year to year, and from age to age, continually and without fail."[477] On such valid principles the universality of actual sin is conclusive of an evil tendency in human nature. This evil tendency is the characteristic fact and the proof of native depravity.

[477]Edwards: Works, vol. ii, p. 319.

3. Only Rational Account of Universal Sin.—In order to invalidate the argument for native depravity from the universality of actual sin, it has been attempted on other grounds to account for that universality, but without success. It will suffice to consider the chief attempts of the kind.

One attempt is, to account for the universality of sin on the ground of evil example and education. In any proper use for such a purpose, the distinction between bad example and bad education is not very thorough, indeed is but slight. However, we have no polemical interest in disputing any distinction which the case will allow. Bad example and bad education are both mighty forces in human life. Many minds are thus perverted, many hearts corrupted, many souls led into sin. But before they can even be assumed to account for the universality of sin there must be conceded them a universal presence and evil influence; for otherwise they could not account for the universal result. But bad example and bad education, every-where present and operative for evil, are simply forms of the universal sin, and therefore must themselves be accounted for. As a part of the universal sin, they must be valueless for any account of that universality. To attempt it is simply the fallacy of making a thing account for itself: worse than that; it is the egregious fallacy of making the part of a thing account for the whole.

There is another decisive view of this question. “While the great power of bad example and education is conceded, it should not be overlooked that such power, like all practical forces, is conditioned by certain responsive susceptibilities or inclinations in man. Without the responsive sensibilities the mightiest practical forces would be utterly powerless. There must be plasticity of substance as well as molding force, else there can be no casting of any form. For the molding power of any form of example or education there must be a plasticity of our nature which will readily yield to its influence. If bad example and education have such power over human life that they may be claimed to account for the universality of sin, there must be susceptibilities and tendencies of human nature which readily respond to their influence. Such susceptibilities and tendencies are possible only with an evil bias or inclination. Such evil bias or inclination is the characteristic fact and the proof of native depravity. Thus the great power of bad example and bad education, through which it is attempted to invalidate a leading proof of native depravity, becomes itself a proof of that depravity.

Again, it is maintained that free-will, without any evil tendency of human nature, sufficiently accounts for the universality of actual sin. If this position is valid, the argument for native depravity from that universality is answered. The main support of this position is brought from the case of Adam in the primitive sin. Without any evil bias, and against the tendencies of his nature to the good, Adam sinned purely through the freedom of volition. Therefore all may sin, and do sin, in the exercise of a like freedom. This is the argument. Dr. Taylor puts it thus: “Adam’s nature, it is allowed, was very far from being sinful; yet he sinned. And, therefore, the common doctrine of original sin is no more necessary to account for the sin that has been or is in the world than it is to account for Adam’s sin. . . . Thus their argument from the wickedness of mankind, to prove a sinful and corrupt nature, must inevitably and irrecoverably fall to the ground.[478] [478] Cited by Edwards: Works, vol. ii, p. 361. From the instance of Adam one might in this manner prove the abstract possibility of universal sin from mere freedom of volition, but could not thus rationally account for its actuality. A single free action may easily be induced without any natural tendency or disposition. We often recognize individual acts of men as quite apart from their known character and habit of life. To account for such acts we do not require any permanent tendency or disposition. But to account for a habit of life, whether good or evil, we do require an inner tendency or disposition in accord with it. The case is infinitely stronger when we go from one man to all men, and especially when we go from a single action of one man to a uniformity of action in all men. We

can account for a single act without any natural tendency or disposition thereto, but cannot account for the habit of even a single life without such tendency or disposition. How much less can we account for the universality of actual sin without a tendency to evil in human nature. The fallacy of Taylor's argument thus appears. A single act of sin gives no account of universal sin, and is utterly powerless against the proof of an evil tendency derived from that universality. Native depravity is the only rational account of universal sin, and its reality is thus proved.[479] [479] Edwards: Works, vol. ii, pp. 361-365.

4. Concerning Natural Virtues.—It is claimed that there are many natural virtues; and on this ground an objection is brought against the doctrine of native depravity. We do not think the objection valid, and therefore have no interest in disputing the fact of such virtues. However, they must not be exaggerated or counted for more than they are. There are natural virtues—virtues which we may call natural in distinction from such as spring from spiritual regeneration, though we do not concede their purely natural ground. They appear in personal character, in domestic life, in social life, in civil life, in the many forms of business. All along the centuries, men and women, without any profession of a regenerate life, yet of unquestionable purity, uprightness, and integrity of character, have appeared: some with natures gentle and lovable, and lives full of sympathy and kindness; others, strong and heroic, but true in all things. A doctrine of native depravity which cannot admit the consistency of such virtues with itself must be an exaggeration, and any inference which that inconsistency warrants goes to the disproof, not of the true doctrine, but of a form of it which exaggeration has made erroneous. There is no doctrine of native depravity in the Scriptures which renders the truth of such virtues inconsistent with itself. Native depravity does not make human nature demonian. It is not irredeemably bad. Life begins with evil tendencies, but also with activities of the moral and religious nature which act as a check upon these tendencies. Monsters of wickedness are a growth. Instances of utter badness from early life are comparatively few, and are properly regarded as abnormal. The Scriptures every-where recognize the moral and religious susceptibilities of men, except as they may be stifled by a vicious habit of life. In the absence of a true spiritual life with so many, natural virtues are necessary to the domestic, social, and civil forms of human life which actually exist, and which we must think to be in the order of the divine providence. Their providential purpose implies a capacity in human nature for the necessary natural virtues. The Scriptures contain no doctrine of native depravity inconsistent with these facts.

We have not conceded to such natural virtues a purely natural ground. We called them natural because actual in human life without spiritual regeneration. The fallen race is also a redeemed race, and a measure of grace is given to every man, and remains with him as a helpful influence, unless forfeited by a vicious habit of life. Human nature is not just what it would be if left to the unrestricted consequence of the Adamic fall. It is not so left. The helping grace of redemption does not await our spiritual regeneration, but a measure is given to every man, that we might be capable of the forms of life providentially intended for us; most of all, that we might be lifted up to a capacity for the moral and religious probation in which we are all placed. We thus have the true source of what we call natural virtues, and a source entirely consistent with the doctrine of native depravity. Further, the many providential agencies for the moral and religious improvement of mankind have ever co-operated with the helping grace of redemption. The virtues necessary to the providential forms of human life are thus nurtured and strengthened. Finally, these natural virtues are mostly of an instinctive character, spontaneous to our nature, and survive all changes and

conditions, except that of an utter personal debasement.

They may exist and fulfill their necessary offices in the providential forms of human life, not only in the absence of a true spiritual state, but with the presence of an evil state. Their functions are fulfilled without any vitalizing moral principle, without any sense of duty to God. They have in themselves no strictly moral or religious quality, and can be carried up into a true moral and religious sphere only by the incoming of a true spiritual life, which subordinates all the powers and activities of the soul to itself and consecrates all to God and duty. These natural virtues therefore may be called virtues only in the most nominal sense. In themselves they are not virtues. And as they may exist, not only in the absence of a true spiritual life, but with aversion to such a life, with propensity to evil, and with actual evil, they give no proof against the doctrine of native depravity.

094. III. Further Proofs Of A Fallen State.

III. Further Proofs Of A Fallen State.

Under this head we group a few facts which are common to the present state of man, but inconsistent with his primitive state. The idea of a primitive state of holiness and happiness is at once a scriptural and a rational idea. Paradise, with its blessings, its freedom from wearying toil, from suffering and death, with its open communion with God and joy in his presence, seems a fitting estate for primitive man, morally constituted as he was, and fashioned in the image of God. The absence of such an estate and the presence of strongly discordant facts give proof of a fallen state. We note a few of these facts.

1. Manifold Ills of Human Life.—The present state of man may be characterized as one of frailty and suffering. This is the Scripture view, and the common experience, as voiced in many a lament of weariness and pain. Man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward. He is of few days, and full of trouble (Job 5:7; Job 14:1). The comparison of his life is not with strong and abiding things, but with the frail and the quickly vanishing. We are like the grass which flourishes in the morning and in the evening is cut down (Psalms 90:5-6); like the flower of the field which perishes under the passing wind (Psalms 103:15-16; Isaiah 40:6-8); like a vapor, appearing for a little while, and then vanishing away (James 4:14). Such a life of frailty and trouble has no accordance with the primitive state of man, and strongly witnesses to his fallen condition.

2. Mortality of the Race.—Human death is the consequence of Adamic sin. Death preceded the Adamic fall, and from the beginning reigned over all living orders. Nor was there in the physiological constitution of man any natural exemption from such a consequence. In this constitution he was too much like the higher animal orders not to be naturally subject to the same law. Yet he was provisionally immortal—that is, he had the privilege of a providential exemption from death on the condition of obedience to the divine will. This appears in the narrative of the probation and fall of man, and also in the account of the origin and prevalence of human death. The fruit of the tree of life, originally open to the use of man, signifies a provisional immortality. Expulsion from that tree was a deprivation of this privilege, and the subjection of man to death (Genesis 3:22-24). It is the sense of this passage that human death came by sin. What is thus given in an implicit mode is elsewhere openly declared. By one man sin came into the world, and death by sin; and through the universality of sin came universal death (Romans 5:12). While the universality of death is thus connected with the universality of sin, it is yet true that the common mortality is consequent to the Adamic sin and fall. “By the trespass of the one the many died.” “By the trespass of the one, death reigned through one.” “In Adam all die” (Romans 5:15; Romans 5:17; 1 Corinthians 15:22). How shall we explain the universal mortality as consequent to the sin and fall of Adam? The assumption of an immediate effect upon the physiological constitution of man could not answer for an interpretation, because the assumed effect is purely of a physical character and, therefore, would be unnatural to the cause. There could be no such immediate physical effect. The theory which accounts physical death a penal retribution, judicially inflicted

upon all men on the ground of a common participation in the sin of Adam, is beset with very great difficulties. Yet, as we have previously shown, the common mortality is in some way consequent to that sin. The subjection of Adam to mortality and death was effected through his expulsion from the tree of life, and the withdrawment of that special providential agency through which, on the condition of obedience, he would have been preserved in life. These were penal inflictions on the ground of sin. In consequence of this subjection of Adam to death, mortality is entailed upon the race. The deprivation of the privilege and means of immortality which he suffered on account of sin descends upon his race. There is this connection of the common mortality with the sin of Adam. In this sense death reigns through his offense and in him all die.

There must be some reason for this consequence; some reason why the race of Adam should be denied the original privilege of immortality with which he was favored. If each one begins life with the primitive holiness, why should he not have this privilege? With such a nature he would be morally fitted for the primitive probation. It is plain, however, that he is not thus fitted. The universality of sin proves his unfitness. The impossibility of righteousness and life by deeds of law, as maintained by Paul, proves the same fact. In consequence of the sin and fall of Adam every man has suffered a moral deterioration which disqualifies him for an economy of works, and requires for him an economy of redemption. Such an economy has been divinely instituted for the race. The privilege of immortality belonged to the former; mortality, with the provision of a resurrection, belongs to the latter. This change of economy, rendered necessary only by a deterioration of man's moral nature, proves his native depravity. The common mortality, as thus mediated by the common depravity, is, in turn, the proof of this depravity.

3. Small Success of Moral and Religious Agencies. —Everywhere there are convictions of duty, with the activities of conscience approving its fulfillment and reprehending its neglect or violation. This is the case even where there is little exterior light for the moral judgment. Every-where such convictions of duty are embodied in public opinion, and often in statutory law, with the sanction of rewards for the restraint of vice and the support of virtue. In the many religions of the world, even with their many errors, there are lessons of moral duty. Philosophy and poetry have joined in the support of the good against the evil. After due allowance for the errors of moral judgment and the elements of evil in legislation and religion, in philosophy and poetry, there is still a large sum of moral agency which, with a responsive nature in man, must have produced a large fruitage of good. The fruitage has been small because the nature of man has strongly resisted these agencies. Every-where the common life has been far below its moral and religious lessons.

Like facts appear under the more direct agencies of Providence in the interest of morality and religion. Such agencies, often in an open supernatural mode, appear through all the history of the race. We see them in the beginning of that history. God is present with men; present with precepts and promises, with warnings against sin, with blessings for obedience and punishment for disobedience. The evil tendencies of men are stronger than these moral restraints. The tide of iniquity rises above all barriers, and so floods the world as to provoke the divine retribution in its destruction. Against all the force of this fearful lesson iniquity soon again prevailed, and so widely as to provoke again the divine retribution. Later history is replete with moral and religious agencies. We see them in the history of Abraham, in the miracles of Moses and the divine legislation through his ministry. God was with the prophets, and through his Spirit their words were mighty. Through all these centuries of Jewish history such moral and religious agencies, often in a

supernatural mode, were in active operation. With a responsive moral and religious nature in man, a prevailing and permanent obedience to the divine will would have been secured. There was no such result. The frequent revolts and rebellions, sometimes in the very presence of the most imposing forms of the divine manifestation, witness, not only to the absence of such a nature, but also to the presence of a nature actively propense to evil and strongly resistant of all these moral and religious agencies (Exodus 32:9; Exodus 32:33; Exodus 33:3; Isaiah 48:3-5; Acts 7:51-53). With the advent of the Messiah came the fuller light of the Gospel. In the life and miracles and lessons of Christ and the ministry of his apostles moral and religious agencies rose to their highest form. Instead of a ready response to such truth and grace, again there is resistance. Like resistance has continued through all the Christian centuries. Nor has this resistance widely taken the form of infidelity, which so bars the soul against the moral forces of the Gospel. The significant fact is its prevalence with so many who accept the deepest verities of Christianity. With the admission of such truths, only a native aversion to a true religious life could in so many instances void their constraining force. In all this resistance to the moral and religious agencies of Providence, and the comparatively small results of good, proof is given of the truth of native depravity.[480] [480] Fletcher: Works, vol. iii, pp. 302-305; Edwards: Works, vol. ii, pp. 348-361.

4. The Common Spiritual Apathy.—This apathy is a manifest fact in human life. It is the mental state of the many. Why is this widely prevalent apathy? Men care for secular good. Self-interest is a potent force in human life. Why are its energies given to mere secular good, while spiritual and eternal interests are so much neglected? Why so much earnest service of mammon in preference to the service of God? Men consent to the paramount duties of religion, and to its infinitely momentous interests, and promise them attention, but slumber again, and slumber on, heedless of all the voices of life and death and the entreating appeals of the divine love. Such spiritual apathy cannot be normal to a soul made in the image of God and for a heavenly destiny. It evinces a moral state which has its only account in the truth of native depravity.

095. Chapter 8: Origin Of Depravity.

Chapter 8 Origin Of Depravity. The origin of depravity as a fact, and the ground or law of its entailment upon the race, are distinct questions and open to separate answers. There is not unanimity respecting either. Nor does the answer to the first question necessarily determine the answer to the second. It is better, therefore, to treat them separately.

096. I. Adamic Origin.

I. Adamic Origin.

1. Limitations of the Question of Origin.—These limitations arise from certain facts of depravity. One is, that it is native—a moral state in which we are born. Hence it cannot have its origin in any thing subsequent to our birth. “We thus see the error of accounting it to any such thing as evil example or education, or to the influence of environment. Such things may act upon our evil nature and quicken its tendencies into earlier and stronger activity, but cannot be the source of our depravity, because, while it is native, they can affect us only in our actual life. Another fact is that depravity is universal. Hence it cannot arise from any local or temporary source. The true source must be common to all men. Finally, depravity itself is intrinsically the same and one in all. Therefore its origin must be one, not many. The present thinking, the best philosophical thinking, forbids an unnecessary multiplication of causes, and for such a uniform and universal fact as native depravity could allow only one source.[481] [481] Dwight:Theology, sermon 32

2. Origin in the Adamic Fall.—The conditions of limitation respecting the origin of depravity are all met in the Adamic relations of the race. This is not the only case in which they are all met, but it is the most reasonable account of the common depravity, and the source to which the Scriptures lead us. They are all equally met in our relation to physical nature as contemporary with our birth, as common to all, and the same for all. The idea of a physical origin of moral evil, and of the evil tendencies of human nature, has widely prevailed. It is in the vast system of Brahmanism, and in the Greek philosophy. It flourished in the Gnosticism of the early Christian centuries. Its tendencies are always evil: to sensuality in one direction, and to extreme asceticism in the other. If matter is intrinsically evil and the inevitable source of corruption to the soul, then such was man’s state as originally created, and there is for him no deliverance in the present life. Such facts are not reconcilable with any true idea of God. But as a heresy in Christian theology the physical origin of moral evil is only a matter of history, and needs no present refutation. The conditions of limitation respecting the origin of depravity are also met m the relations of God to the soul. It could not be said that doctrinal opinion has never implicated the divine agency in the origin of depravity—not, indeed, by an immediate constitution of a corrupt nature in primitive man, but mediately by a determination of the Adamic fall. Such determination must be an implication of supralapsarian Calvinism. Happily, supralapsarianism is now almost wholly a matter of history. Neither by an original constitution of human nature, nor by any agency which determined the Adamic fall, could God be the author of such an evil as human depravity. His holiness and goodness declare it an absolute impossibility. The Adamic origin of depravity is thus rendered strongly probable. The three relations which we have named as meeting the limitations of the question complete the circle of such relations in even thinkable sources. It follows that, as the origin of depravity cannot be either in physical nature or in God, it must be in the Adamic fall.

3. Transmissible Effects of Adam’s Sin.—The effect of Adam’s sin in himself was the corruption of his own nature. No one can sin without detriment to his subjective moral state. The higher the

state of holiness, the deeper the moral deterioration. There was the deeper consequence of evil in the case of Adam, who was created in holiness. Besides this more direct effect of his sin he suffered a deprivation of the Holy Spirit, whose presence gave to his subjective holiness its highest form. As previously shown, the consequence of this deprivation was the deeper depravation of his moral nature. The corruption of nature which Adam thus suffered must have been transmitted to his offspring. This result is determined by a law of nature, and as fixed a law as nature reveals. There is no need to assume that this law of transmission must rule in the case of such slight changes as may occur in the mere accidents of parental character, but it must rule in the case of so profound a change in the subjective moral state. There is no reference to this law in the case of either Cain or Abel, but there is a reference in the instance of Seth in that he was begotten in the likeness and image of his father (Genesis 5:3). The transmission of the Adamic likeness, even in his fallen state, is thus fully recognized. In this there is reason for us to find the origin of depravity in the Adamic fall.

4. Secular Consequences of the Adamic Fall.—In consequence of the Adamic sin and fall the race is involved in physical suffering and death. The record of such results is clearly given in the Scriptures (Genesis 3:16-19). With this text we may collate others in which the common mortality is more definitely attributed to the Adamic fall (Romans 5:15; Romans 5:17; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22). With this great fact so definitely given, we may include with it other forms of physical suffering, as expressed in the divine judgment upon the progenitors of the race. For the present we are concerned only with the facts of such consequences, without any respect to the law of their entailment. Nor is the fact itself in the least affected by any perplexities of interpretation which the texts may present. We may not be able to get the exact sense in which the earth was cursed and man subjected to wearying toil. We may think of great strength in primitive man as at once providentially given and guarded, and also of the garden prepared for him, with such conditions of fruitfulness as to yield an ample living without any requirement of wearying toil. We may also think of greatly changed conditions: a loss of strength in man, and the allotment of new fields, no longer prepared as a garden, but hard and rough in their primitive nature, and from which bread must be forced in the sweat of the face. But whatever the mode of the divine judgment upon man and the earth, it clearly conveys the sense of physical suffering and death in consequence of the Adamic fall.

5. Deeper Moral Consequence in Depravity.—The physical evils which the race suffers in consequence of the Adamic fall are connected with a deeper moral consequence. This connection is specially clear in the case of death. “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Romans 5:12). The sense is not merely that Adam was the first that sinned, but that in some deep sense universal sin and death are connected with his sin and fall. We have previously shown that universal actual sin has no rational account except through the common depravity of human nature. We may thus find the connection between the universal actual sin and the sin of Adam. The universal actual sin has its source in the common depravity, and the common depravity has its source in the sin of Adam. There is no other way of accounting for the universality of actual sin through his sin. Thus the corruption of Adam’s own nature through sin becomes the source of the common depravity there is a like connection of the common mortality which is also traced to the Adamic sin and fall. If human nature is not corrupted through the sin of Adam we should be born in the same state in

which he was created, with equal fitness for a probationary economy and the opportunity of immortality. Thus the universality of death in consequence of the sin of Adam is mediated by the corruption of human nature through his sin. In the physical suffering and death entailed upon the race through the sin of Adam we thus see the deeper moral consequence in depravity.

097. II. Law Of Adamic Origin.

II. Law Of Adamic Origin. With agreement respecting the Adamic origin of depravity, there are different theories respecting its ground or law. For the present we are concerned with the statement and discrimination of these theories. They are so fundamental in doctrinal anthropology as to require separate treatment.

1. Theory of Penal Retribution.—In this theory depravity is a punishment, judicially inflicted upon mankind. It is maintained that under the providence of God so great tin evil could not befall the race except as a punishment. Advocates of the theory may often use the term original sin instead of depravity, meaning by it not only the corruption of human nature but also its sinfulness or demerit. However, as sinfulness is held to be intrinsic to the depravity, just as it is intrinsic to an actual sin, we need not be careful further to notice any difference of the terms in the present connection. If depravity is in itself sin, then the penal infliction of depravity is the penal infliction of original sin. Nor can this form of sin be inflicted without the infliction of depravity. The theory will more fully appear under the next head.

2. On the Ground of Adamic Sin.—If depravity is a punishment it must have its ground in guilt. The most rigid Calvinism holds this principle firmly. Any punishment without a ground in guilt must be an injustice. The alleged guilt in this case is held to arise from a participation in the sin of Adam, as the only precedent sin, and to an intimate connection with which the common depravity is traced. This is the Calvinistic theory. It is such at least in the general sense. On many questions there are divergences in Calvinistic minds. There may be dissent from the present theory, but there is not enough to disturb its Calvinistic position. On this question, Cunningham, after noting some Calvinistic dissent or reserve, proceeds to say: “A second class, comprehending the great body of Calvinistic divines, have regarded it (the common depravity) as, in some measure and to some extent, explained by the principle of its being a penal infliction upon men, resulting from the imputation to them of the guilt of Adam’s first sin.” And further: “There is no view of God’s actings in this whole matter which at all accords with the actual, proved realities of the case, except that which represents him in the light of a just judge punishing sin—a view which implies that men’s want of original righteousness and the corruption of their whole nature have a penal character, are punishments righteously inflicted on account of sin. . . . And the only explanation which Scripture affords of this mysterious constitution of things is, that men have the guilt of Adam’s first sin imputed to them or charged against them, so as to be legally exposed to the penalties which he incurred.”[482] On the same question Dr. Shedd quotes with approval from the Formula Consensus Helvetici: “But it does not appear how hereditary corruption, as spiritual death, could fall upon the entire human race by the just judgment of God, unless some fault of this same human race bringing in the penalty of that death had preceded. For the most just God, the Judge of all the earth, punishes none but the guilty.” [483]While depravity is thus clearly set forth as a punishment on the ground of guilt, it is also declared in the same Formula that the guilt which justifies the penal infliction arises from a common participation in the sin of Adam. Dr. Shedd not only fully indorses this view, but places thisFormula at the head of all Calvinistic symbols of the sixteenth and

seventeenth centuries as the clearest and most scientific statement of the doctrine of original sin in its Adamic connection.[484] Here, then, in addition to the authority of this Formula, we have the testimony of two eminent Calvinistic authors, Cunningham and Shedd, who have made the history of doctrines a special study, who are in opposition respecting the mode of the common participation in the guilt of Adam's sin, who yet fully agree that Calvinism holds depravity to be a penal retribution on the ground of such guilt.

[482]Historical Theology, vol. i, pp. 511, 526.

[483]History of Christian Doctrine, vol. ii, p. 160.

[484]Ibid., p. 157.

3. Realistic and Representative Modes of Adamic Sin.—With the assertion of a common participation in the sin of Adam, and such a participation as justly subjects all men to the penal infliction of depravity, the question must arise as to the ground or mode of such participation. Some answer must be given. No theory could consent to a purely arbitrary implication of the race in the Adamic sin. There are two alleged modes, the realistic and the representative. The former alleges a real oneness of the race with Adam, in some higher or lower form of realism; the latter, a legal oneness under a law of representation. For the present we simply state the views. Full explication will be given with their discussion. Each is held by its advocates to be valid in principle, and sufficient for the common guilt and punishment.

Calvinists divide on these modes, though the representative is for the present the more prevalent view. The issue really involves two questions: Which is the Calvinistic theory? And, Which is the true theory? Many of the older Calvinistic divines alleged both modes of Adamic guilt, which fact naturally gives rise to the first question. In the contention both parties quote the same authors, as well they may, since said authors are on both sides. But it is unscientific, mere jumbling, indeed, to hold both modes, for they are in opposition and reciprocally exclusive. If both were valid, each mode must convey to every soul of the race the whole guilt of Adam's sin. This would make each twice as guilty as Adam himself. It is surely enough to be thus made equally guilty. Calvinistic divines are very properly coming to hold more exclusively to the one or the other mode.[485]

[485] On the realistic side, Shedd:History of Christian Doctrine, vol. ii, pp. 76-93;Dogmatic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 42-48, 181-192; Baird:Elohim Revealed, chap. xi. On the representative side,Princeton Essays, First Series, pp. 114-167; Wallace:Representative Responsibility.

4. Theory of the Genetic Transmission of Depravity.—This theory is based on the law of "like producing like"—the uniform law of propagated life. It holds sway over the most prolonged succession of generations, and is as fixed and permanent in the human species as in any other. Under this law man is now what he was in the earliest offspring of Adam, and what he has been through all the intermediate generations. As in physiological constitution and mental endowment he is thus the same, so is he the same in his moral state. This is a state of depravity genetically transmitted from the fallen and depraved progenitors of the race. Such is the account of the Adamic origin of the common depravity on the theory of genetic transmission.

5. Doctrinal Distinction of the Two Theories.—It should be remembered here that the theory of penal retribution, which accounts the common depravity a punishment on the ground of a common

participation in the sin of Adam, is but one theory, though its advocates divide into two classes respecting the mode of that participation. It will thus be clearly seen that we have in this section presented but two theories respecting the law of the Adamic origin of depravity. Their doctrinal distinction is easily stated, though for greater clearness we should keep entirely separate all questions respecting the intrinsic evil of depravity, or whether in itself it is truly sinful and. deserving of the divine wrath. Both theories hold, and equally, the Adamic origin of depravity. Both hold its connection with the sin of Adam through which he fell under the divine retribution and suffered the corruption of his own nature. So far the two theories are the same. Beyond this they differ widely. The one denies a responsible participation in the sin of Adam and the penal infliction of depravity on the race; the other affirms both.

These are fundamental theories, and must be separately treated —the Calvinistic in its two modes of accounting for the common Adamic sin which it alleges. They are the only fundamental theories. There is no place for a third, however many speculative or mixed theories may be devised. Whichever is the true one must contain the whole truth of the question.

098. III. Speculative Or Mixed Theories.

III. Speculative Or Mixed Theories. The Calvinistic anthropology involves serious perplexities, particularly in the tenets of a common participation in the sin of Adam and the penal infliction of depravity on that ground. The intrinsic sinfulness of depravity itself, as deserving in all an eternal penal retribution, deepens these perplexities. The division into the two modes of accounting for the common participation in the sin of Adam has a sufficient occasion in these perplexities. Some have thought the facts concerned more manageable or less perplexing on the realistic mode, while others for a like reason have favored the representative mode. Neither party pretends to a solution of the difficulties. In the view of some minds they are too great for the acceptance of either mode. Hence, with professed adherence to the Augustinian anthropology, other theories have been devised, but without any improvement of doctrine, while mostly definite tenets are replaced with speculations or mere assumptions. No light is given.

1. Mediate Imputation of Adamic Sin.—It has been attempted to replace the theory of immediate with that of mediate imputation. The former goes properly, in a strictly scientific sense exclusively, with the representative mode of the common Adamic sin. In all forms of the realistic mode every soul is held to be a responsible sharer in the sinning of Adam, and the imputation of the sin is mediated by that responsible participation. In the representative mode the race has no part in the sinning of Adam which mediates the imputation of his sin. Without any fault of the race, and before its corruption through the sin of Adam, the guilt of his sin is imputed, and thus immediately, to every soul.

It is not strange that some Calvinistic minds recoil from such a view. In such a recoil, Placaeus, an eminent Reformed theologian of Saumur, France, propounded, in the seventeenth century, the theory of mediate imputation. He began with an open denial of immediate imputation as a violation of justice. As such imputation in the very nature of it disclaims all participation of the race in the sinning of Adam, the immediate imputation of his sin to his offspring in a measure to constitute every soul as guilty as himself could not, in the view of Placaeus, be other than an injustice. His doctrine was widely assailed. There was more than individual hostility. The doctrine was soon condemned by the National Synod of France, and also by the Churches of Switzerland in the Formula Consensus Helvetici. Under this severe pressure, Placaeus propounded a doctrine of mediate or consequent imputation in place of the standard immediate or antecedent imputation.[486] There is a wide difference between the two theories. In the latter the imputation of sin precedes the common depravity and is the ground of its penal infliction; while in the former the imputation of sin is subsequent to the common depravity, and on that ground. With such a widely different theory Placaeus still professed adherence to the doctrine of imputation. Some received his doctrine with favor. Nor has it been without friends even to the present time. Some have claimed for its support the weighty authority of Edwards, though others dispute the claim. There is nothing in his discussion sufficiently definite to determine the question. Edwards was predominantly a realist on the Adamic connection of the race, and so far immediate imputation could have no consistent place in his doctrine.[487] Henry Rogers is one of the later advocates of

the doctrine.[488] [486] De Statu Hominis Lapsi ante Gratiam;De Imputatione Pnmi Peccati Adami.

[487]Works, pp. 481-495.

[488]Genius and Writings of Jonathan Edwards. The doctrine of Placaeus as stated by himself is not thoroughly clear. Nor have his critics brought it into clearness. There is no obscurity in the denial of immediate imputation, for that imputation has a well-defined sense in the Calvinistic anthropology. The lack of clearness comes with the assertion of mediate in place of immediate imputation. The latter means the imputation of Adam's sin antecedently to any fault or corruption of the race. Seemingly, therefore, mediate imputation, while in the order of thought subsequent to the common depravity and conditioned on it, should still include the accounting of the sin .of Adam to the race. Such a view, however, would be utterly inconsistent with the denial of immediate imputation as a violation of justice. The inheritance of the common depravity under a law of propagation could not constitute any ground of responsibility for the sin of Adam; and its imputation simply as mediated by that depravity would as fully violate justice as immediate imputation. "What remains of the theory of Placceus? Two things: the common depravity of the race as a genetic transmission, not as a punishment; the sinfulness and demerit of the inherited depravity. The first fact is the same as our second fundamental theory in accounting for the depravity of the race. The second fact is the common Calvinistic doctrine of the sinfulness and demerit of native depravity—a question quite apart from all questions respecting the ground of depravity. It thus appears that the theory of Placaeus differs from the Calvinistic anthropology only in the denial of the immediate imputation of Adam's sin; which, however, carries with it the denial that the common depravity is a penal infliction.[489]

[489] Cunningham:Reformers and the Theology of the Reformation, pp. 379-394; Shedd:History of Doctrines, vol. ii, pp. 158-163;Princeton Essays, First Series, essay viii.

2. Hypothetic Ground of the Imputation of Sin.—The theory thus expressed is technically styled Scientia Media Dei. It is this: God in his absolute prescience knew that any and every soul of the race, if placed in the state of Adam, would sin just as lie did; therefore he might justly and did actually impute the sin of Adam to every soul. This hypothetic sin is the ground on which the common, sinful depravity is judicially inflicted upon the race. Strange as the theory is, it has not been without favor. Its acceptance by any one presupposes two things: an unyielding adherence to the common guiltiness of Adam's sin, and a sense of intolerable difficulties in both the realistic and representative modes of accounting for such guiltiness. Surely its own difficulties are no less, while the hypothetic ground on which the sin of Adam is held to be imputed is the merest assumption. Who knows the alleged fact of the divine cognizance, that every soul of the race, if placed in the state of Adam, would sin just as he did? Even if a fact, it could not justify the universal, or even the most limited, imputation of his sin. Otherwise, we might all be held responsible for any and every sin which in any condition we might possibly commit. "But it is a new sort of justice, which would allow us to be punished for sins which we never committed, or never intended to commit, but only might possibly have committed under certain circumstances."[490] "If it were allowable to refer to some intermediate knowledge on God's part as a basis of imputing the guilt and condemnation of original sin to all men, we might with equal propriety argue that God could justly have introduced mankind at once into a state of misery or bliss, upon the ground of his foreknowledge that certain of them would voluntarily make themselves liable to the one or the

other destiny."[491] [490] Knapp:Christian Theology, p. 277.

[491]Muller:Christian Doctrine of Sin, vol. ii, p. 338. This theory gives no distinct law of the Adamic origin of depravity. Depravity itself is still a punishment, judicially inflicted on the ground of a common participation in the sin of Adam. The participation is in the mode of imputation, with a valueless, or even worse than valueless, change of its ground. The economy of representation is replaced with the purely hypothetic assumption respecting the cognizance of the divine prescience. If this assumption could be true, or even were true, a more baseless ground of imputation could not be imagined. It is worse than baseless; it would subvert the most sacred principles of moral government. So far from any relief from the perplexities of immediate imputation, it brings in far deeper perplexities.

3. Origin of Sin in a Pre-existent Life.—With the tenets of native depravity as a judicial infliction, and the sinfulness of depravity in a sense to deserve eternal punishment, the problem is to account for them. Confessedly, they are not explained to rational thought in any mode previously considered. In the view of some minds the only valid ground of guilt and punishment, in any strict judicial sense, must lie in a free, personal violation of duty. The realistic mode of accounting for the penal infliction of depravity might claim to justify itself on this principle, but could hardly pretend to such a claim respecting the alleged demerit of native depravity. Some, however, find no place for this principle in any form of realism; indeed, reject the whole theory. If such must still hold the native sinfulness of all men, there is for them no better resource than the theory of free, personal sinning in a previous state of existence. They would thus avoid the perplexities of the immediate imputation of Adam's sin, and theoretically secure the only principle which, in their view, can justify the common native sinfulness.

Some have adopted this view. The notion of a pre-existence of human souls has been far more extensive than its acceptance in order to avoid peculiar difficulties of the Augustinian anthropology. It holds a wide place in heathen religions, and appears in Grecian philosophy. It found a place in Jewish thought, as clearly implied in the question of our Lord's disciples: "Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind" (John 9:2)? Origen, of the third century, taught the doctrine. It is the theory of Edward Beecher's Conflict of Ages, and is maintained with special reference to the Augustinian anthropology. The eminent Julius Midler maintains it, and for the reason above stated, that only free, personal sinning can justify the sinful state in which he believed all men to be born. He could find no place for such sinning except in a conscious pre-existence of all human souls, and, therefore, accepted this view, that he might justify his theory of native sinfulness.[492] [492] Christian Doctrine of Sin, book iv, chap. iv. The theory is a purely speculative one. Midler himself so styles it, and freely concedes the absence of all direct proof in Scripture and consciousness.[493] In his view, as appears in his elaborate discussion, the whole proof lies in its necessity to a vindication of the divine justice in a common native sinfulness. There is native sinfulness. There cannot be sinfulness without free, personal violation of duty. Such action, as an account of native sinfulness, was possible to us only in a pre-existent state. Therefore we must have personally existed and freely sinned in such a state. This is the argument.

[493]Ibid., vol. ii, pp. 36, 396.

Native sinfulness, as maintained in the Augustinian anthropology, is not a problem to be solved in this purely speculative mode. Logical requirements are valid for truth only with validity in the premises. Very few accept both premises in this case. Many deny the native sinfulness in the sense assumed, and many deny the necessity of free, personal agency to such sinfulness. The former have no need of the interpretation which the theory offers, and therefore see no proof in its logical requirements; the latter would rather face the perplexities of the immediate imputation of sin than accept relief in this purely speculative mode. Very serious difficulties beset the theory in its relation to the Scriptures. It implies, and must admit, that our progenitors, just as their offspring, freely sinned in the pre-existence assumed, and therefore began their Edenic life in a sinful and fallen state.[494] This is plainly contrary to the Scriptures, in the sense of which, as we have previously shown, the beginning of this life was in innocence and subjective holiness. Again, as the Edenic state was strictly probationary in its moral and religious economy, this theory must assume a possible self-recovery of our progenitors from their fallen state; for such a probation intrinsically requires the possibility of righteousness in the fulfillment of its duties.[495] But it is the clear sense of Scripture that there is no self-recovery of sinners; indeed, that there is no recovery of such except through a redemptive economy. Further, while this theory holds that each soul is born in an evil state in consequence of free, personal sinning in a previous existence, it is the clear sense of Scripture, as previously shown, that this state of evil is the consequence of the Adamic fall in the Edenic probation. Finally, in view of the Adamic connection of the race as set forth in the Scriptures, this theory is constrained to admit a deeper corruption of our nature in consequence of the Adamic fall.[496] But if, as alleged, such corruption is itself sin, then, with the deeper corruption, each without any agency of his own has the deeper sin, and therefore in violation of the fundamental principle of Justice which the theory asserts. Thus it falls back into the deepest perplexity of the Augustinian anthropology, from which it has vainly attempted an escape in the mode of pre-temporal sinning.

[494]Muller:Christian Doctrine of Sin, vol. ii, p. 380.

[495]Ibid., p.382.

[496]Ibid., pp. 386, 387.

099. Chapter 9: Realistic Mode Of Adamic Sin.

Chapter 9 Realistic Mode Of Adamic Sin. With a general agreement of Calvinists, that native depravity is a judicial infliction on the ground of a common participation in the sin of Adam, there are, as previously stated, two leading modes of accounting for that participation: the realistic, and the representative. Many authors have appropriated both modes, and seemingly without any notice of their open contrariety. In recent times some have clearly seen their opposition and reciprocal exclusiveness, and more rigidly adhered to the one or the other. We may instance Shedd and Hodge, leading representatives respectively of the two theories.[497] When these theories previously came into notice they were merely stated, and their proper review is still on hand. They are so cardinal in anthropology that such review cannot with any propriety be omitted. We begin with the realistic theory.

[497]Shedd:Dogmatic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 15, 16, 38; Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, p. 164.

100. I. Generic Oneness Of The Race.

I. Generic Oneness Of The Race.

1. A Generic Human Nature.—The theory, in this view of it, has received no more definite statement than at the hand of Dr. Shedd. After citations from Augustine, as containing his own view, he proceeds: “These passages, which might be multiplied indefinitely, are sufficient to indicate Augustine’s theory of generic existence, generic transgression, and generic condemnation. The substance of this theory was afterward expressed in the scholastic dictum, ‘natura corrumpit personam’—human natureapostatizes—and the consequences appear in human individuals. In the order of nature, mankind exists before the generations of mankind; the nature is prior to the individuals produced out of it.”[498] [498] History of Christian Doctrine, vol. ii, pp. 77, 78. The doctrine is constructed upon the principle of the scholastic realism, according to which genera are objective realities, essential existences in distinction from the individuals which represent them. There are two forms of the doctrine respecting the relation of individuals to the generic nature. In the one view, individuals have no separate being in themselves, but are mere modes and manifestations of the generic nature. It is thus one in principle with the pantheism which reduces all things to mere modes of the one being. In the other view each individual has the essence of existence in itself, but that essence was previously in the generic nature, and is derived from it in a process of individuation whereby individuals receive their separate existence. Thus in the instance of any species or genus the total being of all the generations existed in the prior generic nature. The first oak contained the essence of all its generations; the first pair of lions contained the essential being of ail their progeny down to the present hour; the first man contained in himself the essence, material and spiritual, of all human generations. Thus the divine creations gave instant existence to genera and species, not in their serial forms, but in the sense of the whole nature out of which all individuals are produced. It should be specially noted that the prior existence of individuals in the generic nature is without any individuality even in its most rudimentary form. The generic nature is in itself a single, simple essence. It follows that the production of individuals out of such a nature, with separate and essential existence in themselves, requires in each instance the abscission or outgoing of so much of its substance as will constitute the separate existence. In the case of man, with a dichotomic view of his natures, there must be the separation of so much of the generic essence in the production of each person as will constitute the material and spiritual essence of his being. This is the doctrine maintained in the higher realism of the Augustinian anthropology. The other form which, as previously stated, reduces all individuals to mere modes of the one substance, and consequently allows them only a phenomenal existence, could not be brought into harmony with this anthropology. Its deepest tenets require the deepest reality of individual existence in every human person. Each man as a responsible person must possess in himself the reality of individual existence. Each man’s consciousness absolutely affirms such an existence. Therefore the theory of a mere phenomenal existence can have no proper place in Christian anthropology. It allows no distinctively spiritual nature in man. In assuming a merely modal or phenomenal existence of individual men, it must

assume a purely unitary substance as the common ground of all human personalities. This is too senseless for any acceptance in rational thought. It is the other form of realism, according to which the generic nature divides itself and distributes a portion to every individual of the race, that is appropriated in the Augustinian anthropology.[499] Thus each individual has his own essential being, separate and distinct from every other. The theory is constrained to qualify the generic nature, especially on its physical side. It could not be thought that the substance of all human bodies in its phenomenal and bulk form existed in the body of Adam. In this exigency the theory seizes upon the most restricted sense of substance, dismisses all visible qualities of matter, and holds as remaining only the invisible and metaphysical essence of its being.

[499]Shedd:Dogmatic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 63-65, 72-74, 78-80.

2. The Generic Nature Rational and Voluntary.—The generic human nature, considered in its purely metaphysical sense, could not commit the primitive sin. By a process of abstraction we may separate the substance of matter from its properties, but all that remains exists only in the abstraction of thought. There is no such matter in reality. If there were, it could fulfill no function of matter. This is Possible only with its properties. So, for the agent in the primitive sin we cannot stop with any abstract sense of mind. There must be the possession of personal faculties, as necessary to any moral action. Accordingly, the generic human nature is promptly invested with such faculties. “But this human nature, it must be carefully noticed, possesses all the attributes of the human individual; for the individual is only a portion and specimen of the nature. Considered as an essence, human nature is an intelligent, rational, and voluntary essence; and accordingly its agency in Adam partakes of the corresponding qualities.”[500] [500] Shedd:History of Christian Doctrine, vol. ii, p. 78.

3. Adam the Generic Nature.—This higher realism often proceeds in a manner to suggest the existence of the generic human nature prior to Adam himself. In this view he must be accounted simply as its first individualized specimen or part in the historic development of the species. In accordance with this view there is in the citation given just above a characterization of the agency of this nature in Adam. The Scriptures, however, so connect the moral state of the race with the sin of Adam that this realistic theory cannot dispose of him simply as an individualized form of the generic nature, with the only distinction from other individualized forms that he was the first. The only alternative is to account Adam the generic human nature, and the race as individualized portions of himself. This is the view taken: “Adam, as the generic man, was not a mere receptacle containing millions of separate individuals. The genus is not an aggregation, but a single, simple essence. As such, it is not yet characterized by individuality. It, however, becomes varied and manifold by being individualized in its propagation, or development into a series. . . . The individual, as such, is consequently only a subsequent modus existendi, the first and antecedent mode being the generic humanity, of which this subsequent serial mode is only another aspect or manifestation.”[501] In a similar view, Baird holds that the creation of Adam was the creation of the human species.[502] Theoretically, this view most thoroughly identifies the race in a real oneness with Adam.

[501]Shedd:Theological Essays, p. 352.

[502]The Elohim Revealed, p. 133.

4. The Agent in the Primitive Sin.—The theory is obvious and easily stated at this point. The leading facts are the same, whether the race is located in Adam or in a generic nature back of him. There must in either case be the same endowment of personal qualities. The generic nature, possessing all the necessary faculties of personal agency, was capable of moral action, and in the use of such powers did most responsibly commit the primitive sin. It so committed this sin while yet containing in itself, or, rather, being in itself, the whole substance of the human race. This is the doctrine maintained.

5. All Men a Part in the Sinning.—A common participation in the primitive sin is maintained on the ground that all men existed in Adam when he committed that sin. We have previously seen the mode of that existence, as maintained in this higher realism. It was not in a mere germinal or seminal mode, as embodied in a lower form of realism—a form to be separately considered. A merely germinal or seminal existence in Adam lacks the identity with his very being which is necessary to a responsible part in his sinning. The essential being of the whole race then existed in Adam, and without any individuality even in the most rudimentary sense. Our separate personal existence is by the abscission and individualization of so much of his very being as constitutes the essential existence of each one of the race. As so existing in Adam, we participated in the primitive sin. Indeed, it may as truly be said that we committed that sin as that Adam himself committed it. This is the theory. This doctrine is maintained with much elaboration and asserted with frequent repetition. A few citations may suffice where many are possible. “Adam differed from all other human individuals by containing within his person the entire human nature out of which the millions of generations were to be propagated, and of which they are individualized portions. He was to transmit this human nature which was all in himself, exactly as it had been created in him; for propagation makes no radical changes, but simply transmits what is given in the nature, be it good or bad.”[503] The consequences are then drawn upon the supposition of obedience or sin in Adam. In the former case the result would have been the perfect holiness of every individual of the race. In the actual case of sin there necessarily follows the sinfulness of every man as an individualized portion of the generic nature which sinned in Adam. “The individuals produced out of it must be characterized by a sinful state and condition.”

[503]Shedd:History of Christian Doctrine, vol. ii, p. 118.

“The aim of the Westminster symbol accordingly, and, it may be added, of all the creeds on the Augustinian side of the controversy, was to combine two elements, each having truth in it—to teach the fall of the human race as a unity, and, at the same time, recognize the existence, freedom, and guilt of the individual in the fall. Accordingly, they locate the individual in Adam, and make him, in some mysterious but real manner, a responsible partaker in Adam’s sin—a guilty sharer, and, in some solid sense of the word, co-agent in a common apostasy.”[504] Whether the more prevalent Calvinistic view accords with this passage is a question in which Calvinists themselves are far more concerned than others. It forcibly expresses the realistic ground of a common participation in the sin of Adam. “The total guilt of the first sin, thus committed by the entire race in Adam, is imputed to each individual of the race, because of theindivisibility of guilt. . . . For though the one common nature that committed the ‘one offense’ is divisible by propagation, the offense itself is not divisible, nor is the guilt of it. Consequently, one man is as guilty as another of the whole first sin—of the original act of falling from God. The individual Adam and Eve were no more guilty of this first act, and of the whole of it, than their descendants are; and their

descendants are as guilty as they."[505] We have sufficiently stated the realistic ground of a common participation in the sin of Adam. We have seen in the last citation the measure of the common guilt. Each individual of the race is held to be as guilty as Adam himself. This is one of the leading modes in which the Augustinian anthropology maintains the consistency of a common native sinfulness with the divine justice and goodness.

[504]Shedd:Theological Essays, pp. 252, 253.

[505]Shedd:Dogmatic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 185, 186.

101. II. Objections To The Theory.

II. Objections To The Theory.

1. Groundless Assumption of a Generic Nature.—Realism itself is a mere assumption, and, as a philosophy, has long been replaced with conceptualism. General terms express general notions or conceptions, but not objective realities. There is no vegetable nature apart from its individual forms of existence, no animal nature apart from individuals. There is no existent human nature apart from individual men. In the organic realm all actual existence is in individual forms. Nominalism is right in such limitation of actual existence, though wrong in the denial of general notions as realities of mental conception. Realism is right in the admission of general notions, but wrong in the assertion of objective existences in accord with these notions. There are no such existences. Hence, there is no generic human nature.

Realism, however, exists in different forms, and is variously appropriated in doctrinal anthropology.[506] This being the case, fairness requires that in any criticism respect should be had to the particular form in which it is maintained. In the present instance the form has been definitely given. The creation of Adam was the creation of the whole human species, not in its individualities, but in its substantive existence. Adam contained in himself this whole substance. In the mode of propagation it is distributed in a manner to constitute the essential existence of each individual. The theory applies to both the physical and mental natures of man. The two are spoken of as a complex, but certainly not with the intention of sinking their distinction or reducing them to unity. Their distinction is fully recognized.

[506]Ueberweg:History of Philosophy, vol. i, pp. 358-402. Did the substance of all human bodies exist in that of Adam? Certainly not in the form and bulk of flesh and blood. This is not maintained. In place of such a nature there is posited a form of matter without bodily properties, unphenomenal and metaphysical in its mode. The existence of such a form of matter in Adam is a mere assumption. It certainly does not appear in the account of his creation (Genesis 2:7). His body was formed from the dust of the ground; and there is no suggestion of any other form of matter than science now recognizes in the constitution of the human body. In such a oneness of all human bodies with that of Adam, a portion of his body must exist in every one as its proper substance. Otherwise there is no realistic oneness with him. Any element of the body not originally of the substance of Adam is utterly useless in such a realism. In no reference of Scripture to the constitution of the human body is there any intimation of such a specific substance. Neither physics, nor chemistry, nor physiology knows any thing of it. Its existence in Adam and its individualizations into innumerable parts, so as to constitute the substantive reality of all human bodies, are pure assumptions. The theory of a generic spiritual nature created in Adam, which served as a personal mind in himself, and by successive abscissions furnishes the essence of every personal mind, is equally groundless. No direct proof is offered. Little indirect proof is even attempted. It may attempt a defense of itself by charging other theories of .the origin of individual souls with equal mystery and perplexity: as, for instance, the theory of their creation in Adam and

propagation from him; or, that of their immediate and successive creations along with the propagations of the race. If all that is thus alleged is true, not an atom of proof is thus gained for this form of realism. After all that may be said either in its support or defense, it must remain a groundless speculation.

2. Impossible Individuation into the Many.—Such realism in theological anthropology requires the generic human nature to be invested with personal faculties. It must have originally existed in personality, for else it could not have committed the primitive sin. We have previously seen the full recognition of these facts, and the prompt and unreserved investment of the generic nature with personal faculties. Its individuation into the many, into the innumerable personalities of the race, is thus rendered impossible. As personally endowed and capable of free and responsible moral agency, the generic nature, on its mental side, must have existed in simple unity of spiritual essence and personality. Neither is divisible or distributable into the many. It will hardly be pretended that personality can be so treated, though it is claimed that the spiritual essence may be. How can the essence be divided without dividing or destroying the personality? Personality arises with the complex of personal faculties. The faculties are intrinsic to the spiritual essence. All distinction of essence and faculty is purely in thought. No loose connection can be allowed, which might meet the exigency of this form of realism. The whole mental essence is present in every mental faculty und active in every mental action. How then can the essence be divided without dividing or destroying the personality? This very serious difficulty presses the theory not only in respect to generic Adam, but equally in every instance of subdivision of essence in all the individual propagations of the race.

There is no escape from such difficulty through an assumption that only a small portion of the generic spiritual essence, just enough for the constitution of a single person, belonged to the personality of Adam and was active in his agency. Such an assumption would be openly contradictory to the deepest principles of the theory. It maintains the universal native sinfulness, in the double sense of corruption and guilt, on the ground that the whole generic spiritual essence was present and active in the sinning of Adam. Hence, as all human souls are individualized portions of that generic soul, they had a responsible part in the Adamic sin, are actually guilty of that sin, and justly punishable on that ground. These are the vital facts of the theory; and with no one of these can it part without self-destruction. It remains true that the generic spiritual essence in Adam, as held in this theory, existed and acted in the purest form of personality. Hence the theory cannot void the insuperable difficulties which beset the notion of its division and distribution into the innumerable personalities of the race. A statue in metal might be fused and recast into many, but only with the destruction of the original and a diminution of size according to the number of the new; but a spiritual essence existing in the mode of personality cannot be the subject of such treatment.[507] [507] Per contra, Shedd:Dogmatic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 83-87.

3. Equally Sharers in all Ancestral Deeds.—We put this objection in the broadest application, and maintain that, if on the ground of a real oneness with Adam we are responsible sharers in the primitive sin, we must equally share all the sins, and all the good deeds as well, of all our intermediate ancestors. A like objection, but of narrow application, is put thus: If on the ground of a real oneness with Adam and Eve we are responsible sharers in their first sin, so must we share all their subsequent sins. The objection is logically pertinent only with respect to such sins as were committed before the division of the generic nature through propagation and the formation of

separate parental headships. After such disconnection there could be no responsible sharing in their sins. The objection, however, is thoroughly valid respecting sins previously committed. A refutation of the objection so brought is attempted in this manner: “The reply is that the sinful acts of Adam and Eve after the fall differed from the act of eating the forbidden fruit in two respects: 1. They were transgressions of the moral law, not of the probationary statute. 2. They were not committed by the entire race in and with Adam.”[508] [508] Ibid., p. 88. The answer in the second point is utterly void within the limitation of the objection as above stated. On the truth of the theory, the whole race must have existed in Adam and shared in all his acts, prior to the division of the generic nature by propagation, just as completely as in the primitive sin. The answer in the first point is equally void. There is no difference between a moral law and a probationary statute, or between the transgression of the one and the other, which can in the least affect the ground of a common responsibility, as it is maintained in this theory. It is not that the Edenic law was positive in kind and probationary in economy, that all men are held to be responsible sharers with Adam in its transgression, but because all then existed in the very essence of his being, and therefore must share in his sin. Hence, as the same form of existence in Adam continued until a division of the generic nature through propagation, all men must have shared in every previous sin of Adam just as deeply as in his first sin. The theory of representation might insist upon the probationary office of the Edenic law as affecting the question of our responsibility for any other sins of Adam; but for the realistic theory, such insistence is the surrender of its deepest principle. A further reply utterly fails. To the objection that as the whole human nature remained in Adam and Eve until a division in the propagation of Cain, therefore all their previous sins as really as the first must be charged to their posterity, “the reply is that the imputation, even in this case, would not lie upon any individual persons of the posterity, for there are none, but only upon the non-individualized nature. These personal transgressions of Adam, if charged at all, could be charged only upon the species.”[509] True:

[509]Shedd:Dogmatic Theology, vol. ii, p. 90. there were no individual persons of the posterity in that interval of time; and no more were there any at the time of the first sin; and in both cases the relation between Adam and his posterity was precisely the same; and the first sin, just as the later sins, must be charged to the generic nature, because as yet no individualized persons existed.

We have put the same objection more broadly: that, on the truth of this realistic theory and the reality of a responsible part of each in the primitive sin, we are all responsible sharers in all the deeds of our ancestors in the long line of descent from Adam, This position is maintained on the ground that, according to this realistic theory, we existed in each ancestor in this long line of descent in precisely the same manner in which we existed in Adam. If that manner of existence made us sharers in his sin, it must equally make us sharers in the sins, and in the good deeds as well, of all our ancestors. In the division of the generic nature through propagation, in each instance there was communicated, not only enough for the new personality, but enough more for an indefinite number of further individualizations into personalities. This law must rule the whole process of propagation. The theory requires it, and without it would become a nullity. “The specific nature was a deposited invisible substance in the first human pair. . . . As thus deposited by creation in Adam and Eve, it was to be transmitted. In like manner, every individual man along with his individuality receives, not, as Adam did, the whole of human nature, but a fraction of it, to transmit and individualize.”[510] Thus in the long line of human parentage each one receives from

Adam, through his own ancestry, a non-individualized portion of the generic human nature, which he transmits through propagation. Every one possesses the portion transmitted to him in the same manner in which Adam possessed the whole. This is the theory. If it is true, it follows that every man is a sharer in all the moral deeds of his ancestry in the long line of descent from Adam.

[510]Shedd:Dogmatic Theology, vol. ii, p. 90. No answer voids this consequence. The attempts signally fail. “All individuals excepting the first two include each but a fractional part of human nature. A sin committed by a fraction is not a sin committed by the whole unity. Individual transgression is not the original transgression, or Adam’s first sin.”[511] In truth, the original unity of the generic nature was severed in the creation of Eve, so that no one sin, not even the first, was committed by that whole nature. Hence this theory must admit that the presence of the whole generic nature in any one sin is not necessary to a responsible sharing therein on the part of the sinner’s offspring. Therefore this answer to our objection, which proceeds upon the assumption of a determining distinction between the whole generic nature and only a part of it as it respects the consequence of sin to the offspring of the sinner, is utterly groundless. Further answer must be attempted. That portion of the generic nature which each person receives with his own propagation, “and which he transmits, does not act with him and sin with him in his individual transgressions. It is a latent nature or principle which remains in a quiescent state, in reference to his individuality. It is inactive, as existing in him.”[512] All this is easily said; but what is the warrant for saying it? No reason is given for the alleged inactivity of that portion of the generic nature which each one receives for further individualization and transmission. We have previously seen that just as the whole was originally deposited in Adam, so a part is deposited in each individual; and, also, that the individual possesses the part in the same manner and for the same purpose of transmission that Adam possessed the whole. As the whole existed in Adam in a simple unity of spiritual essence, so the portion exists in each individual in the same unity. If the whole was active in the agency of Adam so as to constitute all men sharers in his sin, the whole part must be active in the agency of the individual and constitute his progeny, even to the latest generation, sharers in his moral deeds.

[511]Ibid., p. 91.

[512]Ibid., p. 92. The results are singular and startling; in some facts, appalling. All the descendants of Abraham in the line of Isaac shared in the faith which was accounted to him for righteousness (Romans 4:3; Galatians 3:6); and were as really as Isaac offered up by faith (Hebrews 11:17). Solomon shared in his own father’s adultery, and equally in his profound repentance. These instances are given simply as illustrations of the principle. The principle rules every individual life. What any one is through his own deeds in the present life is as nothing compared with what he is through a responsible participation in the deeds of his ancestors. The number of such deeds is beyond conception. And what a mixture of the good and the bad, the noble and the vile! deeds of every quality, and running through every grade of every quality! And how often must every one have been lost in sharing the sins of some ancestors, and saved in sharing the repentance and faith of others! As this theory is usually maintained, the appalling implication is that every one begins the present life with the accumulation upon his soul of all the sins of all his ancestors in the long line of his descent from Adam. There must be error in such a theory.

4. No Responsible Part in the Primitive Sin.—The ground on which this theory maintains a responsible sharing of all men in the primitive sin should be restated in connection with the present point. “The first sin of Adam, being a common, not an individual sin, is deservedly and justly imputed to the posterity of Adam upon the same principles upon which all sin is deservedly and justly imputed; namely, that it was committed by those to whom it is imputed.”[513] The statement proceeds with the assumption of free agency, “the free agency of all mankind in Adam,” as the ground of their responsible sharing in his sin. “This agency, though differing in the manner, is yet as real as the subsequent free agency of each individual.” The whole generic human nature existed in Adam, and was present and active in the commission of his sin.

[513]Shedd:Dogmatic Theology, vol. ii, p, 186. This generic nature, simply as such, could not sin. Adam could sin only in his own personal agency, and the whole guilt of his sin was his own personal guilt. If it should be said that he was so much the greater in himself, and his guilt so much the greater, because of the presence of the whole generic nature in him, and if all this were true, it could not change the facts as above stated. It is still true, that a nature, simply in itself or without personalization, can exercise no personal agency; still true that the whole agency in the primitive sin was the personal agency of Adam himself, and the whole guilt his own. Hence, when it is said, as it often is, and as the theory requires, that the whole generic nature was present and active in Adam, the meaning must be, if there is any meaning, to the purpose, that that whole nature was personalized in him—just as any individualized portion which constitutes the spiritual essence of an individual man must be personalized in him. The theory must accept this view, or else surrender all ground of pretension even, that the whole generic nature was responsibly active in the sinning of Adam. The result gives us a wonderful Adam; an Adam who possessed in his own personality all the spiritual essence out of which, by a ceaseless process of abscission, are produced all individual minds of the race, even to the last man. He should have been far greater than he was; greater even than the infinitely exaggerated Adam of an earlier theology. He appears in no such greatness. A very serious difficulty again emerges. The theory must answer for the individualization of this Adam into the innumerable personalities of the race. He exists and acts in a simple unity of personality, just as any other individual man. The presence of the whole generic nature in him does not change this fact. To say that it does is to sunder that nature from his personality, and consequently to deny it all and any part in the Adamic sin. The most fundamental principle of the theory would thus be surrendered. The theory must answer for the requisite individualizations of such, an Adam. The task is an impossible one. The division and distribution of a spiritual essence, considered simply as an essence, into the innumerable personalities of the race transcends the utmost reach of human philosophy. The notion of such a division and distribution of such an essence, already existing in personality and active in personal agency, is utterly aberrant from all rational thinking upon such a question. The existence of the generic nature in Adam is held for the sake of its distribution into all human persons, that they may be accounted responsible sharers in his sin. The difficulties of the distribution disprove it, and consequently disprove the whole theory. This is not the whole case against the theory. Neither the existence of the generic nature in Adam, nor its division and personalization in all men, nor both together could make them guilty sharers in his sin. The reason is that on neither supposition, nor on both together, was there in them the personal agency necessary to such participation. Nor do we here attempt to force upon the theory any principle not its own. It affirms the participation of all men in the guilt of Adam’s sin, on the ground that all participated in its commission, and by the exercise of

a personal agency just as real and free as any which they possess and exercise in their individual existence. In previous citations we have given repeated declarations of this principle. One appears under the present head. It is thus admitted that free personal agency is necessary to the commission of sin, and that all men can share the guilt of the first sin only on the ground of sharing its commission. This is an accepted principle of this higher realism. There was no such participation of all men in the primitive sin. The alleged ground of it is utterly inadequate. The determining facts of the question clearly show this.

“For the individuals Adam and Eve were self-conscious. So far as they were concerned, the first sin was a very deliberate and intensely willful act. The human species existing in them at that time actedin their act, and sinned in their sin, similarly as the hand or eye acts and sins in the murderous or lustful act of the individual soul. The hand or the eye has no separate self-consciousness of its own, parallel with the soul’s self-consciousness. Taken by itself, it has no consciousness at all. But its union andoneness with the self-conscious soul, in the personal union of soul and body, affords all the self-consciousness that is possible in the case. The hand is co-agent with the soul, and hence is particeps criminis, and has a common guilt with the soul. In like manner the psychico-physical human nature existing in Adam and Eve had no separate self-consciousness parallel with that of Adam and Eve. Unlike the visible hand or eye, it was an invisible substance or nature capable of being transformed into myriads of self-conscious individuals; but while in Adam, and not yet distributed and individualized, it had no distinct self-consciousness of its own, any more than the hand or eye in the supposed case. But existingand acting in and with these self-conscious individuals, it participated in their self-determination, and is chargeable with their sin, as the hand, and eye, and whole body is chargeable with the sin of the individual man. As in the instance of the individual unity, every thing that constitutes it, body as well as soul, is active and responsible for all that is done by this unity, so in the instance of the specific unity, every thing that constitutes it, namely, Adam and the human nature in him, is active and responsible for all that is done by this unity.”[514] We have given this passage at such length that the determining facts of the question might stand in the clearest light.

[514]Shedd:Dogmatic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 191, 192. The illustrations of the realistic position are first in place for criticism. Neither the hand nor the eye is a guilty sharer in any sin because a bodily member of the person sinning. Neither is capable of guilt or of any moral act. The hand, for instance: what part has it in the murderous deed supposed? The murder is wholly the deed of the personal agent, and his hand is as purely instrumental to his agency as the knife with which he makes the deadly thrust. Let the hand be amputated and cast away: could it still be guilty? As well count the dagger guilty. Yet, on the principles and requirements of this theory, it ought still to be guilty. The fallacy begins with the assumption of a union and oneness of the hand with the self-conscious soul. There is no such union and oneness of the two. Nor can the hand be a co-agent with the soul, and for the reason that it is capable of no such agency. Nor can it be a particeps criminis in any sin of the soul. A particeps criminis is an actual sinner, and must have in himself the power of sinning. The same facts must be true of the hand if in any instance it is a particeps criminis. They cannot be true of the hand. The illustration betrays the weakness of the realistic position.

We may readily agree that, if the generic nature—that out of which all individual souls are produced—existed in Adam and Eve at the time of the first sin, it “is chargeable with their sin, as the hand, and eye, and whole body is chargeable with the sin of the individual man,” for that is not to be chargeable at all. Whatever the theory may assert respecting the presence of the generic nature with the personal Adam, it must ever distinguish the two and hold the separability of the latter from the former. As so separated, it is simply a nature, without personality until distributed and personalized in individual men. It is a fundamental part of this theory that every man, even from the first moment of his individual existence, is sinful. But the individualization of the generic nature into new personalities does not change its character. This is explicitly affirmed. Hence, if guilty as soon as individualized, the nature itself, and simply as such, must have been constituted guilty by the sin of Adam. But guilt is a purely personal fact, and has no ground in a mere nature. The guilt of Adam’s sin was purely personal to himself, and could no more become the guilt of a generic nature in him than the hand of a murderer could share the guilt of his crime. The theory is that the sin of Adam constituted the whole generic nature guilty, and, further, that, on the division of this nature into the innumerable individuals of the race, every one is as guilty of that sin as Adam himself. Such facts utterly disprove the theory.

102. III. A Lower Form Of Realism.

III. A Lower Form Of Realism.

There is a lower form of realism on which a common participation in the sin of Adam is maintained. While differing in some respects from the higher realism, it is yet so similar in its leading principles and facts that a much briefer discussion will suffice.

1. Definitive Statement of the Theory.—It is grounded on the principle of a germinal or seminal existence of the race in Adam. Whether such form of existence included both body and soul is often left without any definite statement. This is specially the case respecting the latter. It may safely be said that the body is always included, but whether the soul is included is often left an open question. In the distinction of theories this theory is popularly called traducian; but it cannot be so called in precisely the same sense as the higher realism. The reason is that it holds a very different mode of existence in Adam. In the higher realism this existence, as we have previously shown, is in the mode of a unitary generic nature, without any individualization even in the most germinal or rudimentary form; so that the propagation of the race is by a ceaseless abscission of portions of that nature. In the lower, the existence of the race in Adam is with such individualizations as always characterize seminal or germinal entities, and the propagation is through their communication and development. Some hold the immediate creation of the soul on occasion of the propagation of the body. In such case the theory is traducian only with respect to the body, and creational with respect to the soul. The notion of a germinal existence of the race in Adam as the ground of a common participation in his sin very often appears in the literature of the Augustinian anthropology. The conception finds its most frequent illustration in the relation subsisting between the root and the branches of a tree, and between the head and members of the body. One instance may suffice. “We say that Adam, being the root and head of all human kind, and we all branches from that root, all parts of that body whereof he was the head, his will may be said to be ours. We were then all that one man—we were all in him, and had no other will but his; so that though that be extrinsic unto us, considered as particular persons, yet it is intrinsical, as we are all parts of one common nature. As in him we sinned, so in him we had a will of sinning.”[515] This citation is, at once, a clear statement of the theory and a justification of our own statement.

[515]Owen: Works (Goold’s), vol. x, p. 73.

2. Doctrinal Aim of the Theory.—The aim is the same as in the higher form of realism ; namely, so to identify the offspring of Adam in a real oneness with himself in the primitive transgression that they may be justly chargeable with a guilty participation in that sin. This is so clearly the case that no further explication is required.

3. The Theory Inadequate to the Aim.—The offspring of Adam cannot in this mode be identified with him in a responsible oneness. A careful inspection of the illustrations readily discovers the inadequacy of the ground for any such identification.

Here is, first, the relation of all men to Adam in the primitive sin as illustrated by the relation of the body and its members to the head. In this illustration the head represents the personality. The members of the body are subject to the head, but only as instruments of its agency. If the head sins, no member shares the sinning. No one either chooses the evil or executes the choice. The attempt to distribute the responsibility to the members of the body severally, after locating it entirely in the head, is a fruitless endeavor. The primitive sin was an act of free personal agency, and could not else have been a sin. That agency was wholly in Adam. We had no such existence in him as made us sharers in his personal act or in the guilt of his sin. Indeed, we had less identity with him than exists between the members of the body and the head. In this case there is an organic union and a resulting bodily unity. There is no answering identity of mankind with Adam through the mode of their primordial existence in him. Even their bodies were not organically one with his body, just as the acorns which an oak bears were not organically one with itself. Much less could we have been so one with him in personality as to share in his personal agency and in the guilt of his sin.

Equally useless is the figure of the tree for the purpose of showing a responsible oneness of the race with Adam in the primitive sin. The root is representatively the personal agent. The branches which exist germinally in the root, and because of such an existence, must be so identified with it as to be responsible sharers in its sinful agency. In like manner all men, as branches from the Adamic root, must be so identified with the personal Adam as to be responsible sharers in the primitive sin. No ground is disclosed for such participation. The branches might suffer from the sin of the root, but could not share its sin and guilt. The first sin was from the personal agency of Adam. That agency was his own, and could not be shared by all men through the mode of a mere germinal existence in him. Distinct personal agency conditions sinful action. Indeed, this is conceded in all attempts to identify the race in a real and responsible oneness with Adam. In this all attempts fail. This lower realism signally fails. The assumed germinal entities, if really existent in Adam and subsequently developed into the personalities of the race, had no personal existence in him. Therefore they could not share either the act or the guilt of his sin. The passage above cited from Owen is constructed as an argument for the theory which is maintained; but close inspection discovers in it serious logical deficiencies, the pointing out of which will further show the groundlessness of the theory. The argument starts with the assumption of a rudimentary existence of all men in Adam, and respecting the soul as well as the body. Whether the soul so existed in Adam is still an open question with theologians. Augustine himself was always in serious doubt of it. Calvin rejected it, and the Reformed theologians mostly agreed with him. It has no place in any church creed.[516] When so doubtful a principle takes the vital place of a logical premise the whole argument must be weak. On the ground of such an assumed existence in Adam the argument proceeds: “his will may he said to be ours.” May be said! Many things may be said without proper warrant for the saying. With a doubtful premise and a merely hypothetic inference as the best support that can be given to the theory, its weakness is manifest. There is no ground for even this hypothetic inference. Such an actual existence in Adam could in no sense and requirement of the theory make his will our own. We had no part in his sin which this hypothetic possession of his will is intended to express. Hence the theory, as set forth in this argumentative statement, utterly fails to furnish any adequate ground for a common participation in the sin of Adam. No stronger statement can be made with any logical warrant.

[516]There are three theories respecting the origin of the soul:

1. The theory of pre-existence. This theory holds the existence of souls in a conscious and responsible mode anterior to their birth into the present life. It has no necessary distinction from other theories respecting the origin of the soul in a divine creation, but differs from them in placing that creation anterior to the present life. This is all that is peculiar to the theory respecting the origin of the soul.

2. Creationism. This theory holds the creation of souls along with the process of propagation. The body is propagated, but the soul is an immediate creation, either at the inception of the body or during its growth.

3. Traducianism, This theory holds the creation of all souls in Adam, and, consequently, the propagation of the soul with the body. Theologians divide on these theories—mainly on the last two. Nor is there any unanimity of view in any great school of theology. Some Augustinians are creationists ; others, traducianists. The same is true of Arminians.

103. IV. Objections To The Lower Realism.

IV. Objections To The Lower Realism. In addition to the objections presented in the discussion of this theory, a few special objections should be stated.

1. Implication of Seminal Guilt.—The theory clearly has this implication. The common guilt is charged to the account of a seminal existence in Adam when he committed the first sin, and solely on that ground. The development of the seminal entities then in him into a personal mode of existence is in no sense the ground or condition of the guilt. This is the theory. It follows that we must have been guilty in our seminal state. The mode of existence on which the guilt is grounded was then complete. If not guilty then, we could not be guilty now. The result utterly discredits the theory. There is no subject of guilt below personality; and the notion that all human souls, existing in Adam in a mere rudimentary mode, could in that state be guilty of his sin, and the subject of the divine wrath, is too preposterous for the utmost credulity.

2. Guilty of All Ancestral Sins.—This objection is the same in principle as one urged against the higher realism. It is as thoroughly valid in this case as in that, and equally weighs against the lower realism. In the inevitable logic of facts the theory has this consequence. It cannot be voided by declaring Adam a public person, while the relation of every subsequent father is merely individual. Such a declaration replaces the realistic ground of guilt with the representative—an entirely different ground, as we have previously pointed out. The surrender of a theory is a very poor way of defending it. Nor is there any escape through such a progenitorship of Adam that all souls existed in him, while only a part existed in any later parentage. It is not the totality of existence in Adam that is the ground of the alleged guilt, but the fact and mode of that existence. The mode is precisely the same in all subsequent parentages as in Adam himself. Benjamin existed in Jacob, and Jacob in Isaac in the very mode in which each existed in Adam. If the principle is valid in the one case, so is it in all others. If guilty of Adam’s sin because then seminally in him, we must be guilty of all the sins of our ancestors committed while seminally in them. Augustine saw this consequence, and admitted its probable reality, though with hesitation.[517] Well might he hesitate to accept the result of such an accumulation of sin upon every human soul. The theory which inevitably involves such a consequence must be false.

[517]Wiggers:Augustinism and Pelagianism, pp. 284, 285.

3. Repentance and Forgiveness of the Race in Adam.—If Adam repented, as generally agreed, he was graciously forgiven. Then, if so really one with him as to be sharers in his sin, on the same ground we should equally share his repentance. If we still existed in him in the same manner as when he sinned, no reason can be given why we should not Just as fully share his repentance as his sin. It follows that, on such a repentance, our own in the same moral sense in which it was his, we should have been graciously forgiven with him. Why then should native depravity be inflicted as a punishment on the ground of a common participation in the guilt of Adam’s sin, when the whole ground of its infliction was removed before the propagation of the race? No reason can be given for such infliction; which, however, the theory fully holds. Indeed, all the reason of the case is

against it. It is plain, in the view of such facts, that the implications of the theory cannot be adjusted to its principles. Hence these implications witness against its truth. The theory of a realistic oneness of the race with Adam in no form of it offers sufficient ground for a common participation in his sin, or for the judicial infliction of native depravity upon the race.

104. Chapter 10: Representative Mode Of Adamic Guilt.

Chapter 10 Representative Mode Of Adamic Guilt. This is the second leading mode in which a common participation in the sin of Adam is maintained as the ground of a judicial infliction of depravity upon the race. It is so cardinal in itself, and so different from the realistic theory, as to require separate treatment. It may be observed that in the present formula we place the word guilt where in the previous one we placed the word sin. There is in the difference of the two theories a reason for this change. In the realistic theory all men are held to have participated in the commission of the primitive sin, so that it is their own as really as it was Adam’s; while in the representative there was no actual participation in that sin, but only a sharing in its guilt. This distinction will more fully appear in the discussion of the present question.

105. I. Legal Oneness Of The Race.

I. Legal Oneness Of The Race.

1. Federal Headship of Adam.—The theory is that God instituted a covenant with Adam whereby he was constituted federal head and representative of the race in the primitive probation. This federal headship constituted a moral or legal oneness of the race with Adam; so that the legal consequence of his conduct under the law of probation, and whether good or bad, might justly be reckoned to them. His obedience should thus be accounted to them as their obedience, or his transgression as their transgression. In this sense the probation and fall of Adam were the probation and fall of the race. Hence the guilt of his sin could be justly accounted to them.[518]

[518] Witsius:The Covenants, vol. i, chap, ii; Wallace:Representative Responsibility, discourse i; Cunningham:Theology of the Reformation, essay vii, sec. ii; Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 121, 197.

2. Immediate Imputation of His Sin.—After the representative headship of Adam, there is still the question of the manner in which all men share his sin. It is not theirs intrinsically or immediately, as from an actual sharing in the sin, but becomes theirs by a judicial act of divine imputation. This imputation, however, carries over to them neither the act nor the demerit of Adam's sin, but only its guilt as an amenability to punishment. It is proper to justify this statement from Calvinistic authorities. In this manner the doctrine will receive fuller explication. In the earlier Calvinian anthropology, largely realistic and often jumbling the two modes of Adamic guilt, the immediate imputation of the first sin to the human race was greatly lacking in clearness of treatment. In later times, and with a more thorough distinction of the two modes of guilt, this imputation has received very exact statement at the hand of masters in the representative school. "Adam was constituted by God the representative and federal head of his posterity, so that his trial or probation was virtually and in God's estimation . . . the trial or probation of the human race; and that thus the transgression of Adam became, in a legal and judicial sense, and without any injustice to them, theirs, so that they were justly involved in its proper consequences."[519] "In virtue of the union, federal and natural, between Adam and his posterity, his sin, although not their act, is so imputed to them that it is the judicial ground of the penalty threatened against him coming also upon them. This is the doctrine of immediate imputation." "And when it is said that the sin of Adam is imputed to his posterity, it is not meant that they committed his sin, or were the agents of his f act, nor is it meant that they are morally criminal for his transgression; but simply that in virtue of the union between him and his descendants his sin is the judicial ground of the condemnation of his race."[520] When Dr. Hodge speaks of the federal and natural union of Adam and his posterity, respecting the natural he must be understood to express the historic view of the question rather than his own personal view. As a rigid representationist, he could not think the natural relation any part of the ground on which the guilt of Adam's sin is imputed to the race. Something might be said for the congruity of appointing the natural head of the race its legal head; but there could be nothing more than such congruity. In this representative theory the federal headship is the sole

ground of a responsible oneness of the race with Adam. The economy is purely a legal one; and the sharing in the sin of Adam is according to its legal character. In the above citations we have given what that sharing is, and in what mode it becomes actual. By a judicial act of immediate imputation God accounts the guilt of Adam's sin to his posterity on the ground of their legal oneness with him.

[519]Cunningham:Historical Theology, vol. i, pp. 337, 338.

[520]Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 192, 195.

3. No Demerit from the Imputation.—The theory has this consequence, that no turpitude or demerit of sin is by such imputation carried over to the offspring of Adam. It is not pretended, not admitted even, that any thing more than the guilt of the first sin is imputed to them. The theory sharply discriminates the demerit of sin and the guilt of sin. The first is personal to the actual sinner, and is intrinsic to his own character; the second is simply amenability to punishment, and arises from the judicial treatment of sin. In the above citations it is denied that we have any part in the criminality of Adam's sin. Such a view belongs to the realistic theory, from which this theory so widely and radically dissents. It is on the ground of this distinction between the personal demerit and the guilt of sin that Dr. Hodge maintains the possibility of such an imputation of sin to Christ as his doctrine of atonement requires. The transference of demerit by imputation is denied and declared impossible. "Moral character cannot be transferred." The same principle is expressed in different places.[521] And the same principle is declared to rule the imputation of Adam's sin to the race. This may be seen in connection with a passage above cited. Hence, when we say that there is no demerit of the race from the immediate imputation of Adam's sin, we are thoroughly sustained by a fundamental principle of the representative theory, and also by its very best exposition. In another place we shall have use for the fact thus established.

[521]Systematic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 189, 582.

106. II. Alleged Proofs Of The Theory.

II. Alleged Proofs Of The Theory. The representative theory, just as every other, is dependent upon its proofs. Hence their importance rises with its prominence in the Augustinian anthropology. Naturally, therefore, all facts and principles which promise any support are called into service and presented with the utmost exegetical and logical skill. We readily concede a strong plausibility to some of the arguments. Some have so much apparent strength that the answer is not always easy. We shall not attempt so elaborate a review as these statements might suggest or seem to require, and yet shall proceed with the confidence of showing that the arguments are inconclusive.

1. Responsibility on the Ground of Representation.—This, argument requires both the federal headship of Adam and the sufficiency of such representation for the common participation in the guilt of his sin. For the present, we proceed without questioning the federal headship as maintained in this theory, and first consider the principle of representation, with the argument constructed upon it. The argument proceeds on the principle of responsibility from representation, and brings illustrations and proofs from various relations of human life. The minister binds the State; the agent, the principal; the child, the parent; the parent, the child. In purely voluntary or conventional associations it is admitted that representation does not impose a common moral responsibility. It is otherwise in such relations as arise in the providential ordering and requirements of human life. Such are the relations above specified. They are inseparable from our present mode of existence, and must be in the order of providence. The principle of responsibility rules in all such instances of representation, and therefore rules in the instance of Adam.[522] [522] Wallace:Representative Responsibility, discourses i, ii; Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 196-201. The argument will not sustain the representative place of Adam as maintained in this theory. On the ground of his federal headship it is maintained that the guilt of his sin is justly imputed to his offspring, and constitutes in them the ground of divine punishment. The instances of representation adduced fall far short of any analogy for the support of any such view. Neither guilt nor penalty is involved. If in the intercourse of nations a minister is invested with plenipotential functions, the State which he represents is bound by his action, and equally when it is unwise and wrong as when it is wise and right; but this obligation involves neither guilt nor punishment. The same is true in all the other instances. The principal is responsible for the action of his agent, so far as empowered to act for him, but can neither be accounted guilty nor suffer punishment for any wrong-doing of the agent. By provisions of law a father may be held responsible for such action of his child as may involve the pecuniary interests of others; but unless in some way a sharer in the wrong-doing his responsibility is not in the nature of either guilt or punishment. In all such instances as we have considered the responsibility is merely political or pecuniary. The law which imposes it is purely one of economical expediency. Interests are thus protected which otherwise might be greatly wronged. To hold either the State, or the principal^ or the father guilty and the subject of punishment in such cases is to depart utterly from the plainest principles of justice and common sense. Hence this utter lack of analogy to the representative place of Adam, as maintained in this theory, renders all such instances utterly valueless for the argument.

Special account is made of instances of attainder, in which treason or some other high crime is punished with confiscation of estates and political disfranchisement, and in which, in the terms of the law and the judicial procedure, the children of the criminal, for successive generations, and even forever, are involved in the same consequences. Any justification of such procedure must arise from the exigencies of the government. Such judicial measures are expedients of government, and can have no other defense. The idea is that such an extension of the evil consequences of treason will more effectually restrain others from its commission. Its justification from its end is not the question now in hand. The point we make is this: Such procedure of government neither constitutes the children guilty of the father's treason nor makes the evil visited upon them in any proper sense a punishment. It is admitted that the act of treason cannot he charged to the children, because it is strictly personal to the high offender; but the guilt of the act is as rigidly and exclusively personal to him as the act itself, and no more can it be charged to them. But guilt absolutely conditions punishment. Hence, as the children cannot be constituted guilty of the parental treason, the evil visited upon them cannot in any proper sense of justice but a punishment. There is nothing in such instances which can support the representative theory.

2. Biblical Instances of Imputation of Sin.—Reference to a few instances will suffice for the review of this argument. We may name the cases of Achan, Gehazi, Dathan, and Abiram. Hodge brings these, with many others, into the argument.[523] No one makes a stronger use of them. Seemingly, they sustain his argument; but a deeper view discovers their insufficiency.

[523]Systematic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 198-205.

Under the divine administration suffering is visited upon families in consequence of parental sins. This is not to be questioned. Whether they are strictly penal is the real question. The same insuperable difficulties of guilt and punishment are present in these cases as in those under human administrations. The evil consequences, as affecting others than the actually criminal, are administered on a law of governmental expediency, not on a law of retributive justice. There is such a law in the divine administration, as in the human. The policy may be illustrated by legitimate usages of war. Consequences cannot be restricted to personal demerit. When suffering is even purposely inflicted upon the innocent they are not accounted guilty, nor is their suffering a punishment to them. The Jewish theocracy was political in its functions as well as moral and religious. Nor can all its measures and ministries be interpreted without a law of economical expediency. Even under a theocracy men were still men, and could be governed only as such. For rectoral ends, and for the great purposes of the theocracy, its judicial inflictions sometimes involved the innocent with the actual offenders, but not as punishments on the ground of imputed guilt. Nor can such exceptional and temporary instances conclude the guilt and punishment of all mankind on account of the sin of Adam as federal head of the race.

3. More Direct Proof-Texts.—A chief text of the class is found in God's proclamation of his name to Moses; which proclamation is a lofty characterization of his own majesty and truth, goodness and mercy. To all the expression of his clemency and gracious forgiveness of sin, it is added, that he "will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation" (Exodus 34:7). The text has special application to the sin of idolatry. Mr. Wesley so regarded it. Maimonides is cited for the same view. There was in this case special reason for such visitation. The tendency to idolatry was persistent

and strong. Its restraint was necessary to the great purposes of the theocracy. The severity of means answered to this exigency. So we find God ordering the utter destruction of any city whose inhabitants gave themselves to idolatry (Deuteronomy 13:12-18). Even the cattle were to be put to the sword, and all the property to be destroyed. This judgment transcended the possibility of guilt in the subjects of its infliction, and therefore could not be to them a punishment. The proper interpretation is upon the same principles on which we interpreted the instances of imputation previously considered. Such extreme measures were necessary to the great ends of the theocracy, and permissible on that ground, but could not be punishments to any who were not actual sharers in the sinning. In this manner we interpret the “visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children.” The standard text is from Paul (Romans 5:12-19). Since the time of Augustine This has been the great text in doctrinal anthropology. Whether it is the formally exact expression of doctrine which its dogmatic use assumes, may fairly be questioned. In the Augustinian anthropology it is equally the reliance of both the realistic and representative schools. Each is sure of its full support, and, equally, that it gives no support to the other; indeed, that it refutes the other. But, with their profound difference, it cannot be the doctrinal ground of both. We may reasonably infer that it supports neither. Arminianism can fairly interpret the text consistently with its own anthropology, though in some facts it differs profoundly from the Augustinian.[524] Respecting individual expositors of the text, we rarely find any two in full agreement.[525] This is the case with expositors of the same school of anthropology. A text so open to diverse and opposing interpretations cannot in itself be the determining ground of any particular doctrine. Such facts strongly suggest the prudence of less dogmatism in its doctrinal use. If the passage is taken as formally exact and scientific in doctrinal statement, no proper consistency of its several parts can be attained; nor can it as a whole be brought into harmony with any system of theology. While seemingly exact and definite in doctrinal expression, it should rather be taken in a popular sense. This is the view of Knapp.[526] His view is appropriated by McClintock and Strong.[527] The passage is a popular statement of great facts for the expression and illustration of a ruling idea—the abounding fullness of grace and life in the redemptive mediation of Christ.

[524]As representatives of interpretation in the realistic, representative, and Arminian schools, we may instance Shedd, Hodge, and Whedon, in their respective Commentaries on Romans.

[525]Many instances of opposing views are given in the respective Commentaries of Stewart and Meyer on Romans.

[526]Christian Theology, sec. lxxvi, iii.

[527]Cyclopaedia, “Imputation.” The diversities of interpretation, and particularly the opposing interpretations of the realistic and representative schools, with their reciprocal refutations, deny to this text any sufficient proof of a common sharing in the guilt of Adam’s sin, as held in the Augustinian anthropology. After a searching study we are satisfied that it does not contain the proof of such a doctrine.[528]

[528] We think this study important, but the extent of its necessary elaboration renders it inappropriate for a place in the body of our work. It will be given in an appendix to the second volume.

4. Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ.—From an imputation of the righteousness of Christ it is often attempted to prove the imputation of Adam's sin to the race, as maintained in ,the representative theory. Theoretically, the two imputations stand together in the Federal theology. This theology requires both, and also the federal headship respectively of Adam and Christ. These federal headships are the ground of the imputation respectively of the sin of Adam and the righteousness of Christ. In the present argument for the representative theory the imputation of the righteousness of Christ is assumed as a fact, and from this fact is inferred the imputation of Adam's sin to all men. It may further be said that the argument also intends the vindication of this imputation. Two questions are thus raised: Is the assumed imputation of the righteousness of Christ a fact? and, if a fact, would it warrant the inference respecting the imputation of Adam's sin? In considering these questions we may change their order.

There is a profound difference between the immediate imputation of sin as a ground of punishment and the immediate imputation of righteousness as the ground of reward. The representative theory can say much for the latter as the outflowing of the divine grace and love; but what can it say for the former? Here no appeal can be made to the divine love. Nor can there be any appeal to the divine Justice. The theory denies all actual sharing in the sin of Adam as a ground of demerit. This is one of its strong points against the realistic theory. The idea of such desert is excluded by the nature of the imputation as immediate. The imputed sin is the very first ground of punitive desert. Hence the theory means a purely gratuitous imposition of guilt upon all men. Such an imputation could have no warrant or vindication in the imputation of the righteousness of Christ. The profound difference of the two precludes both the warrant and the vindication. The words of Shedd are forceful and to the point: "The doctrine of a gratuitous justification is intelligible and rational; but the doctrine of a gratuitous damnation is unintelligible and absurd."[529] [529] History of Christian Doctrine, vol. ii, p. 163.

It is thus manifest that the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, even if a truth of the Scriptures, could neither support nor vindicate a purely gratuitous imputation of Adam's sin to the race as the judicial ground of depravity and death. There is, in truth, no such imputation of the righteousness of Christ as this theory maintains, and hence the argument attempted upon its assumption is utterly groundless. However, the proper place for this question of imputation is in connection with the doctrine of justification.

107. III. Objections To The Theory.

III. Objections To The Theory. So far we have considered the arguments which the representative theory brings in proof of the immediate imputation of Adam's sin as the judicial or penal ground of the common depravity of human nature. Beyond our answer to these arguments there are a few objections to the theory which must not be omitted.

1. No Such Headship of Adam.—It is not the natural headship which is here questioned; it is the federal or forensic headship, as maintained in the representative theory. The deeper idea is that of a covenant between God and Adam, with mutual stipulations of duty and promise—duty on the human side and promise on the divine side. In the obligation of duty Adam should not only answer for himself, but also represent his offspring, so that they should fully share in the righteousness and reward of his obedience, or equally in the guilt and punishment of his disobedience. So, on his side God should reward or punish Adam, personally, and equally his offspring as represented by him, just as he might fulfill or violate the obligation of duty as stipulated in the covenant. The implied and the frequently expressed part of Adam in such a covenant would clearly have been a usurpation. Nor is it to be thought that God could have recognized in him any such right, or have entered into any such stipulations with him on its unwarranted assumption. All that can reasonably be meant is, that in the primitive probation God, solely in his own agency, instituted a federal economy, so that the trial of Adam should, on the principle of representation, be the decisive trial of the race. The irrational idea of Adam's part in the covenant is thus excluded, but the fundamental principle remains, and the consequences to the race are the very same. On his obedience, all would have shared with him in the reward of immortality, confirmed holiness, and eternal blessedness. As he sinned, all share with him the full measure of guilt and loss, and the same desert of an eternal penal doom. "Every thing promised to him was promised to them. And every thing threatened against him, in case of transgression, was threatened against them."[530] This is but the repetition, in substance, of what many others have said. As Adam sinned, very naturally the penal consequences of his headship have come into great doctrinal prominence, and received almost exclusive attention; but the principle of reward, which, on his obedience, would have secured to the race all the blessings promised him, is just as central to this federal economy as the principle of penal retribution. Thus the trial of the race was in Adam, with the judicial consequence of an eternal blessedness or an eternal penal doom.

[530]Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, p. 121.

There is little foundation for so great a structure. Appeal is made to the Mosaic narrative of the Adamic probation. Many things said to Adam and Eve must have had respect to their offspring, and the race is involved in many and great evils through their sin and fall (Genesis 1:26-28; Genesis 3:16-19). This is admitted. We have previously maintained the same. But the real question is whether such consequences are punishments, with their judicial ground in the sin of Adam as representative of the race. To assume that they are is to assume the full doctrinal content of the federal headship. This, however, is the question in issue, and its assumption will not answer

the demand for proof. The proof of such a federal headship is not in the Mosaic narrative. Proof is attempted from the words of Hosea by rendering the text, “But they like Adam have transgressed the covenant” (Hosea 6:7). There is really no proof, because “like men,” as given in the Authorized Version, may be the true rendering. Even the rendering, “like Adam,” must utterly fail to carry with it the full sense of the Adamic covenant in the representative theory. Much use is here made of the two great texts of Paul (Romans 5:12-19; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22), which we have previously considered. But as we found in them no proof of a common participation in the sin of Adam through imputation, so they can give no proof of an Adamic covenant which is maintained as the essential ground of such imputation.

There is no federal headship of Adam on which all men equally with himself share the guilt of his sin. On the Calvinistic views of this question Pope says: “But such speculations as these stand or fall with the general principle of a specific covenant with Adam as representing his posterity, a covenant of which the Scripture does not speak.”[531] The vital connection of personal agency and moral responsibility is too thoroughly pervasive of the Scriptures to allow any place therein for a federal headship which sunders that connection and makes all men sharers in the sin of Adam. “This is so little agreeable to that distinct agency which enters into the very notion of an accountable being, that it cannot be maintained, and it destroys the sound distinction between original and actual sin. It asserts, indeed, the imputation of the actual commission of Adam’s sin to his descendants, which is false in fact; makes us stand chargeable with the full latitude of his transgression, and all its attendant circumstances; and constitutes us, separate from all actual voluntary offense, equally guilty with him, all which are repugnant equally to our consciousness and to the equity of the case.”[532] The force of this argument is not in the least weakened by the failure of Mr. Watson to anticipate the more recent Calvinistic distinction between the guilt and the act of Adam’s sin in the imputation. It is the ethical element involved in the imputation that gives the chief weight to his objection.

[531]Christian Theology, vol. ii, p. 78.

[532]Watson:Theological Institutes, vol. ii, p. 53.

2. Supersedure of a Common Probation.—In such a covenant as the representative theory maintains the obedience of Adam would have secured to the race severally, and without any personal trial, eternal holiness and blessedness. “The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works, wherein life was promised to Adam and in him to his posterity, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience.”[533] Of course, in such a covenant the contingency of universal righteousness and blessedness must answer to the contingency of universal guilt and perdition. We have previously shown how fully the latter is set forth in the maintenance of the representative theory. The former is just as really and fully a part of the theory, and is the part specially set forth in the above citation. Adam represented all men in his own probation. “They stood their probation in him, and do not stand each man for himself.”[534] [533] The Westminster Confession, chap, vii, sec. ii.

[534]Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, p. 133. Also Witsius:The Covenants, vol. i, p. 36; Raymond:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 104, 105. The theory thus places the probation of the race in Adam, with the contingency of a universal and eternal blessedness or misery, just as he might fulfill or transgress the divine command. There is no ground in either reason, analogy, or

Scripture for such a position. It assumes that all men would have been constituted personally righteous by the imputation of the personal righteousness of Adam, and so have been rewarded with eternal blessedness. This is a most exaggerated account of the temporary obedience of one man, and, in the breadth of its possible blessings, lifts it into rivalry with the redemptive mediation of Christ.

3. Guilt and Punishment of the Innocent.—This theory denies all direct sharing of the race in either the act or the demerit of Adam's sin. This is its distinction from the realistic theory, which, in its higher form, asserts both. As the race had no part in the agency of Adam, his sinning could have no immediate consequence of demerit and guilt upon them as upon himself. Hence, until the judicial act of immediate imputation, all must have been innocent in fact, and must have so appeared even in the view of the divine justice as it proceeded to cover them with the guilt of an alien sin, a sin in no sense their own, and then on the ground of such gratuitous guilt to inflict upon them the penalty of moral depravity and death. Thus the race, as yet innocent in fact, is made the subject of guilt and punishment.

4. Factitious Guilt of the Race.—The immediate imputation of sin is by its own definition simply the accounting to all men the guilt of a sin which is confessedly not their own. They had no part in the commission of that sin. The imputed guilt has no ground of demerit in them. In a merely putative mode, and without any desert in themselves, all men are accounted amenable to the divine punishment. This utter separation of the guilt from demerit, this absolute sundering of the reatus puenae from the reatus culpae, must reduce the guilt of the race to a merely factitious character. The word factitious is here used in no light sense. On the supposition of such imputed guilt, we have simply pointed out its unavoidable character. Further, it is only by an artificial measure of law that the one sin of one man could be made to render equally guilty with himself all the millions of the race. The theory must here keep within its own limit, and assume nothing from the realistic theory. There was the one representative and the one sin, with its own intrinsic demerit. The intrinsic guilt was in just the measure of this demerit. Who shall say that it was sufficient for an eternal penal doom of the race in the retribution of the divine justice? How, then, could it be made to cover every soul of the race with a guilt equal to that of the sinning representative, except by an artificial measure of law?

5. A Darker Problem of Evil.—We have previously shown that this theory assumes to vindicate the divine providence in the existence of so great an evil as the common native depravity by accounting it a punishment justly inflicted upon the race. We are born in a state of moral ruin, and the evil is very great. Hence it must be a punishment; for, otherwise, it could not be reconciled with the justice and goodness of God. But if a punishment, it must have its ground in guilt. The principle is accepted, at least by implication, that "no just constitution will punish the innocent." We have seen how it is attempted to secure the principle in this case. The penal infliction of depravity is anticipated by the imputation of the guilt of an alien sin to the race. But no such putative ground could justify the penal infliction. Nor is the native evil any less by calling it a punishment. There is no relief in accounting the innocent guilty in anticipation of such a penal infliction. There is a double and deeper wrong. Verily, there is no theodicy in this doctrine, but only a darker problem of evil.

108. Chapter 11: Genetic Law Of Native Depravity.

Chapter 11 Genetic Law Of Native Depravity.

We have sufficiently reviewed the theory of native depravity which accounts it a penal retribution on the ground of a common participation in the sin of Adam, and have found it unsustained in either the realistic or representative mode of such participation. The disproof of this theory does not affect the reality of native depravity, but leaves it to be accounted for in some other mode. There is an entirely sufficient account in the law of genetic transmission. The corruption of the progenitors of the race is thus transmitted to their offspring. The uniformity with which this law is accepted in doctrinal anthropology greatly favors the theory which makes it the account of the common native depravity.

109. I. Genesis Of Parental Quality.

I. Genesis Of Parental Quality.

1. Reality of the Law.—It is a law of organic life that every thing produces its own kind. This law was divinely instituted at the very beginning of life (Genesis 1:11-12). It has determined the results of propagation through all the geological ages and in all organic orders. It is the determining law of species, and gives us the orderly forms of life. If it were made known simply that life is propagated in other worlds, sober science would promptly affirm the reigning of the same law. The offspring are a reproduction of the parentage, not only in anatomical structure and physiological constitution, but also in the qualities of instinct and disposition. This is clearly seen in the higher animal orders. The lion of the present is the lion of all previous generations. The ferocity of the tiger is a derivation from its earliest parentage. The meekness and gentleness of the lamb of to-day were in the blood of the paschal lamb many ages ago. Man himself is the most striking exemplification of this law. Historically, the diversities of human condition are very great. There is a vast scale from the lowest barbarism up to the highest civilization. The habits of life engendered by location and the modes of subsistence widely differ. Governments, customs, religions, all things which strike the deepest into the nature of man, equally differ. Yet in all the constitutive qualities of humanity man is always and every-where the same. This universal and abiding identity is a genetic transmission from the progenitors of the race down through all its generations.

2. Respecting the Transmission of Adamic Holiness.—On the obedience of Adam and the maintenance of his own holiness of nature, his offspring would have received their life and begun their probation in the same primitive holiness. There would still have been the possible lapse of individuals, with the corruption of their own nature and the consequent depravity of their offspring; but apart from this contingency, or so far as the Adamic connection is concerned, all would have been born in the primitive holiness. Under what law would such have been the consequence? Unquestionably, the law of genetic transmission. Any notion of an immediate imputation of Adam’s personal righteousness to his offspring as the judicial ground of their birth in subjective holiness is utterly groundless. It must assume that without such imputation all must have been born in depravity, which at once contradicts the determining law of propagation and the holiness and goodness of God. There is no requirement for any other law than that of genetic transmission. There is no place for any other.

3. Sufficient Account of Native Depravity.—As the law of genetic transmission rules in all the forms of propagated life and determines the likeness of the offspring to the parentage, and as it was sufficient for the transmission of the primitive holiness to all the race, it must be a sufficient account of the common native depravity. To deny this sufficiency is to assume that simply under the law of nature the moral corruption of Adam would not have been transmitted to his offspring, and consequently that they must have been born in holiness. To assume an intervention of retributive justice, on the ground of a common participation in the sin of Adam, as the only sufficient account of the universal native depravity, is to imply the same results. The implication is

utterly in error. Simply under the law of nature the corruption of Adam must have been transmitted to his offspring, and consequently they could not have been born in the primitive holiness. All this is really conceded by such as hold the common depravity to be a punishment. We have previously seen that this view of punishment is maintained in order to vindicate the divine providence in the existence of so great an evil. But except for the efficiency of the law of nature which determines the likeness of the offspring to the parentage there would have been no common evil of depravity requiring the divine vindication. Why account the corruption of human nature a punishment when it exists in the fullest accord with all the analogies of propagation? Punishment is not thought of in any other instance of likeness in the offspring to the parentage. The sufficient account is in the law of genetic transmission. There is no requirement in either nature or Scripture or reason for any other.

Seemingly, this law of genetic transmission should rule in the instance of regenerate or sanctified parents, and determine the subjective holiness of their offspring. Yet the truth of a common native depravity, as previously maintained, forbids this inference. Why should the Adamic connection rule in such instances instead of the immediate connection? This question naturally arises; nor is it without perplexity. It might be answered, that in the present life the sanctification is not complete; that a measure of depravity remains in the regenerate. This doctrine is formulated in most orthodox creeds, and hence furnishes the ground for such an answer as we here suggest. However, it is one which cannot be given by such as hold the doctrine of entire sanctification, and maintain that there are actual instances of such sanctification. There is a further answer, which fully accords with the former doctrine, and is seemingly the only one in accord with the latter. The regenerate or sanctified state is specially a gracious state, and not of the original constitution of man. It is provided for in the economy of redemption, and achieved through the supernatural agency of the Holy Spirit, and therefore is not transmissible through natural generation. The limitations of such a law are as real in the completely sanctified as in the regenerate in whom the rudiments of depravity may still remain. There is such a law in nature. The fruit of the graft produces, not its own special quality, but that of the natural stock.

110. II. The True Law Of Depravity.

II. The True Law Of Depravity.

If this is not the true law of native depravity, the Scripture proofs of depravity itself must be at fault, and the Catholic doctrine of its transmission must be in error. It will be easy to justify these statements.

1. The Scripture Doctrine.—The creeds which formulate a doctrine of native depravity, and the theologians who maintain such a doctrine, both appeal to the Scriptures for its proof. Many of the evidences thus adduced, and especially the more explicit, rest on the ground of a genetic transmission of depravity. Reference to a few texts will show this. “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one” (Job 14:4). An unclean vessel defiles its content. This deeper idea of the text illustrates the law of native depravity. The reference in the close connection is to natural generation or birth as the source of depravity. “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me” (Psalms 51:5). There is in this text the sense of native evil, but an evil inherited through natural generation. The same truth is given in the profound words of our Lord on the necessity for spiritual regeneration (John 3:3-7). The necessity lies in the fact that “that which is born of the flesh is flesh.” This means the inheritance of a corrupt nature through natural generation. Thus the leading texts which prove the reality of native depravity equally prove its genetic transmission.

2. The Catholic Doctrine.—No element of the Augustinian anthropology has been more fully or uniformly asserted than the genetic transmission of depravity. There is no reserve in Augustine’s expression of his own view. In nothing have his followers in doctrine more closely adhered to his teaching. This element is common to the doctrinal formulas of original sin in the creeds of the Churches: the Eastern or Greek Church;[535] the Roman Catholic Church;[536] Protestant Churches.[537] The eminent theologians of the Churches follow in the maintenance of this doctrine. There is no need of a law of penal retribution to account for a result which is thus accounted for simply on a law of nature.

[535]The Orthodox Confession, Q. 24; Larger Catechism, Q. 168.

[536]Decree of the Council of Trent concerning Original Sin.

[537]The Augsburg Confession, article ii; The Belgic Confession, article xv; The Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, article ix; The Synod of Dort,De Hominis Corruptione, sec. ii; The Westminster Confession, chap, vi, sec. iii.

If it should be said that the genetic transmission of Adamic depravity is simply the mode in which the divine judgment is executed, the answer is at hand. The position, by inevitable implication, denies that the law of propagation which determines the likeness of the offspring to the parentage was original to the constitution of man, while confessedly original with all other living orders, and assumes that it was subsequently ordained for man simply as the means of a judicial infliction of

depravity upon all. Such implications contradict all relative facts, and utterly discredit the principle which involves them.

3. The Arminian Doctrine.—Arminianism has not the exact and comprehensive formulations of doctrine which we find in some other systems, as, for instance, the Lutheran and the Reformed or Calvinistic. No general synod or council has ever taken this work in hand; yet in other modes the leading doctrines of the system are set forth with satisfactory clearness and fullness. Respecting the genetic transmission of depravity there is full accordance with other systems of theology. Expressions are frequently met, particularly in the older Arminianism, and in the Wesleyan, which, at least, imply a judicial ground of the common depravity, but never in contradiction to its genetic mode. The tendency is toward the recognition of this law as the sufficient and whole account of it.[538] This is definitely and explicitly the view of Dr. Whedon.[539]

[538] Arminius: Writings, vol. i, p. 486; Hill:Divinity, pp. 398-400; Shedd:History of Christian Doctrine, vol. ii, pp. 178-186.

[539]Methodist Quarterly Review, 1861, pp. 649-651. Also Raymond:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 109-336; Summers:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, p. 46. On the present question our own article is very definite. Original or birth sin “is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam.”[540] There is neither suggestion nor implication of any judicial ground of the common depravity. The emphasis placed upon the law of propagation from Adam down through the whole race excludes the sense of a penal infliction on the ground of a common Adamic sin. This sense would require us to hold the propagation simply as the mode of the penal infliction; but, as previously pointed out, such propagation is determined by a law of nature which is common to all orders of propagated life, and therefore cannot be the mere mode of a punishment in any specific case. On any consistent interpretation, the article accounts the common native depravity simply a genetic transmission. This is the specific doctrinal formula of the Methodist Episcopal Church on this question. The same article is held by the other Methodist Churches. We know not any exception.

[540]Article vii.

4. Unaffected Reality of Native Depravity.—The reality of native depravity is not involved in the question of its penal infliction. Those who hold this view equally hold its genetic transmission; and both its reality and character are determined by the law of propagation. As the offspring of Adam, we all inherit the depravity of nature into which he fell through transgression. It is no less a reality than if a judicial infliction. The noxious quality of a poisonous tree is just as real, and the very same, under the law of propagation as if the immediate product of a divine malediction. The same is true of the ferocity of a tiger propagated from a parentage synchronical with Adam. So the common depravity genetically transmitted is just as real, and the very same in its own nature, as if a penal retribution. Its reality is not placed in any doubt by the disproof of its judicial ground.

111. Chapter 12: Doctrine Of Native Demerit.

Chapter 12 Doctrine Of Native Demerit. In a previous analysis of original sin, as the formula is maintained in the Augustinian anthropology, we found three distinct elements: a common guilt of Adam's sin, the corruption of human nature as a judicial infliction on the ground of that sin, and the intrinsic sinfulness and demerit of the common native depravity. We have disposed of the former two questions, but the third is still on hand. Nor can it be regarded as merely incidental in its relation to systematic theology, but, when properly apprehended, must be viewed as central and determining. Infralapsarian Calvinism, now the prevalent form, can have no standing without it; Arminianism, no consistent and sure ground with it. It conditions the decree of election and reprobation in the former system, and contradicts the fundamental principles of the latter. Such doctrinal consequences of the question will fully appear in its discussion, and therefore require no further statement here. The doctrine is, that native depravity, in its own intrinsic nature, and wholly irrespective of any personal moral action, is truly sin, or so sin as to have in itself the desert of punishment. On the ground of inherited depravity every soul is amenable to the divine retribution, just as for any free sinful deed. This statement of the doctrine will be fully justified under the next head. The strength of Augustine's own view of the common native sinfulness, in the sense of punitive desert, is quite familiar to students of theology. He has left no room for any uncertainty. On no question was he more earnest or intense. He pronounced the whole human race, in their natural state, as consequent upon the sin of Adam, one mass of perdition (massa perditionis).[541] The creeds and confessions, whose anthropology is constructed upon Augustinian ground, contain the same doctrine. Some of the stronger terms may be avoided, but the doctrine of a native sinfulness and damnableness is equally present. "This disease, or original fault, is truly sin, condemning and bringing eternal death."[542] Original sin, the corruption of our nature and a hereditary disease, "is sufficient to condemn all mankind."[543] Original sin, the fault and corruption of the nature of every one, naturally engendered of the offspring of Adam, "in every person born into the world it deserveth God's wrath and damnation."[544] Our native corruption, as really as our actual sin, "doth, in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal."[545] Many authorities, both confessional and individual, might easily be added.

[541]Works (Migne's), vol. x, p. 403.

[542]The Augsburg Confession, article ii.

[543]The Belgic Confession, article xv.

[544]Articles of the Church of England, article ix.

[545]The Westminster Confession, chap. vi.

112. I. Alleged Proofs Of The Doctrine.

I. Alleged Proofs Of The Doctrine.

Very naturally, a doctrine so central to the Calvinistic system, and at once so necessary to the infralapsarian decree of election and reprobation, and so entirely sufficient for such decree, has been most vigorously maintained. No resource of proof has been omitted. The arguments adduced must now be questioned.

1. More Direct Scripture Proofs.—Native depravity is called sin. This is not disputed. The instances given are clear and decisive (Psalms 51:5; Romans 7:8; Romans 7:17). The fact, however, is inconclusive of the position. It could be conclusive only on the ground that sin—■μαρτ■α—always contains the sense of demerit. This is not the case; and, as in other applications it is used without this sense, so may it be in these instances. There are many instances of a metonymic use, of which a very few will suffice. The golden calf worshiped in the idolatry of Israel is called sin (Deuteronomy 9:21). It cannot mean that this calf was itself the subject of guilt or demerit, but simply the object of a sinful worship. Also the sin-offering is frequently called sin (Exodus 29:14; Leviticus 4:24; 2 Corinthians 5:21). Such offerings are called sin, not on the ground of any demerit in themselves, but simply from their relation to the forgiveness of sin. In a like metonymy our native depravity may properly be called sin for the reason of its tendency to actual sin, but without demerit simply as a subjective state. Such a sense will give the meaning of Paul in many instances of its use (Romans 6:2; Romans 6:6; Romans 6:12; Romans 6:14; Romans 7:8-17). That depravity as a native state is called sin is, therefore, inconclusive of its intrinsic demerit. The great passage of Paul, which we found in such full use on the part of both realists and representationists for the proof of a common participation in the sin of Adam, is equally in use here (Romans 5:12-19). The discussion of its doctrinal sense in the former place leaves little requirement for additional treatment. We there found it insufficient for the proof of a common guilt of Adam's sin in either the realistic or representative mode. Much more must it fail to prove the intrinsic demerit of the common native depravity. Really, the text has no bearing, certainly no direct bearing, on this question. It fairly raises the question of a common participation in the guilt of Adam's sin, but only remotely can it even suggest the question of demerit in the common depravity inherited from him. It furnishes no proof of such demerit. A text of chief reliance is found in the words of Paul: "and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Ephesians 2:3). This was the state of the Jew, as of the Gentile. All alike were by nature the children of wrath. Being children of wrath clearly conveys the sense of guilt and condemnation, amenability to the divine punishment. Hence the ground of this exposure is the real question. It lies in the sense of the term nature: "and were by nature—φ■σει—the children of wrath." Does the term here mean the corruption of nature with which we are born, or the habit of life formed through the indulgence of its impulses? The former is the view of such as find in it the proof of native demerit. Their argument must limit itself to the nature with which we are born, and may not include "our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and the mind;" for all this belongs to the actual sinful life. Is it true, then, that the nature in which we are born, and before any evil act through its impulse, or

any spontaneous activity, has in itself the desert of an eternal penal wrath? The proof is not in this text. Even admitting that φ■σει might mean our native depravity, it is yet no necessary sense; indeed, would be a very rare sense. Further, after such a portrayal of the actual sinful life in the preceding connection, it would be very singular for Paul, without any intimation, or even the transition into a new sentence, wholly to restrict his thought to native depravity as the ground of a common judicial wrath. It is far more consistent with the whole passage (Ephesians 2:1-3) to give to φ■σει the sense of a second nature or habit of life formed through the indulgence of our native tendencies to evil. This accords with the interpretation of Dr. Clarke, who holds the doctrine of original sin, but denies both the sense and the proof of it in this term (Commentary, in loc.). Our actual sins, as portrayed by Paul, and which fulfill the tendencies of our corrupt nature, are the real ground of the divine wrath.[546] [546] Whedon:Commentary, in loc.

Proof is attempted from the sense of ■νομ■α in distinction from ■μαρτ■α: "for sin is the transgression of the law"—κα■ ■ ■μαρτ■α ■στ■ν ■ ■νομ■α (1 John 3:4). By rendering the latter term into lawlessness, it is assumed to be applicable to our nature in its native depravity, and to declare it sinful in the sense of demerit, just as in the case of a sinful act. "When John says, 'Sin is the transgression of the law' ('and sin is lawlessness'), the Catechism cannot be far wrong in understanding him thus: 'Sin is any want of comformity to, or transgression of, the law of God.' Thus the principle out of which the action springs is sinful, as well as the action itself."[547] This is given as a specimen of the argument. It is in the following of many Calvinistic examples. Native depravity is sin in the sense of demerit because it is not in conformity with the divine law. The argument is without any valid ground. The definitions and uses of ■μαρτ■α and ■νομ■α, neither warrant nor allow the assumed specific sense of the latter. It as fully expresses actual sin as the former, and has no more applicability to a mere nature.[548] In this particular instance the one term defines the other, and the two are identical in sense.[549] Each expresses sinful doing—ποι■ν with the former term, ποιε■ with the latter. Such sin is restrictedly personal ethical doing, and cannot be the sin of a mere nature. It follows that the present argument for native demerit is utterly groundless and void. Thus all the more direct Scripture proofs fail.

[547]Summers:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, p. 53.

[548]Cremer:Lexicon of New Testament Greek; Thayer:Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament.

[549]Ebrard:Commentary on St. John's Epistles, p. 223; Haupt:The First Epistle of John, p. 171; Meyer:Commentary, in loc.

2. A Metaphysical Argument.—Dr. Shedd maintains the doctrine of a metaphysical sin, a sin of our nature below actual sin, before the actual and the only sufficient cause of it. This doctrine he supports with the great names of Augustine, Calvin, Turrettin, Owen, Edwards.[550] It is readily conceded that this form of sin lies below consciousness. The argument, therefore, must proceed upon some fundamental principle. It really proceeds upon the principle of causation: every phenomenon or event must have a sufficient cause. Properties of bodies must have a ground in material substance; facts of psychology, a source or cause in mind. The same law of thought requires a sinful nature as the only sufficient cause of sinful action.[551] [550] Theological Essays, pp. 212-215.

[551]Theological Essays, pp. 221-229. The principle of causation in which the argument is grounded is thoroughly valid; but the minor premise, that only a sinful nature is sufficient cause to sinful action, is a material fallacy. The fallacy is the more manifest as the sinfulness of the nature is interpreted in the sense of punitive demerit. If valid in this sense, there must have been, not only a corrupt nature, but also a guilty nature before there could have been any actual sin. This inevitable implication utterly disproves the doctrine which involves it. It is not in any case the previous merit or demerit of an agent that determines the ethical character of a present deed. Such deed is good or bad from its own relation to the divine law. Native depravity is necessary to account for the universality of actual sin, as we have previously maintained; but the demerit of this depravity is not so necessary. Its incitements to sinful action are precisely the same without this ethical quality that they would be with it; therefore this quality can have no part in any account of actual sin which the common native depravity must render.

3. Argument from Christian Consciousness.—In the usual form of this argument it is maintained that Christians, and deeply awakened persons as well, are profoundly conscious of a sinful nature, and therefore have such a nature. There is an invalidating error respecting the alleged consciousness. We are conscious of spontaneous incitements to evil, but not of the nature out of which they spring. Hence consciousness itself can allege no ethical quality of this nature. In order to avoid this fallacy Dr. Shedd has recast the argument and presented it in a new form. The mind reaches the nature through the facts of consciousness, and as the necessary account of them. The mode is valid in both science and philosophy, and equally valid in doctrinal anthropology. When we take into rational thought the many facts of evil which reveal themselves in our consciousness, “that we may look at them, and find the origin and first cause of them, then we are obliged to assume a principle below them all, to infer a nature back of them all. Thus, this sinful nature is an inference, an assumption, or, to use a word borrowed from geometry, a postulate, which the mind is obliged to grant, in order to find a key that will unlock and explain its own experience.”[552] In reply to any objection against the truth or certainty of such inference, the answer proceeds upon the same principle which underlies the above reasoning. When the result of such a rational inquiry forces itself upon the acceptance of the mind, it must be the truth in the case. “If it is not so, then a lie has been built into the very structure of the mind, and it is not to be trusted in regard to any a priori truth.”[553] [552] Ibid., p. 226.

[553]Theological Essays, p. 228. The argument is based on the assumed truthfulness of our cognitions when reached according to the laws of thought. Our faculties were divinely given for the purpose of knowledge, and, when properly used, do not deceive us. Things are as we cognize them. The doctrine is thoroughly valid within the limit of primary or axiomatic truths, but not beyond them. The present argument for native sinfulness goes beyond the sphere of primary truths into the inductive. The corruption of human nature, as the necessary account of the universal tendency to evil, is a very sure inductive truth; but the intrinsic sinfulness or demerit of that nature is not such a truth. The guilt of the nature has nothing to do with its tendency to evil, and therefore is wholly without inductive warrant from this tendency. Much less is its reality warranted by any axiomatic principle. It is not a truth which the mind must accept. Many reject it, however clearly set before them. Many, after the profoundest study and with an intense Christian consciousness, reject it.

Nothing is gained for the argument by an appeal to the affirmations of conscience. These affirmations have no more uniformity than the results of induction. Many, with a profound moral

consciousness and a painful sense of evil tendencies, have no sense of native demerit. The conscience of some has no infallibility for others; has no infallibility for the truth.

There is no principle which validates all the deliverances of conscience, as facts most fully prove. Through deficient analysis the facts of consciousness may be mistaken. One is the subject of spontaneous impulses and appetences which persistently act as incitements to evil conduct, and he has a sense of condemnation, even though no evil conduct follows. Why? Not simply because he has such impulses and appetences, but because of a sense of responsibility for them. This is necessary to the self-condemnation. Why this sense of responsibility? Because of an underlying conviction that by the help of grace he might have promptly repressed or wholly prevented these feelings, and that he ought to have so done. This deeper insight discovers in his self-condemnation the sense of violated obligation. Conscience condemns him, not for the sin of a nature with which he was born, but for his own actual sin. There is nothing in such an experience which points to a sin of his nature. A sense of native demerit is possible, but possible only with the previous belief of such demerit. Thus one's doctrine must precede one's self-condemnation, and, instead of being an induction reached and verified through experience, actually conditions and determines the experience. "When native demerit is an article of one's creed, self-condemnation is in the orderly working of conscience. It is the normal function of conscience thus to affirm the moral judgment which the creed expresses. But surely the creed which conditions and determines one's experience, and must determine it just the same if false as if true, can receive no verification or proof from such experience.

4. Argument from Primitive Holiness.—The argument is this: Adam was holy in his primitive nature; therefore we may be sinful in our fallen nature, and sinful in the sense of demerit. If the argument were valid it could prove only the possibility, not the actuality of native sinfulness. It is not valid, because there is far more in the conclusion than the premise warrants. It is proper to place in comparison the primitive state of Adam and the fallen state of the race. What he was in respect to holiness we may be in respect to sinfulness. What was the holiness of Adam? Simply a subjective state, free from evil tendencies, and with spontaneous inclination to the good. It possessed no strictly ethical character, such as arises, and can arise only, from holy obedience to the divine will. There is blessedness in this state, but no rewardable merit, no worthiness in any proper sense rewardable. Compare with this the fallen state of man. What is it in the comparison? A state of depravity, with spontaneous aversion to the good and inclination to the evil. There is moral ruin in this state, but no demerit or damnable sin. This is all the comparison will allow. The holiness of Adam affords no proof of demerit in the common native depravity.

113. II. Difficulties Of The Doctrine.

II. Difficulties Of The Doctrine.

We have found the arguments for native sinfulness in the sense of demerit entirely insufficient for its proof. With this result the question might be dismissed; but there are difficulties of the doctrine which should be adduced in its more direct refutation.

1. Demerit of a Mere Nature.—The native demerit is affirmed of the nature itself. The judicial ground of the divine judgment and penal wrath is placed in its own intrinsic sinfulness. The demerit is the sin of the nature with which we are born, and therefore must precede its development into personality. But a mere nature cannot be the subject of demerit; and guilt could as well be affirmed of a mere animal nature as of the human. Demerit must always be a personal fact. If it be said that the ground of the demerit lies in the impersonal nature, but that the amenability to punishment arises with the development of the nature into personality, then let the doctrine explain and justify the responsibility of the person for the nature with which he was born.

2. Demerit without Personal Agency.—This is the implication of the doctrine, and the principle is openly avowed and maintained. The higher realism, as previously reviewed, has the logical right of a denial—that is, consistently with itself it may deny the implication of demerit without personal agency. Indeed, the theory is openly) pronounced against the possibility of such demerit. But the mode of securing the personal agency and responsibility for the alleged native sinfulness we have previously shown to be utterly insufficient; so that, while this realistic theory may consistently with itself deny the implication of demerit without personal agency, it is as really involved in this implication as the representative theory. Native demerit, or the demerit of the nature with which one is born, is and must be wholly apart from one’s own agency. The only escape from this fact must be sought in the theory of the personal sinning of each soul in a pre-temporal existence. This theory was previously considered and needs no further attention here. The alleged demerit is the fifth link in a chain of five: 1. the sinning of Adam; 2. the immediate imputation of the guilt of his sin to the race; 3. the divine punishment of the race on the ground of this imputation; 4. the common native depravity as the consequence of that penal infliction; 5. the intrinsic sinfulness and demerit of the common native depravity.

We are all absolutely without any personal agency in a single link of this chain. It is not even pretended that we have any. The doctrine is, that the universal amenability to an eternal penal doom arises from the common native depravity passively inherited from Adam. If consistently with the divine justice there can be such native sinfulness, such penal desert of a mere nature passively received, then the absolute infliction of the deserved punishment upon all the race, and in an eternal penal doom, would be equally consistent with that justice. There can be no injustice in the infliction of deserved penalty. If such are the possibilities respecting the human race, there must be possible modes wherein the guilt of sin could be spread over the moral universe, and all intelligences without any agency of their own be justly whelmed in an eternal penal doom. There must be error in a doctrine which clearly points to such possibilities.

3. Demerit of Childhood.—This goes with the doctrine of an intrinsic sinfulness and demerit of the nature with which we are born. The doctrine has the fullest avowal. Hence, if it be true, the infant just born, yea, and before it is born, deserves an eternal penal doom, and might be justly so punished.

4. Demerit from Punishment.—This is not only an inevitable implication of the doctrine, but is openly avowed. Sin is punished with sin—the punishment of sin is sin. Native depravity is a judicial infliction on the ground of Adamic sin; and native depravity is the very seat and substance of native sin and demerit. But punishment, however just, cannot deserve further punishment. Penalty carries over no sin to the subject of its infliction. If punishment created the desert of further punishment there could be no arrest of the ever deepening doom. There is no such law of justice either human or divine.

5. An Unintelligible Sin.—What is the sin of a nature considered as demerit and amenability to punishment? Native depravity is the corruption of the moral nature, with its characteristic tendency to evil, and the source of actual sin. When we say the source of actual sin we cannot mean the agent in the actual sinning. All that we can mean is that it acts as an incitement of the personal agent toward sinning. The corrupt nature cannot itself sin; and the doctrine is, not that it sins and has demerit on that account, but that it is sin, and in a sense to have penal desert.

What is this intrinsic sin of our common native depravity? Is it definable as sin? Is its demerit a fixed quantity as the guilt of one sin, or an increasing quantity as the guilt of repeated sins? This subjective state is in itself ever the same irrespective of our personal agency; the same in our sleeping as in our waking hours. Does the demerit increase as one's life lengthens, and in its unconscious hours just as in the conscious? Dr. Summers, himself an Arminian, after maintaining the doctrine of native sinfulness, says: "Thus the principle out of which the action springs is sinful, as well as the action itself. The unregenerate man is a sinner all the time; that is his character when asleep or at work, as well as when he is in the very act of transgressing. All jurisprudence is based on this."[554] The citation might be accepted as a statement of the sin of our nature, if this could be viewed as one sin, with a definite amount of guilt; but there is no light in the view as stated, and hence no explication of the real perplexities of the question.

[554]Systematic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 53, 54. This sin is intrinsic to the native corruption of our nature. It does not lie in the inheritance of this corrupt nature, nor in its incitements to evil-doing, nor in the actual sin which it may prompt, which is purely a personal sin committed in the exercise of a responsible personal agency. To locate this sin in any of these specified facts is to deny it to the corrupt nature, and thus to contradict the deepest principle of the doctrine. To locate it in the incitements of the corrupt nature to evil-doing is to deny its intrinsicalness to the nature. If the demerit of the nature is still maintained on the ground of these incitements they must be regarded as actual sins, for otherwise no demerit of the nature could arise from them. This requires that the nature be invested with the powers of a responsible personality, for only a person responsibly constituted can commit an actual sin. Thus we should be led away from a sinful nature to a sinning nature, and from a nature in itself to a nature invested with personality, and the doctrine of native demerit and damnableness would be wholly lost. An actual sin, with the desert of punishment in the sinner, is clearly open to the cognizance of the average mind, but the sinfulness of a mere nature, with the desert of punishment, is hidden in obscurity. Its utter unintelligibility disproves its

reality.

6. The Ground of Election and Reprobation.—That native sinfulness furnishes the ground of election and reprobation is a perplexity for such Arminians as hold the doctrine rather than for

Calvinism. Indeed, as previously shown, it is not only in full accord with this system, but is a vital principle of the system in its prevalent infralapsarian form. Of course no Arminian can hold the special election and reprobation so fully wrought into Calvinism. No more can he consistently admit any sufficient ground for them. Such, therefore, as hold the doctrine of native sinfulness must either deny that it furnishes real and sufficient ground for election and reprobation, or attempt a modification of the doctrine in a manner to avoid this consequence. The latter is the course uniformly taken. The question is specially concerned with the decree of reprobation or preterition.

If our native depravity is of the nature of sin, and of sin in a sense to deserve an eternal penal doom, there could be no injustice in the infliction of the penalty. Penalty is never unjust, and never can be unjust, while within the limit of sinful demerit. Hence, out of this world of sinners, if it so please God, he might elect a part unto salvation and leave the rest to the just punishment of their sin. We might assume that his mercy was partial, but could not say that his justice was cruel or even partial. It does not appear in the doctrine, that justice asserted any unyielding claim for the punishment of a part, but only that it pleased the divine goodness to save a part, and to leave the rest to the just punishment of their sin. Such would have been the righteous doom of all, had it not pleased the divine love savingly to interpose in behalf of a part. This is the doctrine, and one that has received frequent expression in confessional symbols and individual utterance. If the doctrine of native sinfulness, with the desert of an eternal penal doom, be true, sublapsarian Calvinism is thereby furnished with real and sufficient ground for the doctrine of election and reprobation which it maintains. It is well for Arminians to see this, and to see it clearly. Some do thus see it. “Methodism clearly perceives that to admit that mankind are actually born into the world justly under condemnation is to grant the foundation of the whole Calvinistic scheme. Granted natal desert of damnation, there can be no valid objection to the sovereign election of a few out of the reprobate mass, or to limited atonement, irresistible grace, and final perseverance to secure the present and eternal salvation of the sovereignly predestinated number.”[555] [555] Summers:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, p. 38. By the editor. In the way of seemingly, but only seemingly, adverse criticism, Mr. “Watson says: “It is an easy and plausible thing to say, in the usual loose and general manner of stating the sublapsarian doctrine, that the whole race having fallen in Adam, and become justly liable to eternal death, God might, without any impeachment of his justice, in the exercise of his sovereign grace, appoint some to life and salvation by Christ, and leave the others to their deserved punishment.”[556] If the native sinfulness be accepted as a truth, the statement of the sublapsarian doctrine is surely easy enough because of its thorough ground in such sinfulness. Nor is such statement merely plausible or loose and general, but definite, consistent, and well grounded. In these words there is not the slightest dissent from Mr. Watson, and for the reason that in the citation he neither denies nor even questions the sufficiency of such native sinfulness as the ground of election and reprobation. It was in view of this fact that we qualified his statement as only a seemingly adverse criticism of this position.

[556]Theological Institutes, vol. ii, p. 394. In accordance with all this, Mr. Watson proceeds at once to dispute the Calvinistic position by an open denial of the assumed native sinfulness. “But this is a

false view of the case, built upon the false assumption that the whole race were personally and individually, in consequence of Adam's fall, absolutely liable to eternal death. That very fact which is the foundation of the whole scheme, is easy to be refuted on the clearest authority of Scripture; while not a passage can be adduced, we may boldly affirm, which sanctions any such doctrine. 'The wages of sin is death.' That the death which is the wages or penalty of sin extends to eternal death, we have before proved. But 'sin is the transgression of the law;' and in no other light is it represented in Scripture, when eternal death is threatened as its penalty, than as the act of a rational being sinning against a law known or knowable, and as an act avoidable, and not forced or necessary."[557] As only such sin can be justly liable to eternal punishment, and as the human race, descended from Adam, had no part in the commission of any such sin previous to birth, therefore they could not be born with any sin amenable to an eternal penal doom. This is good and wholesome doctrine, and withal truly Arminian. It would be well for Arminians rigidly to adhere to it, and never to hold or maintain the contrary or any thing which implies the contrary. Their fundamental principles would thus be secure, and no open place would be yielded to the doctrine of election and reprobation.

[557]Theological Institutes, vol. ii, pp. 394, 395.

114. III. The True Arminian Doctrine.

III. The True Arminian Doctrine.

1. Native Depravity without Native Demerit.—We have previously shown that native depravity as a fact, and its sinfulness in a sense to deserve divine punishment, are distinct questions, and open to separate answers. The truth of the latter is no consequence of the truth of the former. We have maintained the reality of native depravity, but controverted the doctrine of its intrinsic demerit, and have no occasion to renew the discussion. The present aim is to point out the true position of Arminianism on the question of native sinfulness in the sense of penal desert, whether assumed to be grounded in a participation in the sin of Adam or in the corruption of nature inherited from him. That position, as we view it, is accurately expressed in the above heading: native depravity without native demerit. Native depravity is a part of the Arminian system, and entirely consistent with its principles; native demerit is discordant and contradictory.[558]

[558] Much of the Arminian treatment of original sin is unsatisfactory. Native desert of penal retribution cannot be reconciled with the determining principles of the Arminian system. Hence Arminians who accept such a doctrine of original sin, as not a few have done, are involved in confusion and contradiction in attempting its reconciliation with their own system. These facts call for a thorough review of the Arminian treatment of original sin. Such a review will be given in an appendix to our second volume. The question may be tested by the principle of freedom in Arminianism. There is no more fundamental principle. It occupies much the same position in this system that the divine sovereignty occupies in Calvinism. As this sovereignty underlies the predestination, the monergism, the irresistibility of grace, and the final perseverance, in the one; so freedom underlies the synergism, the real conditionality of salvation, and the possibility of apostasy in the other. In Arminianism freedom must include the power of choosing the good, as the necessary ground of a responsible probation. Repentance and faith as requisite to salvation must be possible; punishable deeds must be avoidable; responsible duties must be practicable. This is the meaning of Arminianism in the maintenance of a universal grace through a universal atonement; a grace which lifts up mankind into freedom, with power to choose the good. Such freedom is the condition of moral responsibility; and without it we could be neither sinful nor punishable, because our moral life could not proceed from our own personal agency. This is the doctrine of Arminianism, always and every-where firmly maintained. But if we could not be sinful and punishable in our actual life without free personal agency, or through morally necessitated evil deeds, how can we be sinful and punishable through the sin of Adam, or on the ground of an inherited corruption of nature? Nothing could be more utterly apart from our own agency than the one or the other. Nothing could be imposed by a more absolute necessitation. Native sinfulness in the sense of punitive desert is, therefore, openly contradictory to the deepest and most determining principle of the Arminian system. With the doctrine of native demerit there is confusion and contradiction in the Arminian treatment of original sin. This result is not from any unskillful handling of that doctrine, but from its intrinsic opposition to the ruling principles of this system. The attempted adjustment to these principles finds no resting-place until it reaches a free cancellation

of that form of sin through the grace of a universal atonement. But this outcome is doctrinally much the same as the denial of original sin in the sense of demerit. It may remain in the theory, but must not be allowed to come into actuality. This is the usual outcome with Arminians who start with the doctrine of original sin in the sense of demerit. It is far better to start with the true Arminian doctrine than to reach it through so much doctrinal confusion and contradiction.

2. The Doctrine of our Seventh Article.—Articles of faith, whether formulated or appropriated by any particular Church, constitute the most definitive and authoritative expression of her doctrines. No exception can be admitted in the case of any doctrine so established. Peculiar doctrines, omitted in such articles, but grounded in approved teaching or in a common consensus, could be no exception. No diversities of interpretation can affect the principle; no improved formulation on the part of individuals can replace any established article. This principle is thoroughly valid for our seventh article, which defines our doctrine “of original or birth sin,” and will be of service in its interpretation. We must view it first in its terms, and then in its history.

“Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam, (as the Pelagians do vainly talk,) but it is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually.”

Pelagianism went to the opposite extreme from the Augustinian anthropology, and not only denied all responsible participation of the race in the sin of Adam, but equally the corruption of human nature in consequence of his fall. We enter into life in the same moral state in which Adam began his. The consequence of his sin to the race is limited to the moral force of an evil example. First of all, the article repudiates this view. Its falsity we have previously shown.

Affirmatively defined, original sin “is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually.” The doctrine we have maintained is in full accord with these definitive facts. We have fully asserted the loss of original righteousness, and the corruption of human nature, as consequences of the Adamic fall. We have maintained the common inclination to evil as the characteristic fact and the proof of native depravity. In maintaining the genetic transmission of this corruption of nature from Adam down through the race we are thoroughly at one with the article, which declares it to be “naturally engendered of the offspring of Adam.” The omissions of this article, as compared with other formulations of a doctrine of original sin, are worthy of special notice. There is not one word about a sharing of the race in the sin of Adam, or about the corruption of human nature as a judicial infliction on the ground of a common Adamic guilt. Nor is there one word which expresses or even implies an intrinsic sinfulness and damnableness of this inherited corruption of nature. Therefore we could controvert these special elements of the Augustinian doctrine, as we have done, without the slightest departure from our own doctrine as formulated in this article. The history of the article as a part of our own creed gives special doctrinal significance to this total absence of any sense of an intrinsic sinfulness of our native depravity. It is the ninth article of the Church of England, but greatly changed, especially by elimination. The change was made by Mr. Wesley, who, in 1784, prepared, and sent over by Bishop Coke, a set of articles for the American Methodists, then to be organized into a Church. These articles came before the notable Christmas Conference of 1784, which

organized the Church. Nor were they passively accepted from Mr. Wesley, but were formally adopted by the Conference. So have they stood in our creed from the beginning. What is thus true of all the articles is true of the seventh. The doctrinal meaning of the change made in the original article appears in the light of these facts.[559] If the article, just as it stands, had been an original formulation by Mr. Wesley or the Christmas Conference, the sense of an intrinsic penal desert of an inherited corruption of our nature could not be read into it. Much more is such a sense excluded by the formal elimination of every word which expressed it in the appropriated article. Every such word was so eliminated; not only the strong words, “it deserveth God’s wrath and damnation,” but the far softer word “fault,” as applied to this nature. It follows that native depravity without demerit or penal desert is the doctrine of our seventh article.[560]

[559] We here give so much of the original article as concerns the present question, and italicize the eliminations, that the change may be clearly seen: Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but it is thefault andcorruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil,so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit, and therefore in every person born into this world, it deserveth God’s wrath and damnation.

[560]Such is our article “of original or birth sin;” and, so far as we know, it is the article of all the Methodist Churches of America. Hence, when Dr. Pope said, as we previously noted, that Methodism accepts the ninth article of the Church of England on original sin, clearly he was historically inaccurate.

It follows, further, that such is the doctrine of the Methodist Episcopal Church. There has been much questioning among divines of the Church of England respecting the terms of penal desert in their own article.[561] Not a few have recoiled from their more obvious sense, and tried to soften their severer import. The complete elimination of these terms not only frees us from all such questioning, but wholly excludes from our doctrine the sense of demerit in native depravity. On a principle previously stated, our seventh article so determines our doctrine of original sin, that nothing contrary to it can have any authority on this question. For instance, in our second article the words still remain which set forth Christ as a sacrifice “for original guilt” as well as for “actual sins.” This recognition of native guilt should have been eliminated from the second article in order to bring it into harmony with the seventh. The simplest explanation of its remaining is through mere oversight in the revision of the articles.

[561]Burnet, Lawrence, and Forbes severally on the Thirty-nine Articles, article ix.

Whatever the explanation, on this question of original sin the words can have no doctrinal weight against the specific seventh article. Any utterances in the writings of Wesley himself contrary to this article must yield to its doctrinal authority. “Wesley rejects the doctrine of our personal desert of damnation here affirmed, for the very good reason that it contradicts our intuitive sense of right and justice. That rejection removes a contradiction to the moral sense and to common sense from theology. Great were Wesley’s logical powers; greater his administrative powers; but greatest of all his intuitive powers. His primitive intuitive perceptions might for the time being be overborne by hereditary prejudices, or clamor of dogmas, or the temporary exigencies of argument; but when he hushed all these hinderances down, his intuitive faculties spoke with an almost infallible clearness.

And undoubtedly the moment when he prepared these twenty-four articles was, if any moment of his life, the crisis when he looked at pure, absolute truth. Those articles were to be for all Methodism standard; and if ever, in sermon, essay, treatise, or commentary, he has expressed a different view, that different view is canceled before this one monumental work. Wesley himself would have to be over-ruled by his own twenty-four articles by us accepted 'of faith.'"[562] What is thus true of all the articles is specially true of the seventh,—specially, because of the profound doctrinal change made in it by elimination.[563] [562] Whedon:Methodist Quarterly Review, 1882, p. 365.

[563]In the earlier writings of Wesley there are utterances doctrinally contrary to this article, and which therefore must be canceled by its supreme authority. In his Southern Review, 1876, Dr. Bledsoe ably discussed the doctrinal significance of the change in this article, and maintained, as a sure implication, that in his later years Wesley repudiated his earlier views of original sin. Our theologians, who in the treatment of anthropology asserted a strong doctrine of native demerit, yet in the fuller discussion of the Arminian system, particularly in its issues with Calvinism, practically came into full harmony with the doctrine of our seventh article. Others, however, have denied the native demerit and from the beginning maintained the doctrine of the article. Respecting inherited depravity, Dr. Fisk says: "The guilt of depravity is not imputed to the subject of it until by intelligent volition he makes the guilt his own by resisting and rejecting the grace of the Gospel."[564] It has already appeared that such is the view of Dr. Whedon. Against the doctrine of reprobation, which grounds itself in the assumption that all men deserve an eternal penal doom simply on account of original sin, he says: "We hold, on the contrary, that though sinward tendencies exist in germ in the infant, yet there is no responsibility, and no damnability, until these tendencies are deliberately and knowingly acted in real life, and by that action appropriated and sanctioned."[565] The decisive doctrinal point in both citations is that, with the reality of native depravity, guilt can arise only on the ground of responsible personal volition.

[564]Calvinistic Controversy, p. 183.

[565]Commentary,Ephesians 2:3.

There is a special Arminian view of original sin which should not be passed without notice. While denying all sharing of the race in the guilt of Adam's sin, it asserts a common guilt on the ground of inherited depravity, and then covers this guilt with the canceling grace of justification.[566] This view is specially open to criticism, and for any consistency of doctrine should maintain a common infant regeneration as well as justification. If inherited depravity is intrinsically sinful, so as to involve us in guilt and condemnation, justification is impossible so long as it remains. It is the doctrine of some creeds that a portion of original sin remains in the regenerate, but that the guilt thereof is not imputed to believers.[567] There is great perplexity even in this view. It is not claimed that this remnant of original sin is different in moral character from the prior whole; rather it is declared to be of the nature of sin, just as the prior whole. How then can we be justified from the guilt of a nature, though but a modicum of the original whole, but which is intrinsically sinful and still remains within us? Let anyone analyze this question and set it in the light of clear thought, and he will find the answer very perplexing. How then shall we explain the justification of infants who are born with the totality of this corrupt and sinful nature? There is no possible explanation. With such a doctrine of original sin infant regeneration must go with infant justification, for otherwise the

latter is impossible. Further, if infants are born in a regenerate state, the ground of native guilt has disappeared, and there is no need of the justification. And, finally, with the disappearance of native depravity, the doctrinal outcome stands rather with Pelagius and Socinus than with Arminius and Wesley.

[566]Summers:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 36-39. By the editor.

[567]Articles of the Church of England, article ix; Westminster Confession, chap, vi, sec. v.

3. The Requirement of a True Definition of Sin.—There can be no true definition of sin which includes the guilt of an inherited nature. A mere nature cannot be the subject of guilt. No more can it be sinful in the sense of penal desert. Only a person can be the subject of guilt; and a person can be a responsible sinner only through his own agency. There can be no true definition of sin which omits a responsible personal agency. Arminianism can admit no definition which omits such agency or includes the guilt of an inherited corruption of nature. A prominent definition is given in these words: “Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.”[568] There is no objection to this formula, as it may be fairly interpreted consistently with a true definition. It does not exclude personal agency from any form of responsible sin. Yet it is often so interpreted and applied to the common inherited depravity. The meaning is, that this nature is out of conformity with the law of God, and therefore it is sin. This sense contradicts the imperative principles above stated, and means that simply on the ground of an inherited corruption of nature every infant is a responsible sinner and deserves an eternal penal doom. Any sinful non-conformity to the law of God must have respect to the law’s demands. It, however, lays no demands upon human nature, simply as such, and without personality. Hence there can be no sinful disconformity of an inherited nature to the law of God. The divine law lays its demands upon persons, and only upon persons. If these demands have respect to our inner nature, and even to our inherited depravity, still they are laid upon us in our personality, and with the recognition of our personal responsibility for oar present moral state. While not responsible for the corruption of our nature by genetic transmission, yet, with the grace of purification freely offered and at hand, we are justly responsible for its continuance. Still, the law makes its demands of us in our personality, and any sinful disconformity to these demands involves our personal agency. Another definition of the Westminster Confession gives the true principle, which really excludes such an erroneous interpretation: “Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of any law of God, given as a rule to the reasonable creature.”[569] The ruling principle of this definition is, that sin is some form of disobedience to a divine law imposed upon a rational subject. Such a subject must be a person, with the power of personal agency; and only through his own agency can he become a responsible sinner according to the terms of this definition.

[568]Westminster Confession: Shorter Catechism, Q. 14 [569]The Larger Catechism, Q. 24.

Arminius gives, by appropriation, a good definition of sin: “Something thought, spoken, or done against the law of God; or the omission of something which has been commanded by that law to be thought, spoken, or done.”[570] The sin so defined he calls, by general characterization, actual sin. In the details all the forms of actual sin may be included; and equally all the forms of responsible sin which an Arminian definition can consistently include. In replying to an objection assumed to contradict the possibility of salvation from all sin in the present life, Mr. Wesley gives a definition of sin: ‘‘I answer, it will perfectly well consist with salvation from sin, according to that

definition of sin (which I apprehend to be the scriptural definition of it), a voluntary transgression of a known law."[571] It is entirely consistent with this definition so to broaden the sense of transgression as to include all forms of disobedience to the divine law, and even all the details given in the definition of Arminius. The voluntary element goes with all. In close connection with the definition the same sense of sin is asserted, and a contrary sense discarded. Both the definitions in this paragraph are in full accord with Arminian doctrine.

[570]Writings, vol. i, p. 486 [571]Sermons, vol. ii, p. 172.

We add our own definition: Sin is disobedience to a law of God, conditioned on free moral agency and opportunity of knowing the law. In this view, law is the expression of the divine will respecting human duty, and the mode of the expression is indifferent to the principles of the definition. The disobedience may be either a transgression or an omission; in either thought or feeling, word or deed. It must be some doing or omission of doing; therefore, really some doing. An omission of duty is as really voluntary as any act of transgression. The specified free agency and opportunity of knowing the law are necessary conditions of moral responsibility, and therefore the necessary conditions of sin. Such disobedience, and only such, is sin in the sense of penal desert. Omit any specified element, or admit any contrary element, and there can be no true definition of sin. Native demerit excludes every element of the true definition. Therefore native depravity cannot be sin in the sense of penal desert.

4. Native Depravity a Reality and a Moral Ruin.—We previously pointed out that native depravity, as a subjective moral state, is the very same under a law of genetic transmission that it would be if a judicial infliction on the ground of a common Adamic guilt. So, we here point out that, as such a state, it is the very same without the demerit of sin that it would be with such demerit. It follows that the reality of native depravity is not affected by the disproof of its intrinsic sinfulness. The argument previously maintained in proof of native depravity fully remains in its conclusiveness. Nor is the common native depravity any less really a state of moral ruin. The evils attributed to it in our own articles are intrinsic to its nature. "It is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually." This is a state of alienage from the true spiritual life, and utterly without fitness for a state of holy blessedness. Nor have we any power of self-redemption. "The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and works, to faith, and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant, and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will."[572] Such is the doctrine of native depravity which we have maintained, while controverting the assumption of its intrinsic sinfulness.

[572]Articles vii, viii.

How then is Christ the Saviour of infants, particularly of such as die in infancy? This question will not fail to be asked. "But if the infant is irresponsible, how can Christ be to him a pardoner of sin and a Saviour? We might reply, that it does not make Christ any pardoner of sin to imagine a factitious sin, or a guilt which has no foundation in the nature of things. The pardon will remain just as factitious, just as merely verbal, as the guilt to be pardoned. But Christ still stands a Saviour to the infant, as we hold, in the following respects: 1. We have elsewhere shown that had Christ not

been given the race would, in all probability, not have been permitted to be propagated after the fall. . . . So the grace of Christ underlies the very existence of every human being that is born. 2. Between the infant descendant of fallen Adam and God there is a contrariety of moral nature, by which the former is irresponsibly, and in undeveloped condition, averse to the latter, and so displacent to him. By Christ, the Mediator, that averseness is regeneratively removed, and the divine complacency restored: so that the race is enabled to persist under the divine grace, 3. Christ, in case of infant death, entirely removes this sinward nature, so as to harmonize the being with the holiness of heaven. 4. Christ is the infant's justifier against every accuser . . . whether devils, evil men, or mistaken theologians; asserting their claim through his merits, in spite of their fallen lineage, to redemption and heaven. Being thus purified, justified, and glorified by Christ, none are more truly qualified to join in the song of Moses and the Lamb."[573] [573] Whedon:Commentary,Ephesians 2:3.

Careful and candid students of historical theology, on the question of anthropology assign to Arminianism the doctrinal position which we have maintained—native depravity without native demerit.[574]

[574] Hill:Divinity, pp. 398-400; Cunningham:Historical Theology, vol. ii, p. 388; Muller:Christian Doctrine of Sin, vol. ii, p. 320; Shedd:History of Doctrines, vol. ii, pp. 178-186; Schaff:Creeds of Christendom, vol. i, p. 897.

5. Question of Practical Results.—The doctrine of native demerit is often commended on an assumption of practical value. The view is this: the deeper the sense of sin, the more thorough is the moral recovery and the intenser the spiritual life; the deepest sense of sin is possible only with the doctrine of native demerit; hence the practical value of the doctrine. The major premise is not questioned; but the minor is disputed. Besides, with the admission of practical benefit, the doctrine may have evil consequences which more than balance the good. The deepest sense of sin is possible only with the sense of personal culpability. No form of original sin can furnish this element. Even the higher realism does not assume that we can have any personal consciousness of a responsible sharing in the sin of Adam. The alleged ground of such sharing is purely speculative, and too shadowy for any real sense of culpability for that sin. The representative theory is quite as impotent. Indeed, in its own definitions it denies the culpability of the race for the sin of Adam. The demerit of that sin was personal to himself and untransferable to his offspring. So the doctrine asserts. Here is the difference between reatus culpae and reatus poenae. We are amenable to the- punishment of Adam's sin, but not guilty of the sin itself—do not share its culpability or turpitude. The difference is profound, and must be profound for our moral consciousness. A mere guilt judicially imposed, and without any ground in personal desert, never can bring the soul into that deep sense of sin which is of special value in its moral recovery. There can be no true sense of responsibility for the derivation of a depraved nature from Adam. If on reaching a responsible age the stirrings of this nature trouble the conscience, let the experience be analyzed, and there will be found underlying the sense of responsibility the deeper sense of power in hand, or power at hand, to restrain these impulses and to prevent their ruling power in the life. It is only at the point where personal agency meets the activities of this inherited nature that the true sense of responsibility can arise. We do not find in the doctrine of native guilt the element of practical value assumed in its commendation. The doctrine tends to excess, and in its earlier history soon ran into great exaggeration; so much so as to absorb attention and quite dismiss the

infinitely deeper turpitude of actual sin as a matter of comparatively little concern. Since the time of Augustine, and in the line of his following, native sinfulness in the sense of penal desert has been the great theme of doctrinal anthropology. It has dominated the view of the atonement and the interpretation of Scripture. The atonement meets its profoundest necessity in the enormity of native guilt. The question has even been raised whether Christ atoned for any other form of sin. After Paul proves by a great argument the universality of actual sin, and in that truth grounds the necessity for the atonement and justification by faith, his doctrine of sin is interpreted as having almost exclusive reference to original sin—that form of guilt and damnableness in which all are held to be born. The world of actual sinners is thus dismissed from the view of Paul, and the world of infants is put in their place as though the very worst of sinners. This appears in the interpretation of a popular statement of Paul (Romans 5:12-19) respecting the relation of the Adamic fall to the universal sinfulness, and the relation of the atonement in Christ to our justification and salvation. This exaggeration of native sinfulness, with the consequence of pushing men's actual and personally responsible sins so much out of view, cannot be a practical good; indeed, must be a practical evil. The early history of the doctrine discloses very serious consequences of evil to the true Christian life. These evils appeared in baptismal regeneration and sacerdotalism. It is not meant that either had its inception with Augustine. Both appear in the high ecclesiasticism of which Cyprian was a chief representative. But there was already a strong doctrine of native guilt, as may be seen specially in Tertullian; and from their inception both baptismal regeneration and sacerdotalism will be found in close connection with this doctrine. The doctrine of Augustine fell in with those evil tendencies, and so was received with the greater favor.[575] His doctrine of native sin not only fell in with these evils, but by its own exaggerated form greatly intensified them. The law of this consequence is easily disclosed.

[575]Milman:Latin Christianity, vol. i, p. 172. The doctrine of Augustine carried with it the damnation of infants. This consequence was felt to be horrible. Augustine himself was appalled. No wonder that he cried to Jerome for help in this awful perplexity. There could be no rest. All the better feelings of pious souls cried out for relief. There were no eyes to see the assured blessedness of dying infants in the free grace of a universal atonement. Relief was sought in the sacrament of baptism. Baptism must have power to wash away sin—must have, because of the exigency of infant salvation. Baptism thus became a saving ordinance; and, naturally enough, very soon for adult sinners as well as for dying infants. Here was the source of infinite detriment to the spiritual life of the Church. But if the sacraments are saving we must have a priesthood for their proper administration. Sacerdotalism is the result. Sacerdotalism, like baptismal regeneration, has been a calamity to the Christian life. By legitimate consequence, Augustine's exaggerated doctrine of native sin greatly strengthened and intensified both, and sent them down the centuries as a fearful heritage of evil. Moral paralysis and despair were in his doctrine. Within the moral and religious sphere, man was absolutely helpless; a mass of sin and perdition, with power only to sin, and under the absolute necessity of sinning. In the utter blackness and darkness of the doctrine no eyes could see the universal grace of a universal atonement. We are pleased to note that many who have inherited the substance of this doctrine have freed themselves from its more serious consequences. Yet it still widely nourishes and supports the deadly evils of baptismal regeneration and sacerdotalism. The doctrine we maintain is free from all such evil results, and yet carries with it the very best practical forces. It is well known that the Methodist doctrine of sin is greatly modified by her doctrine of the atonement and the universality of its grace. We have ever held the

doctrine of a common native depravity; that this depravity is in itself a moral ruin; and that there is no power in us by nature unto a good life. But through a universal atonement there is a universal grace—the light and help of the Holy Spirit in every soul. If we are born with a corrupt nature in descent from Adam, we receive our existence under an economy of redemption, with a measure of the grace of Christ. With such grace, which shall receive increase on its proper use, we may turn unto the Lord and be saved. With these doctrines of native depravity and universal grace there is for every soul the profoundest lesson of personal responsibility for sin, and of the need of Christ in order to salvation and a good life.

General reference.—Augustine: On Original Sin, Works, vol. xii, Edinburgh, 1874; Calvin: Institutes, book ii, chaps, i-iii; Witsius: The Covenants, book i; Edwards: Original Sin, Works, vol. ii, part iv; Wesley: The Doctrine of Original Sin, Works, vol. v, pp. 492-669; Wiggers: Augustinism and Pelagianism; Hopkins: Doctrine of the Two Covenants; Straffen: Sin as Set Forth in the Scriptures, Hulsean Lectures, 1874; Persier: Oneness of the Race in its Fall and its Future, translated from the French; Wallace: Representative Responsibility; Dwight: Theology, sermons xxvi-xxxiii; Baird: The Elohim Revealed, chaps, vii-xviii; Fitch: The Nature of Sin; Princeton Essays, Original Sin, v; Doctrine of Imputation, vi-viii; Taylor: The Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin; Pond: Christian Theology, lects. xxix-xxxv; Shedd: The Doctrine of Original Sin, Theological Essays, pp. 211-264; Dogmatic Theology, Anthropology; Hodge: Systematic Theology, Anthropology; Laidlaw: The Bible Doctrine of Man; Tulloch:The Christian Doctrine of Sin; Boardman: The Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin; Flower: Adam’s Disobedience and its Results; Burgess: Original Sin; Landis: Original Sin, and Gratuitous Imputation; Glover: A Short Treatise on Original Sin; Muller: The Christian Doctrine of Sin; Fisher: Discussions in History and Theology, Augustinian and Federal Theories; Payne: The Doctrine of Original Sin, Congregational Lectures, 1845; Curry: Fragments, Religious and Theological, i-iii ; Raymond:Systematic Theology, Anthropology.

115. Part IV.—Christology.

Part IV.—Christology.

Christology—Χριστο■ λ■γος—has Christ for its subject, and might properly include his divinity and subsistence in the Trinity; his incarnation and unique personality; his prophetic, priestly, and kingly offices. Such truths are central to Christianity, and determinative of what it is in itself, and in distinction from other religions. Their inclusion in Christology would give to it a very wide scope. Then, in addition to the range of its own legitimate topics, the subject is greatly broadened in its doctrinal history. Few questions in theology have been more persistently or deeply discussed. The fact is quite natural to the intrinsic importance of the subject. Besides, the discussion has been intensified by the divergences of doctrinal views of the Christ. For the present, however, we are specially concerned with the one question of the person of Christ. This does not mean the omission of other great topics of Christology. They must be included in a system of Christian theology because they involve fundamental truths of the system. Some of them are inseparably connected with the question of the person of Christ, but may be more appropriately discussed in other parts of the system. The question of personality is itself a subject of wide scope. It is such m the range of its own topics, and also in its doctrinal history. It is the one question of Christology which has been most in discussion. Opposing views have been maintained; and the issues thus raised have been regarded, not as matters of merely speculative interest, but as questions of the profoundest religious concern. The result is that the theories and discussions respecting the person of Christ occupy a large place in the history of Christian doctrine. Any one who wishes to study these discussions can readily find ample resources in the literature which they have produced, particularly in Corner’s great work on the development of the history of the doctrine of the person of Christ. However, systematic theology is concerned with this history only so far as it may be helpful in reaching the true doctrine.

116. Chapter 1: The Person Of Christ.

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117. I. Construction Of The Doctrine.

I. Construction Of The Doctrine.

1. Importance of a True Doctrine.—The doctrine of the person of Christ is not a question of mere speculative interest, but one that vitally concerns the central realities of Christianity itself. No other religion is related to its founder as Christianity is related to Christ. Buddhism is related to Buddha simply as the original of its doctrines and cults. They derive no intrinsic worth from him, and would he the very same in value if originated by any other man. The same is true of Confucianism and Mohammedanism, and of every other religion of human origin. Even in the instance of men divinely commissioned and inspired for the communication of religious truth and the institution of forms of worship, nothing in themselves gives intrinsic worth to either the truth so communicated or the religious service so instituted. So thoroughly is this true that, in the providence of God, other men might have replaced Moses and Aaron, David and Isaiah, Peter and Paul, without any intrinsic change in either Judaism or Christianity. It could not be so respecting Christ. Without him Christianity could not be what it is. No man could have taken his place. He so wrought himself into Christianity that what he is must determine what it is. It follows that the doctrinal view of the person of Christ must determine the view of Christianity itself. The history of doctrinal opinions respecting the person of Christ witnesses to the importance of a true doctrine. Indeed, without the details of history this importance is clearly manifest in the inevitable consequences of any serious or determining error of doctrine. Hereafter we shall have occasion to point out several error in Christology and to note their consequences. For the present it may suffice that we place the Socinian doctrine in contrast with the Chalcedonian or orthodox doctrine. In the former Christ is a mere man, a mere human person. No spiritual or miraculous endowments, not even such as the older Socinianism freely conceded, could change this fact. He would still be a mere man. In the latter doctrine he is a theanthropic person—truly God-man. He is the Son of God incarnate in our nature. In this doctrine there is sure and sufficient ground for all the great facts of Christian soteriology: atonement; justification by faith; regeneration by the Holy Spirit; a new and gracious spiritual life. There is no ground for these great facts in the Socinian Christology. A mere human Christ could not make an atonement for sin. He could not be a Saviour in any other mode than that in which Peter and Paul, Luther and Wesley, Edwards and Asbury, were saviours. So determining is the doctrine of the person of Christ in Christian theology. Without his divinity and incarnation, without his theanthropic personality, he is another Christ, and Christianity is robbed of its divine realities in the measure of the change in him.

2. Early Need of Doctrinal Construction.—In Christianity, even from the beginning, Christ was the great theme of the Gospel and the life of Christian experience and hope. Therefore he could not fail to be the subject of much thought. Nor could such thought limit itself to merely devotional meditations, but inevitably advanced to the study of his true nature or personality. For the deepest Christian consciousness Christ was the Saviour for whose sake all sin was forgiven, and in whose fellowship all the rich blessings of the new spiritual life were received. For such a consciousness he could not be a mere man. It is true that in the history of his life he appeared in the fashion of a

man and in the possession of human characteristics; still, for the Christian consciousness he must have been more than man. But how much more? And wherein more? Such questions could not fail to be asked; and in the very asking there was a reaching forth of Christian thought for a doctrine of the person of Christ. In such a mental movement the many utterances of Scripture which ascribe to him a higher nature and higher perfections than the merely human would soon be reached. Here it is that a doctrine of the person of Christ would begin to take form. He is human, and yet more than human; is the Son of God incarnate in the nature of man; is human and divine.

Reflective thought could not pause at this stage. If Christ is both divine and human in his natures, how are these natures related to each other? What is the influence of each upon the other on account of their conjunction or union in him? Is Christ two persons according to his two natures, or one person in the union of the two? Such questions were inevitable. Nor could they remain unanswered. The answers were given in the different theories of the person of Christ which appeared in the earlier Christian centuries.

It is not to be thought strange that theories differed. The subject is one of the profoundest. It lies in the mystery of the divine incarnation. The divine Son invests himself in human nature. So far the statement of the incarnation is easily made; but the statement leaves us on the surface of the profound reality. With a merely tactual or sympathetic union of the two natures, and consequently two distinct persons in Christ, the reality of the divine incarnation disappears. With the two distinct natures, and the two classes of divine and human facts, how can he be one person? Is the divine nature humanized, or the human nature deified in him? Or did the union of the two natures result in a third nature different from both, and so provide for the oneness of his personality? The Scriptures make no direct answer to these questions. They give us many Christological facts, but in elementary form, and leave the construction of a doctrine of the person of Christ to the resources of Christian thought.

Soon various doctrines were set forth. In each case the doctrine was constructed according to what was viewed as the more vital or determining fact of Christology, as related to the person of Christ. Opposing views and errors of doctrine were the result. More or less contention was inevitable. The interest of the subject was too profound for theories to be held as mere private opinions, or with indifference to opposing views. The strife was a serious detriment to the Christian life. Hence there was need of a carefully constructed doctrine of the person of Christ ; need that the construction should be the work of the best Christian thought, and that it should be done in a manner to secure the highest moral sanction of the Church.

3. Formula of the Council of Chalcedon.—The state of facts previously described called for some action of the Church which might correct or, at least, mitigate existing evils. Certainly there was need that errors in Christology should be corrected and contending parties reconciled. A council which should embody the truest doctrinal thought of the Church seemed the best agency for the attainment of these ends. The Council of Chalcedon was constituted accordingly, in the year of our Lord 451. The Council of Nice was specially concerned with the doctrine of the Trinity. The doctrine constructed clearly and strongly asserted the true and essential divinity of Christ, but expressed nothing definitely respecting his personality. For more than a century this great question still remained without doctrinal formulation by any assembly properly representative of the Church. The construction of such a doctrine was the special work of the Council of Chalcedon.

The subject was not a new one. Much preparatory work had been done. Many minds were in possession of the true doctrine, which was already the prevalent faith of the Church. There was such preparation for the work of this Council. Indeed, the notable letter of Leo, Pope of Rome, to Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople, so accurately and thoroughly outlined a doctrinal statement of the person of Christ, that little more remained for the Council than to cast the material into the mold of its own thought and send it forth under the moral sanction of the Church.

Perfection is rarely attained in such work; never, indeed, on so profound a subject. Yet the work of this Council was well done. The Chalcedonian symbol combines the elements of truth respecting the person of Christ. There is no better construction of the doctrine. It is true that this symbol has not completely dominated the Christological thought of the Church; yet it has ever held a position of commanding influence, and has furnished the material and the model for the Christological symbols since constructed in the orthodox Churches. In view of these facts we here give it entire:

“We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in Manhood; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable [rational] soul and body; consubstantial [co-essential] with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the mother of God, according to the Manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ; as the prophets from the beginning [have declared] concerning him, and the Lord Jesus Christ himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has handed down to us.”[576] [576] Schaff:Creeds of Christendom, vol. ii, pp. 62, 63.

It is proper to note the doctrinal contents of this formula, so far as they directly concern the question of the person of Christ. He is the subject of its doctrinal predications. Christ, the incarnate Son, is truly and essentially divine: perfect in Godhead;” “consubstantial with the Father according to the Godhead.” In these affirmations there is a formal exclusion of the Arian Christology, which denied the essential divinity of Christ. The real and complete humanity of Christ is definitely affirmed. He is “truly man, of a reasonable soul and body;” “consubstantial with us according to the manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin.” These affirmations were formally exclusive of two heresies in Christology: the Gnostic, which denied to Christ the possession of a real body of flesh and blood; and the Apollinarian, which denied to him the possession of a human mind. The personal oneness of Christ in the union of the two natures is affirmed: “One and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one person and one subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons.” These doctrinal predications excluded two heresies in Christology: the Nestorian, in which Christ was held to be two persons, not one; and the Eutychian, which held the deification of the human nature in consequence of its union with the divine in the incarnation; so that the human nature became one with the divine. On this great

question the Athanasian Creed is in full accord With the Chalcedonian: “For the right faith is that we believe and confess: that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and man; . . . perfect God, and perfect man, of reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting. . . . Who, although he be God and man, yet he is not two, but one Christ. One, not by the conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God: one altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person. For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ.”[577] It is readily seen that this creed affirms both the divinity and humanity of Christ, and the oneness of his personality in the union of the two natures in him.

[577]Schaff:Creeds of Christendom, vol. ii, pp. 68, 69. The Council of Chalcedon declared its Christological symbol to be final, and forbade the formation of any other, under penalty of excommunication. Yet the Council of Constantinople, in the year of our Lord 680, made important Christological formulations, and joined them to the Chalcedonian symbol in a manner which evinced the purpose of making them an integral part of that symbol.[578] These additions were specially intended for the correction or exclusion of monothelitism, the doctrine of one will in Christ, and to establish in its stead the doctrine of two wills: a divine will, and a human will. We here have the monothelitic and diothelitic issue—the question whether Christ had one or two wills. There is no more difficult question in Christology. It concerns the deepest mystery of the divine incarnation. It is not, therefore, a question for much dogmatism; yet, naturally enough, both parties to the issue were intensely dogmatic.

[578]Schaff:Creeds of Christendom, vol. ii, p. 72.

Monothelitism could readily admit a human will as really present in the complete human nature assumed in the divine incarnation; but the denial of its exercise in volitions distinctively human involved the very difficult task of properly interpreting many facts in the life of Christ which were seemingly of a purely human cast. On the other hand, if such human volitions are asserted, the result must be either a Nestorian or a Socinian Christology. We regard the Constantinopolitan additions to the Chalcedonian symbol as really Nestorian, though not so intended. The existence of two wills in Christ is strongly asserted; and the human is viewed, not merely as an element of the human nature assumed in the incarnation, but as an active agency in the life of Christ. There are two natural energies or operations—which must mean the separate energizings of a divine will and a human will in Christ.

Nothing that follows respecting the union and harmony of the two wills in Christ can bring their alleged duality into consistency with the oneness of his personality. The assertion respecting the complete submission of the human will to the divine will, instead of eliminating the Nestorian dualism, really concedes it.[579] No such obligatory or becoming submission can be required of any impersonal thing. Not even the heavens can be subject to any such law of courtesy, propriety, or duty. No more can a finite will in its abstract self, or apart from a finite person, be the subject of any such law. Only a person can yield a becoming or dutiful submission to the divine will. Hence, in the assertion of such a submission of the human will to the divine will in Christ, there is an assumed personal dualism which cannot be reconciled with the oneness of his personality. This is really the Nestorian error.

[579]Oportebat enim carnis voluntatem moveri, subjici vero voluntati divinae, juxta sapientissimum Athanasium.”

118. II. Elements Of The Doctrine.

II. Elements Of The Doctrine.

1. The Divine Nature of Christ.—As we found in the divinity of the Son a necessary element of the doctrine of the Trinity, so must we find in the divinity of Christ a necessary element of the doctrine of his personality, as it is maintained by the Church. If he does not possess a divine nature through the incarnation of the divine Son, there is not in him the ground of a theanthropic personality, and the Chalcedonian Christology must give place to an Arian, Nestorian, or Socinian Christology. So vital is the question of a divine nature in Christ. However, much of this question was anticipated in the discussion of the divinity of the Son as a necessary part of the doctrine of the Trinity. That discussion need not here be repeated; and it will meet all further requirement that we set forth, in its appropriate place and on the grounds of Scripture, the incarnation of the Son in the person of Christ.

2. The Human Nature of Christ.—The reality, of a human nature in Christ is determined by the presence of human facts in his life. This determination is on a principle which underlies science, and is valid for the knowledge of things in the many spheres of science. In all these spheres we know things by the presence of their distinctive qualities. The principle is thoroughly valid respecting the human nature of Christ. As we know men to be human, thoroughly human, by the presence of human facts in their lives, so by the presence of such facts in the life of Christ we know that he possessed a complete human nature. We are just as certain of this in the instance of Christ as in that of any eminent man of history. So far we have proceeded on the assumption of such human facts in his life, and, therefore, must now set them forth as they are given in the Scriptures. A summary presentation will suffice for the present point.

It is in the meaning of the first promise of a Saviour that he should be the lineal offspring of Eve (Genesis 3:15); and this means his possession of a human nature. There are various Christological facts which, in form and meaning, are in close accordance with this first promise. Christ is the seed of Abraham (Genesis 12:18; Acts 3:25); is the offspring of David (Revelation 12:16); is made of a woman (Galatians 4:4); is born of Mary (Matthew 1:21-25); is the Son of man (Matthew 13:37). All these facts mean the reality of a human nature in Christ. He was born in the manner of other children, and, both physically and mentally, grew in the manner of others: “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man” (Luke 2:52). The great texts of the divine incarnation clearly contain the truth of a human nature in Christ, and can receive no proper interpretation without it. Indeed, the reality of the divine incarnation is the reality of a human nature in Christ. A body was prepared for the Son, that through an incarnation he might redeem mankind (Hebrews 10:5-9). The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14). The Son, who was in the form of God, was made in the likeness of man (Php 2:6-7). He assumed a body of flesh and blood in the likeness of our own (Hebrews 2:14). However, as these and other texts of the incarnation must be considered in the direct treatment of that subject they need no formal exposition here.

If it should be said that these texts make no direct mention of a human soul as a part of the nature assumed by the Son, the fact is admitted; but it is not admitted that they mean any restriction to a mere physical nature. That in the incarnation the divine Son did assume a complete human nature, the mind as well as the body, is manifest in many facts in the life of Christ. These facts are such that they cannot be interpreted without the presence of a human mind in him. We recall the fact of his increase in wisdom. This increase shows the presence and development of a human mind. This is none the less certain if we account his growing wisdom specially moral or spiritual in its kind. For such a growth there must be a ground in rational mind. The temptations of Christ, both as presented to him and as endured or repelled by him, show the presence of a human mind. We may specially note the temptation in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-10). Hunger is a physical appetite, and may be suffered by an animal; but only with a rational mind can any one receive or repel such a temptation in the manner of Christ. The other temptations, the one to religious presumption and the other to ambition, whether viewed in the manner of their presentation or in that of their resistance, can have no satisfactory interpretation without the presence of a human mind in him. He has joy of soul: “In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, Father” (Luke 10:21). Only with the presence of a human mind can we find the ground of a joy of spirit so thoroughly human in its cast. Christ had sorrow, many and deep sorrows, and such as were specially mental in their mode. It suffices that we recall his deep words on the night of his betrayal: “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death” (Matthew 26:38). These words must mean a human soul, though his suffering was far deeper than a mere human consciousness. The sympathy of Christ, through a law of common suffering with us, as set forth in the Scriptures, is possible only with his possession of a mental nature like our own (Hebrews 2:17-18; Hebrews 4:15). The perfecting of Christ through suffering, that he might accomplish the work of our salvation, means, and must mean, his possession of a human soul (Hebrews 2:9-10).

3. The Personal Oneness of Christ.—Oneness of personality is intrinsic to personality itself. With the presence of its distinctive facts, and the absence of all contrary facts, we are sure of its reality and oneness. Personality is a most definite form of existence. Its determinations thoroughly differentiate it from every other mode of being. These determinations are well known in our observation of others as well as in our own consciousness. There is nothing of which we are more certain respecting either ourselves or others. By the presence of its distinctive and determining facts in any human life we know the reality and oneness of the personality which they express. To assume a duality of persons in what is formally one human life would be to assume two sets of personal facts as really distinct as in the instance of any two men. By the presence of personal facts in the life of Christ, and the absence of all facts expressive of duality, we know the oneness of his personality just as we know that of any man of historic eminence. He appears among men as one person, talks and acts as one. In his words he often uses the personal pronouns in application to himself, just as he uses them in application to others. Thus I, mine, me, frequently occur in his discourses and conversations. Friends and foes address him and speak of him in like manner. Clearly, they fully recognize the oneness of his personality. There is no intimation of any thought of a duality of persons in Christ.

Such are the facts as given in the Scriptures; and they are the more decisive because, while the personal qualities ascribed to Christ are often in the utmost contrast, there is no intimation of any personal duality. Some have a purely human cast, while others have the perfection of divine

attributes. He is at once the Son of God and the Son of man; a newly born child and the everlasting Father; before all things and yet of human lineage; upholder of all things and yet daily subsisting in the manner of men. If the Scriptures mean any duality of persons in Christ, surely that distinction would be made, or at least recognized, in ascribing to him personal facts so widely different. There is no such recognition. Hence his personal oneness must be a truth of the Scriptures.

We may easily verify and illustrate the above statements by reference to a few appropriate texts. The Messiah is at once a child born, a son given, and truly God—The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6). The child of Mary is Emmanuel, God with us (Matthew 1:23). Christ is both the Son and Lord of David—Son in the sense of a human lineage. Lord in the sense of divinity (Matthew 22:42-45). Wearied by his journey, Jesus sat and rested on the well of Jacob, and asked a drink of water of the woman of Samaria. Then, in further conversation, he assured her that he could give her to drink of the water of life, and that whosoever drank of this water should never thirst, but possess the fountain of everlasting life (John 4:6-14). Herein the person who sat by the well as a weary man asserted for himself the resources of divinity. The same personal Christ is of Jewish lineage, as concerning his flesh, and over all, God blessed forever (Romans 9:5). We have given the substance of a few texts out of many. They all concur in ascribing to Christ both human and divine attributes, and yet without any distinction as to his personality. That is ever one.

119. Chapter 2: The Divine Incarnation.

Chapter 2 The Divine Incarnation.

120. I. Doctrine Of The Incarnation.

I. Doctrine Of The Incarnation.

1. Ground of the Person of Christ.—When we speak of the personality of Christ we have in view, not that of the unincarnate Son, nor that of a man simply, but the unique personality which arises from a union of the divine nature with the human. Only in this union could there be such a person as Christ. He is God m his divine nature and man in his human nature, but in personality he is the God-man. Hence the incarnation of divinity in humanity is the necessary ground of such a personality. The necessary union of the two natures is possible only in the mode of a divine incarnation. The divine nature is eternal, while the human originated in time. The divine was therefore eternally before the human. Hence the union of the two in the person of Christ must have been an event in time. The divine Son did incarnate himself in human nature, or did take the nature of man into personal union with himself; and this union is the ground of the unique personality of Christ.

2. The Incarnation a Truth of Scripture.—A few appropriate texts will suffice for the setting forth of this truth. Those that we shall use are more or less familiar to students of theology, and, therefore, need not be formally cited.

We begin with the words of St. John (John 1:1-3; John 1:14). The Word was in the beginning, was with God, and was God, by whom all things were made. The Word must be a personal being, for only a personal being can be the subject of such predications. Also, he must be a divine being. The predications are as conclusive of divinity as of personality. He who was in the beginning, and the creator of all things, must possess the attributes of omniscience and omnipotence, and, therefore, must be God. Accordingly, the text declares that the Word was God. Then, in the fourteenth verse, it is declared that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us—made flesh, not by transmutation of his nature into a body of flesh, but by the incarnation of himself in the nature of man. The words “and dwelt among us” forcibly mean such an incarnation. Then this same verse clearly identifies the Word with the Son of God: “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”

We have a great Christological text from St. Paul (Php 2:6-8). Three facts are specially noted: Christ in the form of God; Christ in equality with God; Christ in the likeness of men. These facts contain the truth of a divine incarnation. “Who, being in the form of God”—■ς ■ν μορφ■ Θεο■ ■π■ρχων. Mostly, these words have been interpreted to mean an existence in the nature of God. Such a sense of μορφ■ is fully warranted by its use; and such must be its meaning here; or, at least, the words together must mean an existence in possession of the divine perfections. Such, for the most part, has been their interpretation since the time when the great questions of Christology first came into formal discussion. They are still so interpreted by some of the ablest expositors. “Though μορφ■ is not the same as φ■σις or ο■σ■α, yet the possession of the μορφ■ involves participation in the ο■σ■α also; for μορφ■ implies not the external accidents, but the

essential attributes" (Lightfoot: Philippians, in loc).

Only with such a sense of μορφ■—form—can the several parts of the text be brought into harmony. The pre-existence of Christ in the form of God is clearly the ground of his rightful claim to an equality with God—τ■ ε■ναι ■σα Θε■. Wherein equal? Not in divine perfection, for that would identify the object of his claim with its ground; but equal in estate, in the glory which he had with the Father. Only the possession of divine perfection could be the ground of a rightful claim to such an equality with God. Thus these two facts come into harmony, and each interprets the other. With these facts in possession, other facts of the text are easily interpreted. The equality of estate with God and the form of a servant in the likeness of men appear in their proper antithesis, while the Son freely surrenders the former and accepts the latter instead. "Being made in the likeness of men" and "being found in fashion as a man" can mean nothing less or other than the assumption and possession of a human nature. Thus we have the truth of a divine incarnation. In another passage St. Paul clearly gives the same truth (Colossians 1:13-17). Here the facts are presented in an order reverse to that observed in the texts already noticed, but none the less definitely on that account. The subject of the text is the Son, "in whom we have redemption through his blood." The blood means the Son's possession of a body like our own. Then the facts which follow in the same text are conclusive of his true and essential divinity. This was shown before in treating the works of the Son as the proof of his divinity. No text in the Scriptures more clearly or surely expresses the work of a divine creation: "For by him—the Son through whose blood we have redemption—were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions, principalities or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." The divine Son, thus proved to be truly and essentially divine, must have incarnated himself in our nature before he could redeem us with his blood.

"God was manifest in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16). This is the explicit truth of the divine incarnation. No reason of doubt whether θε■ς belongs to the original text can affect its meaning respecting the incarnation. It is the divine Son who was manifest in the flesh. This is determined by the facts which immediately follow: "Justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." The truth of the divinity of the Son is in no sense dependent upon the genuineness of θε■ς in this text. His divinity has the most thorough proof in the Scriptures, and the text now in hand clearly and definitely asserts his incarnation. The Epistle to the Hebrews is replete with Christological facts. Among these is the incarnation of the divine Son. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same" (Hebrews 2:14). This text is central to others which fully determine its meaning. The divinity of the Son is clearly given in the first chapter of this epistle. He is the maker of worlds and the upholder of all things by the word of his power. He is Lord of the angels and the object of their supreme worship. In the beginning he laid the foundation of the earth and framed the heavens; and while they shall wax old and perish he is the same, and his years fail not (Hebrews 1:2-3; Hebrews 1:6; Hebrews 1:10-12). This is the divine Son who incarnated himself in the nature of man. Therein he was made a little lower than the angels, that through death he might redeem mankind. Thus he entered into brotherhood with men in the assumption of their nature, that by his own death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them, who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage (Hebrews 2:9;

Hebrews 2:11; Hebrews 2:14-15). This is the truth of a divine incarnation.

3. Incarnation of the Personal Son.—The full truth of the incarnation is not contained in the notion of a union of the divine nature, simply as such, with the human nature. The subject of the incarnation was not a mere nature, but a person—the personal Son. The divine nature is common to the persons of the Trinity; therefore any limitation of the incarnation to the divine nature would deny to the Son any distinct or peculiar part therein. This would contradict the most open and uniform sense of Scripture. The Father and the Holy Spirit had no such part in the incarnation as the Son. Nor could any union of the divine nature, simply as such, with the human nature give the profound truth and reality of the incarnation. It could mean nothing for the unique personality of the Christ; nothing for the reality and sufficiency of the atonement. The Scriptures are most explicit respecting the incarnation of the personal Son. We have already seen this in the great texts of the incarnation, and it may suffice for the present point that we recall a part of them. In the statement of the first text it was the Word that was made flesh and dwelt among us; but in the same text the Word is identified with the divine Son (John 1:14). In the next it is the Son through whose blood we have redemption and remission of sins, the Son who created all things (Colossians 1:13-16). This must mean the incarnation of the personal Son. This same truth is clearly given in the texts of the incarnation, which we found in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Again, it is the Son who created all worlds, who is Lord of the angels and the object of their supreme worship, that was made a little lower than the angels by an incarnation in which he assumed a body of flesh and blood (Hebrews 1, 2).

We have specially noted this fact of the incarnation for the reason of its relation to the person of the Christ. There is an intimate, even a determining relation of the one to the other. Christ could not be a wholly new personality, because the personality of the Son could not be suspended or neutralized by the incarnation. His true and essential divinity forbids the notion of any such result. The personality of the Son, as verified to himself in the facts of his own consciousness, must forever abide. The immutability of the Son in his essential being and in his personal attributes affirms this truth. Therein lies the ground of the immutability of Christ: “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8). With all his mutations of estate, he is eternally the same, because he is the incarnate Son. The personality of the Son must forever abide.

What, then, is the result of the incarnation in the personality of the Son? Not a new personality, but a modified personality—modified by the possession of new facts of consciousness. The reality of the incarnation will not allow us to stop short of this result. We here face a profound question, but shall find a more appropriate place for its discussion. Any question which involves the reality of the incarnation must be profound. Respecting these new facts of consciousness many questions of difficulty and doubt might readily be asked. How could the divine Son come into the possession of new facts of consciousness? No definite answer may be given as to the mode, but surely the possibility lies in the fact that he is a person, with the ceaseless exercise of a personal agency. What are the new facts of consciousness? Such as came to him through the human nature assumed in the incarnation. What could the incarnation mean, or what could be its reality, without such result? Not else could there be a union of the two natures in a personal oneness; not else the unique personality of the Christ; not else the God-man.

121. II. The Two Natures In Personal Oneness.

II. The Two Natures In Personal Oneness.

1. The Result of the Incarnation.—The reality of the incarnation determines the personal oneness of the Christ in the union of the two natures. We already have the facts which verify this statement. They came into our possession while discussing the doctrine of the person of Christ, and more fully in the treatment of the incarnation. The divine Son did not place himself in a merely tactual or sympathetic union with a human person, even though it were the closest possible to the mode, but so united our nature with himself as to share our experiences. The Christ is the Son incarnate. He is one person, but in possession of both divine and human attributes. The divine nature is the necessary ground of the former; the human, the necessary ground of the latter. Therefore while he is personally one he must possess both natures in a personal oneness. This is the meaning and the result of the incarnation. Only with such a result can it be a reality—such a reality as will interpret the Scriptures, or meet the necessity for an atonement, or satisfy the deepest religious consciousness.

2. The Catholic Doctrine.—That the union of the two natures in the personal oneness of Christ is, in the proper sense of catholic, the catholic doctrine, is so surely and openly true that it needs no elaborate treatment. The doctrine is embodied in the creeds of the Churches. Exceptions are too rare to discredit or render inaccurate the general statement. Even its omission from a creed may not mean its omission in the faith of the Church which formulates such creed. The creeds of some Churches are very brief, and deal but little with formulations of doctrine. In such instances the omitted doctrine of the union of the two natures in the personal oneness of Christ may hold its place as firmly in the faith of the Church as other fundamental doctrines likewise omitted. This doctrine is in the ecumenical creeds, and by their acceptance has become the catholic doctrine. It is true that this doctrine was not definitely formulated in the Nicene Creed, but the ground of it was therein laid, and so far it became the faith of the Church. It is also true that the Athanasian Creed was not formally ecumenical, but the consensus of the Church soon gave it ecumenical character, and thus determined the union of the two natures in the personal oneness of Christ, so definitely formulated in this creed, to be the doctrine of the Church universal. There follows the Chalcedonian symbol, formulated by an ecumenical council convened for the definite purpose of constructing a doctrine of the person of Christ. Nothing in this doctrine is more definitely formulated than the union of the two natures in his personal oneness. This was then the creed of the whole Church. Since the division into the Greek and Roman it has been in common the creed of both. It is the doctrine of the Protestant Churches: of the Lutheran; of the Reformed; of the Churches which hold substantially the Westminster Confession; of the Church of England; of the Methodist Churches, and of others here omitted. It is thus manifestly true that the union of the two natures in the personal oneness of Christ is the catholic doctrine.

3. Mystery of the Doctrine.—We reach the profoundest mystery of the incarnation in the personal oneness of the divine-human Christ. It is, if possibly so, a profounder mystery than the doctrine of

the Trinity. The notion of three personal subsistences in one nature seems less remote from the grasp of thought than a unity of personality in the union of two natures, each of which is normally a person. Personality itself is a profound mystery. How obscure the notion of an unbodied spirit endowed with personal faculties and active in modes of personal agency! Nor do we attain to any clearness of view in the instance of personal mind enshrined in a physical organism. Indeed, it is difficult to say in which case lies the deeper mystery. Even our own experience in the embodied mode of life clears no obscurity. That we thus exist and personally act we know, but below these facts all is mystery. Surely, then, it is not for us to grasp in thought the personality of the Christ in the union of- a human nature with the divine. The constitution of our own personality in the union of two distinct natures, the mental and the physical, has been in frequent use for the illustration of the person of Christ. Any helpful illustration would be accepted readily, but we can find no help in the one here offered. The want of analogy wholly voids the illustration. In order to secure any ground of analogy our mental and physical natures must be combined in the basis of our personality. This is attempted, but certainly without attainment. In man the seat of personality is wholly in the mind, and there is no ground for two personalities in his constituent natures. No attribute of personality belongs to the body. The mind is the whole personal self, and if disembodied would still possess its personality. For the present life the body determines some modes of its personal agency and some facts of its consciousness, but has no part in its personal constitution nor place in its ground. But the human nature assumed by the divine Son in the person of Christ not only may be a person, but normally is a person. The depth of mystery lies in the union of two such natures in the unity of personality. For the illustration of such a personality there is no analogy in the constitution of our own. The mystery deepens in the fact that in his personality the finite blends with the infinite. In his consciousness there is a mingling of human forms of experience with forms of the divine consciousness. The person of Christ is a mystery of Christian truth without solution In our reason. It is proper here to recall the profound difference, previously pointed out, between a mystery and a contradiction. There is nothing in the doctrine of the person of Christ which contradicts our reason. The world is full of mysteries, but mystery is not the limit of assured truth. On the ground of Scripture the doctrine of the person of Christ, as previously set forth, is true, and on that ground we hold it in a sure faith.

Two facts are offered in aid of our thought. If not of any service for the solution of this mystery they may be helpful toward a true notion of the person of Christ.

One fact is that it was a form of human nature, simply as such, and not in personal development, that the Logos assumed in the incarnation. While it is conceded that the assumption of a human nature in its personal form would have resulted in a duality of persons in Christ, it is claimed that by the assumption of a human nature as yet impersonal such a consequence is avoided. “If the Son of God had taken to himself a man now made and already perfected, it would of necessity follow that there are in Christ two persons, the one assuming and the other assumed; whereas the Son of God did not assume a man’s person into his own, but a man’s nature to his own person, . . . the very first original element of our nature, before it was come to have any personal human subsistence. . . . By taking only the nature of man he still continueth one person, and changeth but the manner of his subsisting, which was before in the mere glory of the Son of God, and is now in the habit of our flesh.”[580] [580] Hooker:Ecclesiastical Polity, book v, § 53. Of course, the fact here given as securing the oneness of personality in Christ requires that the assumed human

nature should in itself ever remain in an impersonal form; for any subsequent change into a personal mode would have the same consequence of personal duality as an original incarnation of the Son in a human person. Yet this notion of a mere human nature must not be carried too far, nor held too rigidly, else the nature itself will not account for the human facts in the life of Christ. We know nothing of the mode of connection between a mental nature and a physical organism, whereby the physical determines the cast of many facts of experience in the mental. No more can we know the mode in which the spiritual nature of man must be related to the incarnate Logos so as to constitute in him the ground of experiences like our own. Yet it seems manifest that there can be no such ground without the activity of the mental nature assumed with the physical nature in the incarnation. This must be the case in respect to such experiences as have a specially mental cast. While, therefore, we may deny to the human nature assumed in the incarnation a distinct personal subsistence in Christ, we must still allow it such forms of activity as will account for the human facts of his incarnate life. The other fact is that the ground of the personality of Christ is in his divine nature, not in his human nature. There is here such a distinction between nature and person as we find in the doctrine of the Trinity, as formulated by the Council of Nice. While we cannot think of the divine nature as ever actually in an impersonal state, we can so think of a human nature. Indeed, the nature of every man exists in an impersonal mode before it attains to personality. In this case, however, as in the preceding one, it must be assumed that the human nature of Christ remains without personality in itself. But in this case, as in that, it must not be assumed that the human nature remains inactive or without effect in the consciousness of Christ. Such an assumption would deny the reality of the divine incarnation. While it is true that our own mind has the ground of its personality entirely in itself, yet its enshrinement in a physical organism has much to do with its consciousness. So the impersonal human nature assumed in the incarnation may determine many facts in the consciousness of Christ. Thus arises his the anthropic personality. In the consciousness of both divine and human facts he is the God-man. The new facts of consciousness are entirely consistent with the unity of his personality—just as the experiences which come to the human personality through the bodily organism are entirely consistent with its unity.

122. Chapter 3: Christ Is Theanthropic.

Chapter 3 Christ Is Theanthropic.

There is a sense in which Christ is God, and a sense in which he is man; but there is a deeper sense in which he is God-man. His theanthropic character is determined by the union of the divine and human natures in his personality. That he is truly theanthropic is clearly a truth of the Scriptures. It is the key to the many Christological paradoxes which they contain.

123. I. Theanthropic In Personality.

I. Theanthropic In Personality.

1. Permanent Duality of His Natures.—It is the doctrine of the Church, as definitely formulated in the Chalcedonian symbol, that the union of the two natures in Christ is forever an inseparable one. This, however, is not the present question. The point we here make is that the natures suffer no change in consequence of their union in Christ. This also is the doctrine of the Church, and, as we have already shown, is very fully and definitely expressed in the same Christological symbol. There is neither change nor mixture of the natures. The divine is not transmuted into the human; the human is not transmuted into the divine. There is no mixing of the natures, with a resultant third nature, or indefinable tertium quid—something neither human nor divine.

Christological speculation has not been entirely without the notion of such results of the divine incarnation. We may a contrary instance the monophysitic or Eutychian heresy, accord-ing to which the human nature was so changed by its union with the divine nature that it ceased to be human and really became divine. It would follow that there was but one nature in Christ. This is one of the errors which the Council of Chalcedon so formally excluded from the doctrine which it formulated. Without a personal union of the two unchanged natures in Christ the facts which appear in his life must remain without any satisfactory interpretation. There is in his life a mingling of human and divine facts. The human can have no ground in a purely divine nature; the divine, no ground in a purely human nature. The presence of two classes of facts, the human and the divine, in the one life of Christ imperatively requires the presence of both natures in the unity of his personality.

2. Communion of Attributes in His Personality.—There is in doctrinal Christology a distinction between the communion and the communication of attributes in Christ. The former means simply that the attributes of the two natures are common to the person of Christ; the latter, that each nature communicates its attributes to the other; particularly, that the divine nature imparts its attributes to the human nature. The theory is technically expressed as the communicatio idiomatum. This was really the monophysitic or Eutychian theory, previously noticed, and which we found to be excluded as a heresy from the doctrine of the Church. As a modern theory, it has its place mostly in the Lutheran theology. It is necessary to the doctrine of consubstantiation—the doctrine of the real presence of the body of Christ in the sacrament of the supper—as maintained in Lutheranism. As previously pointed out, the deification of the human nature of Christ cannot be reconciled with the human facts so thoroughly manifest in his life. This may here suffice, as we must again consider this theory. The communion of the attributes in Christ, in the sense that the attributes of the two natures are common to his personality, is clearly a truth of the Scriptures, and a truth necessary to the interpretation of the Christological facts which they contain. Such a communion is determined by the nature of the divine incarnation. Therein the personal Son took the nature of man into personal union with himself. The two natures, without change in either, were thus united in the personal oneness of the Christ. Therefore, as he thus unites in himself the two

natures, he must possess the attributes of both in the unity of his personality. Accordingly, the Scriptures freely, and with frequent repetition, ascribe to him both human and divine facts. In the collection of separate utterances we find the ascription of attributes in the utmost extremes. Christ is an infant in the arms of Mary, and over all, God blessed forever; weary from his journey, and the upholder of all things; grows in stature and acquires knowledge in the manner of other children, and yet is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever. Often there are such ascriptions in the same verse or passage. Such are the paradoxes of Christology which find their interpretation in the theanthropic character of Christ.

3. Truth of a Theanthropic Personality.—As in his personality Christ possesses the attributes of both the divine nature and the human, so must he be a theanthropic person. As a person he is not God merely, nor man merely, but God-man. This must be the meaning of the orthodox creeds, for otherwise they would be self-contradictory. They ever confess the oneness of Christ in two distinct natures. With such a duality of natures he can be one only in his personality. Yet, with the confession of the one Christ in the two natures, the same creeds declare him to be God and man. We may instance the Chalcedonian symbol.[581] The Christological symbol of the Methodist Episcopal Church is really the same.[582] But the immediate connection denies to these terms, very God and very man, a definite personal meaning in their application to Christ ; for with this meaning the same symbol would confess him as one person, and also as two persons, and would be self-contradictory. Besides, it is not the meaning of either the Scriptures or the Christological symbols that in a personal sense Christ is very God and very man. This is really the Nestorian heresy, which the creeds so formally and thoroughly reject. Christ is very God and very man only in the sense that he possesses the two natures in the oneness of his personality. In his personal oneness he is simply and truly God-man.

[581]“We . . . confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, . . . truly God and truly man.”

[582]“So that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and manhood, were joined together in one person, . . . whereof is one Christ, very God and very man.”—Articles of Religion, article ii. The theanthropic personality of Christ is determined by the nature of the divine incarnation. This incarnation was a profound reality. Therein the divine Son took the nature of man into a most intimate, even a personal union with himself. With this union of the two natures in Christ there is for him both divine and human facts of consciousness. There is still a unity of consciousness, as a central reality of all personality, but for this consciousness in Christ there are new facts, which are determined by his human nature. We have no insight into this mystery. Indeed, as previously pointed out, we have no insight into the enshrinement of our own mind in a physical organism, or into the unity of our own consciousness in the mingling of the diverse forms of experience as determined by our sensuous, rational, and moral natures. But, if we accept the personal union of a human nature with the divine nature, we should not stumble at the new facts of consciousness. They lie in the mystery of the incarnation, but surely belong to its reality. The facts determine the theanthropic character of the Christ. In the truest, deepest sense he is personally God-man.

4. A Necessity to the Atonement.—Any other union of the divine nature with the human than that in a personal oneness must leave the human in its own complete and separate personality. What, then, is the offering or sacrifice in atonement for sin? A human being, a mere man. No gracious

endowments or supernatural gifts could change the grade of his being. As the paschal lamb whose blood was shed in atonement for sin was a mere lamb, so Christ, who was sacrificed for the redemption of the world, would be a mere man. This would mean that Christ, who loved us and gave himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God, was a mere man (Ephesians 5:3); that our great High-priest, Jesus, the Son of God, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God in atonement for sin, was a mere man (Hebrews 4:14; Hebrews 9:14). We need not pause to show how utterly false such a view is to the profound meaning of these texts, and of many others like them. All the fundamental truths of Christian theology must pronounce such a mere human sacrifice utterly insufficient for the redemption of the world.

These consequences cannot be obviated by any appeal to the offices of the Son as our great High-priest in the offering up of Christ on the cross. There is no priesthood of the Son without his incarnation in a manner which unites the nature of man in personal oneness with himself. Besides, if we divide the Christ into distinct personalities, the one divine and the other human, even the priestly service of the divine could not change the character or grade of the human sacrifice; it would still be merely human. Nor can we, in this case, hold priest and sacrifice in any such duality. Christ is, at once, both priest and sacrifice: “Who needeth not daily, as those high-priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.” “For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself” (Hebrews 7:27; Hebrews 9:26). Thus the identity of priest and sacrifice in the atonement is definitely a truth of the Scriptures. Any such division of Christ into a divine priest and a human sacrifice is manifestly false to the Scriptures; and it is equally false to the catholic doctrine of his personality. In the hour of our redemption the Christ does not fall asunder into two persons, the one divine and the other human, while the divine in the office of high-priest offers up the human in atonement for sin; but the divine, incarnate in the human, offers up himself. Only thus can we secure the truth and reality of the atonement. The possibility of such an atonement lies in the theanthropic personality of Christ.

124. II. The Interpretation Of Christological Facts.

II.The Interpretation Of Christological Facts. In treating the theanthropic character of Christ we might have begun with the multiform facts which the Scriptures ascribe to him, and thus in an inductive method reached the truth of his theanthropic personality. This truth, however, we found in the nature and reality of the divine incarnation. Now we find in this truth the key to the many Christological paradoxes which appear in the Scriptures. These paradoxes lie in the diverse facts which the Scriptures ascribe to Christ. But, while we find in his theanthropic personality the interpretation and harmony of these diverse facts, we also find therein the verification of his theanthropic character. Thus it is doubly proved that Christ is verily God-man.

It should be specially noted that the facts here considered are ascribed to Christ in his personality, and are true of him as a person. Most of these facts have appeared already in our discussion, particularly in the treatment of the divinity and humanity of Christ, and therefore require only a summary presentation here.

1. Facts of Divinity Ascribed to Christ.—The Son incarnate is the personal Christ. Hence, as we found the Son in possession of the distinctive facts of divinity, so we find the Christ in full possession of the same facts. The Scriptures ascribe to him the titles, attributes, works, and worshipfulness which belong only to true and essential divinity. All this ascription is thoroughly warranted on the ground of his divine nature.

2. Facts of Humanity Ascribed to Christ.—These facts were sufficiently given in treating the humanity of Christ, as furnishing the second element in the formulated doctrine of his personality. They are the common essential or distinctive facts of humanity. The Scriptures freely ascribe them to the same personal Christ to whom they ascribe the facts of divinity. This is properly done because he possesses a true and complete human nature. As the divine facts ascribed to him have their interpretation on the ground of his divinity, so these human facts have their interpretation on the ground of his human nature. Thus on the ground of the two natures in the personal oneness of Christ the two classes of facts come into complete harmony. In like manner we have the interpretation of various texts which combine the two classes of facts in ascribing them to Christ. The child born, the Son given, is the mighty God, the everlasting Father (Isaiah 9:6). He is in the form of God and in the likeness of men (Php 2:6-7). The same person who redeems us with his blood is before all things, and the creator and preserver of all things (Colossians 1:14-17). The combination of divine and human facts in these great texts places them in no contradictory opposition. The paradoxes remain, but, just as in the preceding instances, the facts come into complete harmony through the union of the two natures in the personal oneness of Christ.

3. Divine Facts Ascribed to Christ as Human.—“And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven” (John 3:13). The words, “No man hath ascended up to heaven,” may have been intended to correct a somewhat prevalent notion, that Moses ascended into heaven in order to receive the law which he gave to the Hebrew

people.[583] Two facts are to be noted: that Christ came down from heaven, and that when here on earth he was in heaven. Christ affirms both facts of himself as the Son of man. But he is the Son of man in his human nature, while his coming down from heaven and still being in heaven are facts of his divinity, which are thus ascribed to him as human (see also John 6:38; John 6:62). Supreme worship is rendered to Christ as the Lamb that was slain: “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. . . . Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever” (Revelation 5:12-13). Such divine worship is rendered to Christ as the Lamb slain, and, therefore, as represented in his human nature. Many like texts might be added, but those given will suffice.

[583]Clarke:Commentary, in loc.

4. Human Facts Ascribed to Christ as Divine.—“Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us” (Matthew 1:23). To be thus conceived and born are specially human facts; but they are ascribed to Christ as in view of his divine nature. This is manifest in his name, Emmanuel, God with us. The blood of Christ, shed in atonement for sin, is a fact of his human nature; but it is ascribed to him as divine. This appears in the words in which the ministry is charged “to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood” (Acts 20:28). “We have a like instance in the crucifixion of Christ: “They crucified the Lord of glory” (1 Corinthians 2:8). The human fact of the crucifixion is thus ascribed to Christ as divine. We cannot find a lower meaning in his designation as the Lord of glory.

We have thus found, under the last two heads, the ascription of divine facts to Christ as human, and the ascription of human facts to him as divine. The two cases have the same interpretation. In each there is a synecdochical designation of Christ. This is a mode of speech much in use. Nor does it mislead or deceive any one. The meaning is thus given as clearly and definitely as in any other mode. The divine and human natures are so united in the person of Christ and so integral to his personality that he may properly be designated in the view of either. In any such instance the one nature represents the whole person of Christ. It follows that the two classes of facts, the divine and the human, may be respectively ascribed to him under the designation of either nature. Such is the interpretation of these two cases. But the very ground of this interpretation lies in the union of the two natures in the personality of Christ, just as we found it in the interpretation of the other facts considered in this section. Now, as the personal oneness of Christ in the union of the two natures furnishes the interpretation of all those facts, so, in turn, they confirm the truth of his personality as so constituted. But a personality so constituted must be truly theanthropic. Christ is very God-man.

125. Chapter 4: The Sympathy Of Christ.

Chapter 4 The Sympathy Of Christ. The sympathy of Christ is in itself an important truth of Christology; but the special reason for its present treatment lies in its intimate relation to the question of his personality. Some facts which deeply concern this question may be most appropriately treated under the heading of the present chapter. The sympathy of Christ has an open place in the Scriptures. Inspiration gives it clear and full expression. We may also view it in the light of our own sympathy, although there is a wide difference between the two. We ever associate the sympathy of Christ with his greatness, with the intensity of his suffering and the infinite fullness of his love. Hence, it has for our thought and feeling a fullness and sufficiency infinitely above all mere human sympathy. Still the fact of sympathy in ourselves is helpful in this study, and gives us the deeper and clearer insight into the sympathy of Christ. With these several facts in hand this sympathy may seem to us specially open truth and one most easy of comprehension. Simply as a fact it is most manifest, but as a truth for doctrinal study it is one of the profoundest in Christian theology. It is inseparably connected with the divine incarnation, and this fact invests some of its elements in a like mystery. Still it is a great and precious truth of Christology, and therefore a proper subject for our deepest study. In order to the greatest benefit of this sympathy in our Christian life there is need that we apprehend its real and sufficient grounds. The apprehension of these grounds will give us the clearer insight into the person of Christ.

126. I. Sympathy Through Common Suffering.

I. Sympathy Through Common Suffering.

1. A True and Deep Law of Sympathy.—It is not assumed, nor could it be successfully maintained, that common suffering is a necessary condition of sympathy. Such a capacity seems intrinsic to our own nature wholly irrespective of any personal suffering. It is a fact of the Scriptures that holy and ever happy angels sympathize with us in the misery and peril of sin. Only with such sympathy can they have Joy in our repentance and salvation. Here we have an instance of very real sympathy without any ground in common suffering. The compassionate love of the Father, a love in profound sympathy with us, was the deepest source of the great plan of human redemption. Also, before the incarnation and suffering of the Son he was in loving sympathy with us.

It is none the less a truth that suffering, and particularly suffering in common with others, is a very real law of sympathy. Few, if any, are without the personal experience which verifies this law. Innumerable witnesses could testify to its reality. More readily, and as by the attraction of a special affinity, we go for sympathy to those who have suffered; for the deepest sympathy, to those who have suffered as we suffer.

2. Law of the Sympathy of Christ.—There is the same law of sympathy in Christ. This is not a speculation or mere inference, but an explicit truth of Scripture. And it is a truth to which the Christian consciousness is gratefully responsive. As in the exigencies of our trouble and sorrow we turn to Christ for his helpful sympathy, the fact of his own suffering in our nature, and in a manner so like our own, is ever most assuring.

It is proper that we here present this law of his sympathy in the light of the Scriptures. A few texts will suffice for the presentation. “For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted” (Hebrews 2:18). There are other like words: “For we have not a high-priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). Immediately preceding these words the duty of fidelity to the Christian profession is strongly enforced. “Seeing then that we have a great high-priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession” (Hebrews 4:14). Such a characterization of our great High-priest as the Son of God, and as having passed into the heavens, might readily suggest a doubt whether one so remote in his exaltation and greatness could still have a helpful sympathy with his disciples in the sore trials incident to their Christian profession. Hence, as if in apprehension of such a doubt, there immediately follow the words, as previously cited, which give the fact of his own former sufferings as the ground and warrant of his ever-abiding sympathy. This law of his sympathy is thus specially emphasized.

3. The Law Appropriated in the Incarnation.—Our previous discussion of the incarnation supersedes any requirement for its formal treatment here. All that we further need is to point out and briefly illustrate the fact stated in our last heading, that it was through his incarnation that Christ appropriated the law of his sympathy with us.

It seems clearly the sense of Scripture that a special purpose of the Son in the incarnation was that through a participation in our suffering he might have the deeper sympathy with us. It was in the incarnation that he was made a little lower than the angels; and therein he entered into the profound suffering which he endured (Hebrews 2:9). A special reason for all this is immediately given, which means the truth here maintained: “For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings” (Hebrews 2:10). Other verses follow which are replete with the same truth. Through the incarnation the divine Son entered into a real brotherhood with man. In this brotherhood there is sympathy with us in our sufferings (Hebrews 2:11-16). He thus met all the requirements for the work of our salvation: “Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high-priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted” (Hebrews 2:17-18).

It is thus manifest that the divine incarnation, with its result in the personality of the Christ, furnishes the real ground of his sympathy. Hence, if we would reach any proper apprehension of his sympathy we must view it in the light of his incarnation.

4. Thorough Appropriation of the Law.—The divine incarnation was very real; therefore the appropriation of this law of sympathy was very thorough. We need not here renew the formal discussion of the incarnation; yet a few facts which directly concern the present question may properly be specialized. The divine Son assumed a real human nature. The facts, as given in the Scriptures, allow no place for the early Gnosticism which denied this reality and held the human form of Christ to be a mere phantasm. On the truth of such a theory there could have been no divine appropriation of a law of sympathy with us. The theory openly contradicts the facts of Scripture. In proof of this we need only to recall the appropriate texts, most of which were previously cited. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.” “For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh” (John 1:14; Hebrews 2:14; 2 John 1:7). It seems quite impossible to mistake the meaning of such explicit words respecting the reality of the human body of Christ. In the incarnation the divine Son assumed, not only a real human body, but also a human soul, the soul and body thus constituting a complete human nature. This is, at once, the sense of Scripture and the doctrine of the Church. Accordingly, the Church repudiated the Apollinarian heresy, which, while conceding to Christ a real body, denied to him a human mind, and assumed to provide for its functions in his life by the offices of the incarnate Logos. It was no such defective form of human nature that the divine Son assumed in the incarnation. The historic life of Christ can have no interpretation without the presence of a human mind. The phenomena of such a mind are just as manifest in his life as the phenomena of a body of flesh and blood. Further, without the presence of such a mind there could be no sufficient ground for the sympathy of Christ. Many of our own experiences in which we so much need his sympathy have their seat in our rational and moral nature. Hence the need that the “reasonable soul” should constitute a part of the nature assumed in the incarnation. It was only in a personal union with the human mind in his incarnation that the divine Son could appropriate the law of sympathy through a common suffering with us. This law he did fully appropriate by the assumption of our complete nature.

We here emphasize another point previously made. The human nature assumed in the incarnation suffered no change in consequence of this assumption. Again we meet an opposing and perverting heresy, the Eutychian, which assumed a transmutation of the human nature into the divine. With such a result there could be no place for the human facts in the life of Christ; no place for the experiences which are the ground of his sympathy. This heresy was rejected by the Church, and the truth was maintained, that the human nature assumed in the incarnation remained unchanged. With this truth the ground of the sympathy of Christ remains complete. In the incarnation the complete human nature was taken into personal union with the divine. Here again there was an opposing heresy, the Nestorian, which denied the union of the two natures in the personal oneness of Christ, and held that in the historic Christ there were really two persons, the Son of God and a human person. Between the two, as thus distinct in personality, there could be only a spiritual communion. Consequently, there could be no sympathy of the Son through a law of common suffering with us. But, with the personal oneness of Christ in the union of the two natures, the ground of his sympathy remains complete. The life of Christ is replete with instances of suffering in the likeness of our own. His sufferings were manifold and in him were fulfilled the prophetic utterances of Isaiah: “He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief” (Isaiah 53:3). He suffered trials even from his chosen disciples. Much more did he suffer the contradiction of hostile minds. Malignant eyes were ever upon him. Scribe and Pharisee, priest and people, were combined against him in hatred and persecution. Deep were his trials from the opposition of the wicked. There is profound meaning in the words: “For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds” (Hebrews 12:3). These trials were such in kind as the disciples of Christ were called to suffer; for otherwise there could have been no power in his example of patience to fortify their minds with a like power of endurance. His own words picture to us other forms of trial: “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head” (Matthew 8:20). Here again is the meaning of such trials as often enter into human experiences; only, the meaning is specially profound in the application of the words to Christ. Nor may we infer that his transcendent character in anywise rendered him indifferent to such forms of trial. With such loftiness of character his sensibilities were all the more acute.

Still, there are differences between Christ and ourselves which may suggest some doubt respecting this law of sympathy. One is that, whatever his temptation or trial, there was in him no evil tendency, while in us there is such a tendency. How, then, can he sympathize with us in our conflict with such a tendency, since there was no such experience in his own trials? The law of his sympathy is not deficient at this point. The profound reality of the divine incarnation still provides for its sufficiency. In the assumption of a complete human nature into a personal union with himself the divine Son entered so deeply into the consciousness of human experiences that, without any evil tendency of his own nature, he can sympathize with us in our conflict with such tendencies. We may instance his temptation in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11). In this temptation he knew in his own experience the intense appetence of very real hunger. He thus knew the appeal of worldly power and glory, and the solicitation to an irrational presumption upon the providence of God. All this must be admitted, or we sink these temptations into a mere appearance, with the consequence, that Christ was not really tempted in the wilderness. A solicitation in the sensibilities and an inclination responsive to its gratification are distinct facts, and the entire absence of the latter does not affect the reality of the former. While these forms of temptation found nothing

responsive in the nature of Christ, as too often they do in our own, still he knew in his own experience their power of solicitation. These trials were so very real in the experience of Christ, and so comprehensive of the forms of our own trials, that they constitute in him a very real and profound law of sympathy with us.

There is another suggestion of doubt respecting this law of sympathy. It arises from the fact that we have forms of trial of which Christ had no experience. There are spheres of life into which he never entered, and hence he could not know in his own experience the precise forms of trial peculiar to these spheres. This is the view. It is true that in one text of Scripture the law of Christ's sympathy is based on an experience of trial as broad and diverse as our own: "For we have not a high-priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities ; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). This, however, need not be interpreted in an absolute sense. Nor is it necessary that Christ should have entered into all the precise forms of our own trial in order to sympathize with us in all. We find in ourselves the power of sympathy with others in forms of trial peculiar to themselves, and the more deeply as we ourselves have suffered, though not in precisely the same form of trial. So his trials were so multiform and deep, and so thoroughly in the cast of our own, as to constitute in him the profoundest and most comprehensive law of sympathy with us. When we add to the many trials of his life the severe sufferings which crowded its closing hours the law of his sympathy with us is manifestly complete.

127. II. The Consciousness Of Christ In Suffering.

II. The Consciousness Of Christ In Suffering. In the conclusion of the previous section it was stated that the sufferings of Christ in common with our own were such in multiformity and intensity as to constitute a complete law of his sympathy with us. There is, however, a further question which vitally concerns the sufficiency of this law. It is the question of the consciousness of Christ in the sufferings which he endured. The doctrine of his personality is vitally concerned in this question.

1. Deeper than a Human Consciousness.—On the ground of the person of Christ, as revealed in the Scriptures and accepted in the faith of the Church, he suffered in a consciousness far deeper than a mere human consciousness. In a personal oneness there must be a unity of consciousness. With a distinct and purely human consciousness in Christ there must have been a distinct human person. The result would be either a Socinian or a Nestorian Christology. Christ must have been either a mere man or two persons, divine and human, in a merely spiritual communion. Each consequence is contrary to the accepted doctrine of the person of Christ, and subversive of all that is deep and evangelical in Christianity.

Yet even in the orthodox faith or with orthodox believers there is a tendency to the Nestorian view. While the theanthropic character of Christ, as determined by the union of the two natures in a oneness of personality, is accepted as a truth of doctrine, there is a halting at the consequent relation of his divine nature to the consciousness of his sufferings. In the thought of not a few his sufferings are restricted to a mere human consciousness. Such a limitation must mean a distinct human person in Christ, and consequently the sundering of Christ into two persons. This is openly contradictory to the accepted doctrine of his personal oneness in the union of the two natures.

2. Else, Only a Human Sympathy.—If the sufferings of Christ were limited to a mere human consciousness, his sympathy through a law of common suffering with us must be limited to a mere human ground and capacity. Sympathy through suffering must be in the same consciousness in which the suffering was endured. We cannot limit the suffering of Christ to a mere human consciousness and then carry it up into his divine consciousness as a law of sympathy therein. By such limitation neither the suffering nor the sympathy can have any place in the divine. And again the Christ is sundered into two persons, the one divine and the other human, while only the human can sympathize with us through a law of suffering.

3. An Utterly Insufficient Sympathy.—A mere human sympathy of Christ, though in the fullest capacity of the human, could not answer for its place in either the Scriptures or the deeper Christian thought and feeling. There was no deification of the human nature assumed in the divine incarnation. Its exaltation and glorification with the divine Son could not free it from the limitations of the finite. The false assumption of its distinct personal existence must concede it, even in that exaltation and glorification, the limitations of the human. It would follow that the sympathy of Christ through a law of common suffering with us must be subject to human limitations. Therefore his sympathy could not be sufficient for the many instances of suffering and need in the present life.

There are two forms of limitation which should receive special notice.

Sympathy is conditioned by the measure of personal knowledge. It can reach no one which the knowledge does not reach; nor can it be more intense than the clearness of the mental apprehension. These facts impose narrow limits upon the capacity of human sympathy. If we determine for the human nature of Christ a distinct human personality, his knowledge must be subject to the limitations of the human. As his sufferings, if limited to a human consciousness, cannot be carried up into the divine consciousness as a law of sympathy therein, so the divine knowledge cannot be brought down into the human mind as the provision of a sympathy which may have the comprehensiveness of the divine. The sympathy of Christ which the Scriptures reveal as through a law of common suffering with us would thus be subject to the limitations of human knowledge. Hence, it could reach but few of the many that need its gracious ministries. Nor could it be intense and constant respecting any. Such is not the sympathy of Christ which the Scriptures reveal.

There is still another law of disability under such limitations. All sympathy through mere human suffering is subject to the laws of time and changing conditions. The trying experiences which lie far back in the years of even the present life give little power of present sympathy with others in like trials. The mother who buried her child twenty years ago cannot have through the memory of her own sorrow the same sympathy with a friend in a like bereavement as the mother who came but yesterday from the burial of her child. The more is all this true as the years subsequent to one’s sufferings may be full of new and happy experiences. The same laws must be operative in the future as in the present life. The deep nature of Moses was tenderly responsive to the afflictions of his people; and his sympathy was the deeper as he suffered with them. In the pathos of this sympathy he could pray that, if they might not be spared, he might perish with them (Exodus 32:32). Such a soul was St. Paul’s. With a like deep nature and sympathy he could wish himself accursed from Christ for the sake of his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh (Romans 9:3). Neither Moses nor Paul has lost the depth of his nature in the glory of his exaltation; but with the many centuries of blessedness which separate them from their earthly sorrows little power of sympathy through the memory of those sorrows can remain with them. Some personal facts of the present life we may ever carry with us in the full vigor of their reality; but they must be facts of personal conduct which concern ourselves, and cannot be such as mainly constitute the ground of our sympathy with others.

If we limit the sufferings of Christ to a human consciousness, and so determine for him a distinct human personality, there must be the same laws of disability in his sympathy. These consequences cannot be voided by any appeal to his divine nature; for by such limitation we place that nature infinitely above all consciousness of suffering; and therefore we cannot bring it down so as to invigorate the law of his sympathy and lift it above the limitations of all human sympathy. If the sympathy of Christ is subject to such limitations it must ever be a diminishing force, and in the blessedness and glory of his exaltation would already be quite exhausted of its efficiency.

128. III. Suffering In A Theanthropic Consciousness.

III. Suffering In A Theanthropic Consciousness. In the unique personality of Christ, as accepted in the faith of the Church, there is a theanthropic consciousness; and in the experiences of trial and suffering therein we shall find the real and sufficient law of his sympathy.

1. Concerning a Human Consciousness of the Divine.—Often a leading question in the orthodox treatment of Christology concerns the human consciousness of the divine in Christ. Many facts in his earlier life appear to us as purely and distinctively human, while later there is seemingly a transition into a higher consciousness, the consciousness of a divine nature. Such facts naturally suggest this question. It is one, however, that should be treated guardedly; for, otherwise, it may prove itself misleading. It proceeds on the assumption of a distinctively human personality and consciousness in Christ for a longer or shorter period; with some, reaching the time of his baptism or the beginning of his public ministry. In this view, up to such time the incarnate divine nature must have remained in a latent state, or without any manifestation in the consciousness of Christ. Or, if there was any exception, it was only in some transient instance, such as that of his notable conversation with the doctors in the temple (Luke 2:46-47). Otherwise, up to the time of his baptism or entrance upon his public ministry his consciousness was simply that of a man, without any recognition of either his great mission or his divine nature.

Such a view of Christ simplifies the interpretation of facts in his earlier life. It would equally simplify the interpretation of many facts of his public life which have a like human cast. But the view is closely kindred to the Nestorian, and may easily lead to a perversion of doctrine respecting the person of Christ. If we start with the assumption of a purely human consciousness, and so of a purely human person of Christ, we may carry the same assumption through his whole life, and he shall be to us two persons, after the Nestorian manner. Even with the admission of a deeper consciousness of the divine in the later life of Christ, it might still be denied that this was the result of a personal union of the two natures in him. Indeed, this union is denied so long as we hold a distinct human consciousness of Christ. While this view could readily interpret some facts of his life, it cannot interpret the communion of divine and human facts in his personal oneness. This personal oneness in the union of the two natures lies in the mystery of the incarnation. In personality Christ is God-man. This is the only doctrine which can interpret and harmonize the Christological facts of Scripture. There is no distinctively human Christ, and therefore no distinctively human consciousness of the divine in Christ.

2. Divine Consciousness of the Human.—In the incarnation the divine Son so took the nature of man into personal union with himself as to enter into the consciousness of trials like our own. The facts of the incarnation, as given in the Scriptures and accepted in the faith of the Church, mean such a consciousness. The self-incarnating Son was himself complete in personality, but the human nature which he assumed, while complete as a nature, was without personality. The personality of the Son was not neutralized; nor were his personal attributes compressed into the measure of the human. Wherein, then, lies the reality of the incarnation? Not in a personality of

Christ distinct from the personality of the Son. There is no such a personality, and to assume it is to deny the reality of the incarnation. Nor is this reality to be found in the entrance of a human person into such a union with the divine nature as to attain the consciousness of the divine in Christ. There is no such a person in Christ. Such a consciousness would be a purely human consciousness, and therefore could not answer for the reality of the incarnation. The incarnation was a divine act, not a human act; and if we would apprehend its reality we must view it on its divine side. Here is the great truth which we previously considered. In the incarnation the divine Son entered personally into the nature of man in a manner to enter into the consciousness of trials like our own. This is the deepest and most luminous truth of the divine incarnation. The divine consciousness of the human is an intrinsic fact of the theanthropic character of Christ. As we previously pointed out, he is theanthropic in his personality, not in his natures. In his natures he is divine and human, but in the unity of personality he is divine-human, God-man. In the unity of personality there must be a unity of consciousness, but in a theanthropic consciousness there must be both divine and human facts. In the theanthropic consciousness of Christ the divine facts come with the divinity of the Son; the human facts, through the human nature in which he was personally incarnated.

3. A Possibility of the Divine Consciousness.—A great mystery! But the divine consciousness of facts in the form of human experiences is no greater a mystery than the incarnation itself. Indeed, the profoundest mystery of the incarnation lies in the union of the divine and human natures in the personal oneness of Christ. The divine is thus brought into new relations. Through new relations there may be new facts of consciousness. This is often exemplified in human experience. An angel, existing in pure spirituality, or in a corporeity wholly without sensitivity, might still have the consciousness of many facts, but must be without many such as we have. Such an angel might become enshrined in a bodily organism, just in the manner of a human spirit, without any suspension of personal consciousness, but not without many new facts of experience in the form of our own. So in the incarnation the divine Son may have the consciousness of facts in the form of human experiences. We are in possession of no light or principle which can warrant a denial of the possibility of such facts. They must be actual in the very reality of the divine incarnation.

There is a sympathy in God which must witness for the truth which we here maintain. As in our own nature there is a power of sympathy, for the deeper action of which common suffering is a special law, so in the very nature and love of God there is a sympathy with the suffering so true and deep as to manifest the possibility that in the incarnation the divine Son could so enter into the forms of human trial as to appropriate this special law of sympathy with us. God is not the Absolute of speculative agnosticism, impersonal, without knowledge or sensibility. Even our speculative theology has too often removed God so far away from mankind as to deny to them his real compassion, or invested him with an absoluteness of blessedness which could not be affected by either the joys or woes of men. God is not such a being. He is our Father in heaven. He is love. He has pleasure in our happiness and sympathy with us in our suffering. He suffers with us. This is the meaning of his compassion, which the Scriptures so frequently and earnestly express.

If God is such in himself, and such in his sympathy with us, we should not stumble at the doctrine of the sympathy of Christ which we have maintained. The chief objection urged against it is that it is contradictory to the absolute divine blessedness. This objection vanishes before the character of God as revealed in the Scriptures. The gift of the Son for the redemption of the world means a

stress of sacrifice in the consciousness of the Father. How else can we interpret the expressions of his love in that gift? God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son; spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; sent his own Son to be the propitiation for our sins (John 3:16; Romans 8:33; 1 John 4:10). If this gift of the Son was without stress of sacrifice in the consciousness of the Father, what mean these intense expressions of his love? There could be no such love in the gift of the Son without a stress of sacrifice in the giving. In the presence of such a fact of divine sacrifice it must be admitted that the incarnate Son could enter into the consciousness of trials like our own, and so appropriate the deepest law of sympathy with us.

There are facts in the redeeming work of Christ which mean, and must mean, such a law of sympathy with us. It was the Son who, though he was rich, for our sake became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich (2 Corinthians 8:9); who was in the form of God, and equal with him in glory, but parted with that glory and took instead the form of a servant in the likeness of men, and humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross (Php 2:6-8). In these facts we must admit a stress of sacrifice infinitely profound, or assume an utter indifference of the Son as between these states. If the state of poverty was the same to his consciousness as the state of riches which he surrendered, the form of a servant in the likeness of men the same as the glory of the Father in which he dwelt and with which he parted, then there was for him no stress of sacrifice in the profound facts of his redeeming work. If it be so, what can these intense words mean? Nothing; really nothing. Indeed, they can mean nothing less than a profound sacrifice of the Son in the work of redemption—a sacrifice fully apprehended in his divine consciousness.

Mostly, our orthodox theology lays aright the foundation of our soteriology. The Son of God, truly and essentially divine, is the Saviour. The Scriptures emphasize the fact that the Son is the Saviour (John 3:16-17; 1 John 4:9; 1 John 4:14); so that there is no reason, no excuse even, for any halting or divergence at this point. That the Son may save us he incarnates himself in our nature, takes it into personal union with himself. Now, the Son incarnate is the Christ Jesus of the Gospel; a theanthropic person. All this is accepted and maintained. But in the further exposition of our soteriology Christ m his work of redemption begins to appear quite distinct from the person of the Son. It is forgotten that there is no theanthropic Christ except as the incarnate Son enters into the consciousness of experiences like our own. Even the possibility of such a consciousness is denied. Then the human nature of Christ begins to be viewed as a human person, quite distinct from the divine nature, and as the conscious subject, and the only conscious subject, of the vicarious sufferings whereby the world was redeemed. This is a wide departure from the accepted doctrine of the person of Christ, and ends in the notion of the redemption of the world by the sacrifice of a man. It was not a man, but his own Son, that the Father sent to be the Saviour of the world; and the Son was consciously present and operative in all the work of its redemption; consciously participant in the deepest sorrows of Gethsemane and in that bitterest outcry on Calvary. All this is in the accepted doctrine of the person of Christ, in the reality of the divine incarnation, and in the sense of Scripture.

We have no insight into the mystery of such facts. They lie in the depths of the divine incarnation. We attempt no philosophy of the manner in which the divine Son entered into the consciousness of trials like our own. We do not even intimate any form of physical pain, such as we suffer. We simply maintain the deep and manifest truth of Scripture, that in the incarnation the divine Son entered into the consciousness of trials like our own, and through such trials appropriated the

deepest law of sympathy with us.

4. Real Ground of the Sympathy of Christ.—We thus reach the very sure ground of the sympathy of Christ as it is revealed in the Scriptures and apprehended in the deepest Christian thought and feeling. This ground does not lie in the experiences of a mere human consciousness, with all the limitations and disabilities of the human. Nor is it subject to the law of time and changing conditions, as the grounds of all human sympathy must be. The trials of Christ which constitute the ground of his sympathy have their place in his theanthropic consciousness. Therein they ever abide, and for all the requirements of his sympathy are living facts still, just as they were in the hours of his trial.

Such a sympathy of Christ is sufficient for its place in the Scriptures and for the exigencies of Christian experience. It is free from all the limitations of a merely human sympathy, and with its grateful ministries can reach all cases of need. Mere human sympathy, even in its deepest intensity, must often consume itself in kindly yearnings while it is powerless for any effective ministry. Many could weep with Martha and Mary, but could not reach the depth of their grief. Jesus wept, and turned .their sorrow into joy. In him an infinite efficiency combines with an infinite depth of sympathy.

5. Light on the Person of Christ.—It should be remembered that we took the sympathy of Christ into our discussion, not only because it is an important truth of Christology, but specially for the reason of its intimate relation to the question of his personality. In the progress of the discussion we have seen that this relation is, indeed, most intimate. We found that his sympathy is grounded in a law of common suffering with us. In his life we found many facts of trial and suffering in the likeness of our own; but a deeper study discovered their insufficiency for the requirements of his sympathy, if they are restricted to a mere human consciousness. In this case his sympathy could be only human, and therefore utterly insufficient for its place in the Scriptures and for the needs of Christian experience. We further found that only as these forms of trial and suffering were apprehended in a divine consciousness could they constitute in Christ a sufficient ground for his sympathy.

It is here that we find in the sympathy of Christ the true doctrine of his personality. He must be a theanthropic person, else he could not have the consciousness of trial and suffering which is necessary to his sympathy. He is a theanthropic person as in personal oneness he unites a human nature with his divine nature and through the human enters into the consciousness of trial and suffering like our own. The theanthropic consciousness of Christ is the central truth of his personality.

Literature.—Pearson: Exposition of the Creed, articles ii, iii; Hooker: Ecclesiastical Polity, book v, secs. 51-54; Waterland: The Athanasian Creed, Works, vol. iii; Owen: The Person of Christ, Works (Goold's), vol. i; Martensen: Christian Dogmatics, secs. 125-147; Dorner: System of Christian Doctrine, vol. iii;Doctrine of the Person of Christ; Luthardt: The Saving Truths of Christianity, lect. iv; Usher: On the Incarnation; Hovey: God With Us; Wilberforce: On the Incarnation; Pope: The Person of Christ; Gess:The Person of Christ; Goodwin, Henry M.: Christ and Humanity; Goodwin, Thomas: Christ the Mediator; Schmid: Biblical Theology of the New Testament, part i; Ullmann: The Sinlessness of Jesus; Bruce: The Humiliation of Christ; Plumptre: Christ and Christendom, Boyle Lectures, 1867; Medd: The One Mediator, Bampton Lectures, 1882; Du Bose: The

Soteriology of the New Testament; Gore: The Incarnation of the Son of God, Bampton Lectures, 1891; Schaff: The Person of Christ; Neander: History of the Church, vol. ii, pp. 424-557; Hefele: History of Church Councils, book xi.

129. Chapter 5: Leading Errors In Christology.

Chapter 5 Leading Errors In Christology. The treatment of Christological errors is specially the work of historical theology; yet some attention to them is proper in a system of doctrines. We may thus set in a clearer light the true doctrine of the person of Christ. However, a brief presentation of the leading errors is all that we require and all that we attempt.

130. I. Earlier Errors.

I. Earlier Errors.

While it is convenient to make the general distinction between the earlier and later Christological errors, a chronological order is not important in the treatment of the errors as classed in the two divisions. Here it is better to observe, as far as practicable, a logical order.

1. Ebionism.—The Ebionites were probably so named by an opprobrious application to them of a Hebrew word which means poor; but not on account of their low and impoverished views of Christ, as some have held. Ebionism was a strongly Judaized form of Christianity. This is true as a general characterization. However, Ebionism represents several sects, with different Christological tenets. There were two leading sects: the Essene and the Pharisaic. The Essene Ebionites held the Mosaic law to be obligatory on all Jewish Christians, but did not require its observance by Gentile Christians. Therefore they accepted the apostleship and teaching of St. Paul. The Pharisaic Ebionites held that all Christians must observe the law of Moses, the Gentile no less than the Jewish. Therefore they repudiated the apostleship and teaching of St. Paul. They were his virulent and persistent opposers and persecutors.

Both sects held Christ to be the promised Messiah, but their notion of him was the low, secularized notion of the Jew. But, with agreement on this point, the two sects differed on others. The Essene held the miraculous conception of Christ, while the Pharisaic held him to be the son of Joseph and Mary by natural generation. The former of these views is in close identity with the earlier Socinianism ; the latter in a like identity with a more modern humanitarianism, which holds Christ to be a man, just as others, whatever moral superiority may be conceded him. With these statements the errors of Ebionism in Christology are manifest. The divinity of Christ and the divine incarnation in him are both denied.[584]

[584] Burton:Heresies of the Apostolic Age, Bampton Lectures, 1829, lect. iii; Reuss:Christian Theology in the Apostolic Age, book i, chap, ix; Neander:History of the Church, vol. i, pp. 344-353; Schaff:History of the Christian Church, vol. li, pp. 431-442, 1886; Dorner:Doctrine of the Person of Christ, div. i, vol. 1, pp. 188-217.

2. Gnosticism.—No doubt the term Gnostic had its ground in the Greek word γν■σις. As appropriated by the Gnostics it meant the profession of a high order of knowledge. As knowledge is possible, such a claim is not necessarily groundless; but it may mean, and with the Gnostics did mean, the profession of a peculiar insight into great problems which lie beyond the grasp of other minds. They dealt freely, and with much pretension of knowledge, with the profoundest questions. We may instance the world-ground or absolute being; all secondary or finite existences; the mode of their derivation from the absolute; the origin of evil and the mode of the world’s redemption. Mostly, however, their treatment of these great questions was in a purely speculative mode. Hypothesis and deduction were in the freest use. Deduction, however, must be kept within its own sphere, and proceed only from grounds or principles of unquestionable truth. The Gnostics were

heedless of these imperative laws, carried their speculations into spheres where induction is the only appropriate method, and proceeded from the merest hypotheses or assumptions. With such methods in view the vagaries of Gnosticism should cause no surprise.

Gnosticism divided into various schools. This was an inevitable consequence of its purely speculative method. It was also made certain by the diverse influences to which its speculations were subject. “The principal sources of Gnosticism may probably be summed up in these three. To Platonism, modified by Judaism, it owed much of its philosophical form and tendencies. To the dualism of the Persian religion it owed one form at least of its speculations on the origin and remedy of evil, and many of the details of its doctrine of emanations. To the Buddhism of India, modified again probably by Platonism, it was indebted for the doctrines of the antagonism between spirit and matter and the unreality of derived existence (the germ of the Gnostic Docetism), and, in part at least, for the theory which regards the universe as a series of successive emanations from the absolute unity.”[585] Theories would thus take form just as one source of influence or another predominated, or according to the elements combined in their construction.

[585]Mansel:The Gnostic Heresies, p. 32

It is already apparent that leading tenets of the Gnostic heresy flourished in different philosophies long before the Christian era. As a heresy in Christianity it began its evil work while the apostles yet lived and wrote. There are many references to it in the New Testament, particularly in the writings of St. John. It is every-where reprehended as false in doctrine, evil in practice, and corrupt in influence. These characterizations are not limited to its evils as then manifest, but are prophetic of far greater evils in a future not remote. The truth of these prophecies was fully verified in the early history of the Church.

There were two principles of Gnosticism which led to an utterly false doctrine of the person of Christ. These were the tenets of emanation and the intrinsically evil nature of matter. God was not a creator of the universe, but the source of emanations. In this mode all things have proceeded from him. But this process is on a descending scale; so that even the first emanation must be inferior to the original ground of all things. Hence, wherever Christ is placed in the scale of emanated existences, even though it were at the top, he cannot be truly divine. The other tenet that matter is intrinsically evil, and corruptive of all spiritual being in contact with it, was common to the different schools of Gnosticism, and led to a denial of the divine incarnation. That is. Gnosticism denied the reality of the human nature of Christ. What in him seemed a real body was not such in fact, but a mere phantasm or appearance. It was on this ground that the Gnostics were often called Docetae, from δοκ■ω, to seem or appear. If there was no reality in the bodily form of Christ, of course there was no divine incarnation in him.

It was in view of this heresy as an evil already at work, and as seen in prophetic vision, soon to become a far greater evil, that St. John opened his gospel with a doctrine of the Logos, which could mean nothing less than his essential divinity, and asserted in a manner so definite the reality of his incarnation.[586] It was in the same view that he wrote in his epistles: “And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God : and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come ; and even now already is it in the world.” “For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist” (1 John 4:3; 2 John 1:7). It is obvious that such texts are

indirect reprobation of certain principles of the Gnostics, which determine for them an utterly false doctrine of the person of Christ. According to these principles he could be neither divine nor an incarnation of divinity in our nature.[587] [586] John 1:1-3;John 1:14

[587]Burton:Heresies of the Apostolic Age, Bampton Lectures, 1829; Mansel:The Gnostic Heresies; Norton:History of the Gnostics; Lightfoot:Commentary on Colossians, pp. 73-113; Ueberweg:History of Philosophy, § 77; Reuss:Christian Theology in the Apostolic Age, book iii, chaps, ix, x; Neander:History of the Church, vol. i, pp. 366-478; Dorner:Doctrine of the Person of Christ, div. i, vol. i, pp. 218-252; King:The Gnostics and their Remains. An appendix to King's book gives very fully the literature of the subject.

3. Arianism.—The term Arianism was derived from Arius, who became the representative of certain doctrinal views regarded as heretical. Arius was a presbyter of the Church of Alexandria, early in the fourth century, and a man of influence. He set forth and maintained views at issue with the accepted doctrine of the Trinity; but the real point of the issue concerned the divinity of the Son. When, in an assembly of his clergy, Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, maintained the eternity of the Son, Arius openly opposed him, and maintained that in the very nature of his relation to the Father, the Son could not be eternal. This position could not remain as the whole adverse view. It involved doctrinal consequences which could not be avoided, and which, therefore, were soon accepted and maintained. If the Son was not eternal, then there was a time when he was not. This consequence was accepted and avowed. If the Son was not eternal, then his existence must have originated in an optional will of the Father, and either in the mode of generation or in that of creation. These consequences were also accepted; but respecting the actual mode of the Son's origin the earlier Arianism was vacillating or indefinite. Later, the mode of creation was more in favor. Thus, the Son was held to be of creaturely character. The departure from the orthodox faith was really the same, whichever view of his origin was maintained. A being originating in time, and by an optional act of God, whatever the mode of his operation, could not be truly divine. This consequence was fully accepted. The results of these views respecting the doctrines of the Trinity And the person of Christ are obvious. They are utterly subversive of both. The truth of the Trinity imperatively requires the essential divinity of the Son. He must be consubstantial with the Father, and his personal subsistence must be in the mode of an eternal generation, not by any optional act of the Father. A true doctrine of the person of Christ equally requires the essential divinity of the Son. Hence Arianism subverts the deepest truth of the person of Christ. When the Son is reduced to a temporal existence, to a finite being, to the plane of a creature, there can be no divine incarnation in Christ, no theanthropic character of Christ. No attribution of greatness to the Son can obviate these consequences. Arianism may declare him, as it did, the head of creation, and far above all other creatures, so far as to be like God ; but all this avails nothing because such likeness means, and is intended to mean, that he is not God, and that the divine nature is not in him. No more relief comes with the ascription to the Son of the whole work of creation. Relief might thus come if this work were allowed to mean what it really means for the divinity of the Son; but there is no relief so long as Arianism denies his divinity and reduces him to the plane of a creature. The contradictory ascription of the work of creation to the Son, after he is reduced to the plane of a creature, leaves Arianism in the utter subversion of the truth respecting the person of Christ.[588]

[588] Newman, Cardinal:Arians of the Fourth Century; Gwatkin:The Arian Controversy; Waterland:Defense of the Divinity of Christ; A Second Defense of Christ's Divinity, Works, vol. ii;

Cunningham:Historical Theology, vol. i, pp. 276-293; Gieseler:Ecclesiastical History, vol. i, pp. 294-322; Schaff:History of the Christian Church, vol. iii, §§ 119-125, 1886; Dorner:Doctrine of the Person of Christ, div. i, vol. ii, pp. 201-241.

4. Apollinarianism.—The Apollinarian Christology was so named from Apollinaris, Bishop of Laodicea, and was disseminated in the fourth century. Its distinctive characteristic is that it denies to Christ the possession of a human mind. Necessarily, therefore, the theory grounded itself in a trichotomic anthropology. Man was assumed to consist of three distinct natures, body, soul, and spirit—σ■μα, ψυχ■, πνε■μα. In the theory body and mind were held in their usual meaning: the former as the physical nature; the latter as the rational and moral nature. The peculiarity of the theory was in the meaning given to the psyche or soul. This was held to be a distinct nature, intermediate between the physical and mental, and the seat of the sensuous or animal life. Provision was thus made for the theory of a partial incarnation. If man consists of three distinct natures it was possible that in the incarnation the Son should assume two of these natures and omit the third. It was assumed, accordingly, that the rational and moral nature was omitted, and that the Son united with himself merely the physical and psychic natures of man. With such limitation of the human nature assumed in the incarnation, or the omission of the mental nature, the theory must account for the rational and moral facts, such as have a human cast, in the life of Christ. The account was attempted on the assumption that the incarnate Logos so fulfilled the functions of a rational mind in Christ as to account for this class of facts in his life.

While trichotomy provides for a partial incarnation, it is the necessary ground of a Christology which makes such limitation fundamental. If man is only dichotomic in his natures, there is no place for such a Christology. However, the refutation of Apollinarianism is not to be most readily achieved through the refutation of trichotomy. While the Scriptures are seemingly in favor of dichotomy, yet they are not decisive, as appeared in our discussion of that question. Nor can the question be concluded in any scientific or philosophic mode. On the other hand, there is here a fatal weakness of the Apollinarian Christology. In the first place, it is unable to establish the truth of trichotomy, which yet is its necessary ground. In the next place, the established truth of trichotomy could not conclude the Apollinarian Christology ; indeed, could not furnish any proof of it. The disproof of this Christology lies in the historic life of Christ. The facts of a rational and moral life in the cast of the human are as manifest therein as the facts of a psychic life, as here distinguished from the rational and moral. The presence of a human mind in Christ is the necessary ground and the only rational account of these facts. They cannot be accounted for simply by the presence of the incarnate Logos. To assume this possibility would be to assume the compression of his divine attributes into the limits of the human, after the manner of the modern kenoticism. Then there could no longer be a divine incarnation. The humanization of the Logos in Christ contradicts the deepest truth of the incarnation, which lies in the divine consciousness of the human. If the divine is in any way changed into the human there can no longer be a divine consciousness of the human. The reality of the divine incarnation is itself the disproof of the Apollinarian Christology. The assumption of a human nature without the rational mind could not be an incarnation in the nature of man. The mind is so much of man that without it there is no true human nature. Nor could the self-incarnating Son, with such limitation of the nature assumed, so enter into the consciousness of experiences like our own as to be in all points tempted like as we are, and thus appropriate the deepest law of his sympathy with us. Our deepest trials and our deepest

exigencies of experience lie in our rational and moral nature; therefore it was necessary that he should take this nature into personal union with himself. Only in this mode could he share the consciousness of such experiences and so appropriate the law of his profoundest sympathy with us.[589]

[589] Neander:History of the Church, vol. iii, pp. 428-434; Schaff:History of the Christian Church, vol. iii, § 136; Plumptre:Christ and Christendom, Appendix H; Hagenbach:History of Doctrines, § 99; Dorner:Doctrine of the Person of Christ, div. i, vol. ii, pp. 351-398.

5. Nestorianism.—The term Nestorianism is derived from the name of Nestorius, and means the doctrine of two persons in Christ. This doctrine was propagated early in the fifth century, and at one time very widely prevailed, particularly in the Eastern Church. Nestorius, whose name is so responsibly connected with the doctrine, was a presbyter of Antioch, and, later. Patriarch of Constantinople, and a man of eminence and moral worth. However, he was not the author of the Christological view so directly connected with his name. The true authorship was with Theodore of Mopsuestia, but his doctrine found able advocates in his former pupils, Nestorius and Theodoret, the latter, Bishop of Cyrus.

While it was a special aim of the Apollinarian doctrine to make sure of the oneness of the person of Christ, it was equally the aim of the Nestorian doctrine to make sure of the integrity of his two natures, particularly of his human nature. Each made an unnecessary sacrifice of vital truth in order to the attainment of its aim: the former, of the integrity of the human nature of Christ; the latter, of the unity of his personality in the union of the two natures. It is true that the leaders of Nestorianism, such as we have named, claimed to hold the personal oneness of Christ, or denied the dualism with which Cyril, Archbishop of Alexandria, and others charged them. Cyril was their chief opponent. Their doctrine of the union of the Logos with the human nature in Christ fell far short of the requirement of his personal oneness, and left the human in the mode of a distinct and complete human personality. “They called it an inhabitation; and the general nature of the inhabitation, as distinct from that by which God dwells in all men. through his omnipresent essence and energy, they indicated by the phrase ‘by good pleasure’ (κα■■ ε■δοκ■αν); and this indwelling by good pleasure in Christ they further discriminated from God’s indwelling in other good men, by representing it as attaining in him the highest possible degree. This indwelling of the Logos in Christ was also said to be according to foreknowledge, the Logos choosing the man Jesus to be in a peculiar sense his temple, because he knew beforehand what manner of man he should be. . . .Among other phrases current in the same school were such as these; union by conjunction; union by relation, as in the case of husband and wife; union in worth, honor, authority; union by consent of will; union by community of name, and so forth; for it were endless to enumerate the Nestorian tropes or modes of union.”[590] No such union of the divine nature with the human assumed in the incarnation is here expressed, or even allowed, as will answer for the personal oneness of Christ. Therefore, while Nestorianism might repudiate the doctrine of two persons in Christ, it could not free itself from the implication of such a doctrine.

[590]Bruce:The Humiliation of Christ, pp. 48, 49. The disproof of Nestorianism lies in the proofs of the personal oneness of Christ in the union of the divine and human natures. These proofs were given in the treatment of that question; hence they need not here be repeated. Further, this doctrine, as the Apollinarian, and even more fully, is refuted by the reality of the divine incarnation.

The great texts adduced in the treatment of that question mean, and must mean, that the divine Son took the nature of man into a personal union with himself ; so that of the two natures so united there is one Christ, very God-man. The Nestorian Christology must deny the reality of the divine incarnation, and, therefore, must be false to the Christology of the Scriptures.[591]

[591] Hefele:History of Church Councils, book ix, chaps, i, ii; Schaff:History of the Christian Church, vol. iii, §§ 137-139, 1886; Neander:History of the Church, vol. ill, pp. 446-524; Cunningham:Historical Theology, vol. i, pp. 315-320; Gieseler:Ecclesiastical History, vol. i, pp. 343-355; Hagenbach:History of Doctrines, § 100; Dorner:Doctrine of the Person of Christ, div. ii, vol. i, pp. 25-79.

6. Eutychianism.—This error is coupled with the name of Eutyches, a monk without other distinction, unless we reckon to his account a notable lack of culture, an intense love of debate, and an extreme doggedness. He is not reckoned the author of this Christological error, though he may have contributed something toward its extreme form. His intense activity in the propagation of the doctrine seems to be the only reason for its bearing his name.

Eutychianism is monophysitic as it respects the nature of Christ; that is, that as the incarnate Logos Christ possessed but one nature. This view was in direct contradiction to the Chalcedonian symbol, which so formally declared that in him there were two complete, unmixed, and unchanged natures, the human and the divine. Eutychianism admitted the reality of the divine incarnation, and the incipient duality of the natures, but denied that their distinction remained in Christ. Just when, and in what mode, the distinction ceased, and the two natures became one, are questions on which the doctrine was quite indefinite. Respecting the time, it was held that it might have been instant with the incarnation, or at the baptism of Christ, or after his resurrection. Nor was the theory less indefinite respecting the change in the natures whereby the two became one. Whether the divine was humanized, or the human deified, or the two so mixed and compounded as to constitute a nature neither human nor divine was not determined, though the stronger tendency was toward the view of the deification of the human nature. In this view Christ was wholly divine. The human nature was transmuted into the divine, or absorbed by the divine, as a drop of honey is absorbed by the ocean. Such an illustration was in frequent use for the expression of the change to which the human nature assumed in the incarnation was subject and the monophysitic result determined. Much is thus expressed. The drop of honey absorbed by the ocean would no longer be a drop of honey; nor would it be distinguishable from the body of the ocean. Hence the frequent use of such an illustration fully justifies our statement, that the doctrine strongly tended to the view of a deification of the human nature in Christ.

It seems quite needless to subject such a doctrine to the tests of criticism. Unless this change is held to have occurred at least as late as the ascension of Christ, the doctrine is openly contradicted by the daily facts of his life. We may as readily question his divinity as his humanity. His life is replete with facts so thoroughly in the cast of the human that he must have possessed a human nature; for otherwise these facts have no rational or possible account. Besides, if the human nature assumed by the divine was so transmuted or absorbed, the incarnation loses its own true, deep meaning and assumes a purely docetic form. Thus all grounds of the atonement and of the sympathy of Christ through a law of common suffering with us are utterly swept away. It may suffice to add that such a transmutation of the human nature into the divine is an absolute

impossibility. We mean by this that it is not within the power of God. This must be manifest to any mind which takes the proposition into clear thought.[592]

[592] Hefele:History of Church Councils, book x, chap, ii; Neander:History of the Church, vol. iii, pp. 504-511 Schaff:History of the Christian Church, vol. iii, §§ 140-145, 1886; Hooker:Ecclesiastical Polity, book v, §§ 52-54; Dorner:Doctrine of the Person of Christ, div. ii, vol. i, pp. 79-119.

131. II. Later Errors.

II. Later Errors. A review of all the modern phases of Christological error would be tedious, and without compensatory result. It will suffice that we consider some of the leading forms of such error.

1. The Socinian Christology.—Socinianism, as a system of theology, originated in the sixteenth century, and took its designation from Laelius Socinus, an Italian, but who spent most of his active life in Poland, because he there found more liberty in the propagation of his peculiar doctrinal views. However, while the original of this system is with Laelius Socinus, his nephew, Faustus Socinus, born 1539, more fully developed and propagated it, and first formed the converts to this faith into a distinct religious body, so that he may properly be regarded as one of the founders of Socinianism.

We here need only the most summary statement of its doctrinal tenets. Mostly, the Scriptures were admitted to be of divine origin, but rather as containing than as being a divine revelation. A strong rationalistic principle was held as a law of biblical exegesis. It was in this mode that Socinianism provided for itself so much liberty of interpretation, that it might the easier wrest the Scriptures from the proof of the orthodox faith and maintain its own opposing views. With all this rationalism, the earlier Socinianism admitted the supernatural in Christianity, particularly in its Christology. It held the miraculous conception of Christ; that he was the subject of supernatural moral and spiritual endowments, and that he was temporarily taken to heaven in order to a better preparation for his great work in the redemption of the world. As Socinianism denied the divinity of Christ, so it denied the doctrine of the Trinity. Its anthropology was Pelagian, and its soteriology admitted no other ground or power of human salvation than the moral influence of the life and lessons of Christ. With these tenets of doctrine in hand, the Christology of the system is easily stated. With all the concession of supernatural facts, as previously stated, the Christ of Socinianism is a man, nothing more. True, he was declared to be more than man, but no sufficient ground was given, or even admitted, for the truth of the declaration. No supernatural fact conceded, nor all combined, could raise him in his own nature or being above the plane of the human. No other ground is given for the assertion that he was more than man. In its Christology, therefore, Socinianism was substantially the same as the old Ebionism. In many instances of its later purely rationalistic or Unitarian forms it has degenerated from the higher views of Christ with which it began. The Christology of Socinianism is utterly false to the Christology of the Scriptures. It denies the divinity of Christ; the reality of the divine incarnation; the union of the two natures in the personal oneness of Christ. All ground of the atonement is excluded from the system.[593]

[593] Dorner:Doctrine of the Person of Christ, div. ii, vol. ii, pp. 249-265; Cunningham:Historical Theology, chap, xxiii; Owen: Works (Goold’s), vol. xii. The utter falsity of this and all other forms of Christology grounded in the mere humanity of Christ is fully shown in discussions of the Trinity and the divinity of Christ, to which reference was given under our own treatment of these questions.

2. The Lutheran Christology.—This error lies in the ascription of divine attributes, particularly of omnipresence, to the human nature of Christ. Only in an omnipresence or, at least, multipresence of his human nature could the Lutheran Christology answer to the doctrine of consubstantiation—the doctrine of the presence and communion of the body and blood of Christ in the sacrament of the supper. If in this supper the communicants really partake of the body and blood of Christ, then in some real sense, however obscure its mode, he must be present in his human nature, and, therefore, he must be present in many places at the same time. This is not denied by those who hold the doctrine of the real presence; indeed, it is affirmed.

It has often been said by divines who controvert the Christology of the Lutherans that its construction was determined by the requirements of their doctrine of the real presence. Lutherans, however, deny this, and maintain that their doctrine of the person of Christ was constructed directly upon the ground of the Scriptures, and in the proper interpretation of their Christological facts; yet it is admitted that the one doctrine confirms the other and sets it in a clearer light. Thus, Dr. Gerhart having maintained that the Lutheran doctrine of the person of Christ "was developed from the Lutheran theory of the sacrament,"[594] Dr. Krauth replies: "If Dr. Gerhart means no more than that God in his providence made the discussions in regard to the Lord's Supper the means of bringing more fully and harmoniously into a well-defined consciousness and into clearer expression the doctrine of the Scriptures in regard to the person of Christ, we do not object to it; but if he means that the doctrine of our Church on the person of Christ originated in the necessity of defending her doctrine in regard to the Lord's Supper, we think he is wholly mistaken. The doctrine of our Church rests upon the direct testimony of God's word; and her interpretation of the meaning of that word is not one of her own devising, but had been given ages before her great distinctive confession, by the fathers and councils of the pure Church."[595] [594] Bibliotheca Sacra, 1863.

[595]The Conservative Reformation and its Theology, p. 502.

Theologians of any distinct Christian communion have the right of stating their own case on any such issue; but they have no final authority. That the Lutheran doctrine of the person of Christ was the doctrine of the early fathers and councils is rejected as groundless. Further, it is in the truth of doctrinal history that the Christology of the Lutheran Church has ever been associated with her doctrine of the real presence of Christ in the sacrament of the supper, and that mostly the former has been treated as secondary or subordinate to the latter. It is true that Dorner concedes to Luther a construction of his Christology independently of his doctrine of the Lord's Supper, but he also says this: "During the sixteenth century it was the doctrine of the supper that gave its direction and character to the concrete development of Christology."[596] The Lutheran doctrine is greatly lacking in clearness. Nor is this to be thought strange, especially in view of its peculiar tenets.

[596]Doctrine of the Person of Christ, div. ii, vol. ii, p. 301.

Further, Lutherans have differed widely among themselves, and this fact greatly hinders the clear apprehension of the doctrine. The contentions on this question within the Lutheran Church were quite equal to those which she maintained with Papists, Zwinglians, and Calvinists. There were two schools of special prominence in these interior doctrinal issues: one in the following of Brentz; the other in the following of Chemnitz. There were other schools, each with its own doctrine, and for which it contended against all opposing views. Among the contending parties there were real

differences of doctrine. These contentions were fruitful of much evil. This came to be so clearly seen and deeply felt as to awaken an intense desire for peace and a harmony of doctrinal views. The attainment of these ends was earnestly attempted. The Formula of Concord was the product of this endeavor. The aim was good, but the result brought little satisfaction. The desiderated concord was not attained. Divisions were rather increased than diminished. There was still a Brentzian doctrine, and still a Chemnitzian doctrine. Others were added, notably a Giessen doctrine, and a Tubingen doctrine. There were others, but enough have been named to show the persistence and prevalence of the strife. These facts of division and disputation not only hinder the clear apprehension of the Lutheran Christology, but clearly point to peculiar difficulties of the doctrine, and really disprove it. Where shall we find the doctrine? Naturally, we turn first to the Augsburg Confession; but it is not given in the article which directly concerns this question.[597] In the article on the Lord's Supper some facts are given which, if true in themselves, must be determinative of some vital elements of the doctrine.[598] We note specially the alleged facts that the body and blood of Christ are truly present with the bread and wine, and are communicated to those who partake of the supper. But the determination of the doctrine of the person of Christ from the contents of this article would subordinate it to the doctrine of the supper in a manner to which Lutheran divines strongly object.

[597]Article iii.

[598]Article x. The Formula of Concord, while giving a later formulation of the doctrine, and the latest with any claim to authority, still leaves us in uncertainty, and for two reasons: one, that this statement was a compromise among opposing parties; the other, that it has not been held in any unity of faith. Yet we know not any better source to which we may look for the Lutheran doctrine.

Much of the article on the person of Christ is in full accord with the Chalcedonian symbol, but it contains elements article which are peculiar to the Lutheran doctrine.[599] These eight appear in the ascription of divine attributes to the human nature of Christ. It is not meant that the human nature is deified in any Eutychian sense, but that by virtue of the union of the two natures in Christ the human possesses the attributes of the divine. This is the sense of the communicatio idiomatum, the communion of the attributes of the two natures in Christ. It seems obvious that, if the union is such that the human should possess the attributes of the divine, then, conversely, the divine should possess the attributes of the human. This, however, is denied. Omniscience, omnipotence, and ubiquity are the divine attributes which are more specially ascribed to the human nature of Christ. "Therefore now not only as God, but also as man, he knows all things, can do all things, is present to all creatures, has under his feet and in his hand all things which are in heaven, in the earth, and under the earth." These facts are central to the Christology of the article, and other facts affirmed are in full accord with them. "What the divine has in its essence and of itself, the human has and exercises through the divine, in consequence of its personal union with it. We might imitate one of our Lord's own deep expressions in characterizing it, and might suppose him to say: 'As my divine nature hath omnipresence in itself, so hath it given to my human nature to have omnipresence in itself.'"[600] If the union of the two natures is valid ground for the omnipresence of the human, the same union must be equally valid for its omniscience and omnipotence.

[599]Article viii.

[600]Krauth:The Conservative Reformation and its Theology, p. 479. The statement of such a doctrine seems entirely sufficient for its refutation. The human nature assumed by the Logos in the incarnation remained human, with the attributes of the human. In itself it possessed the capacity for only such knowledge, power, and presence as are possible to the human. How then could it become omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent? The answer is, through the divine nature with which it was united. But if this union answers for such results, either it must give to the finite attributes of the human nature the plenitude of the infinite, or invest that nature with the attributes of the infinite. Attributes of knowledge, power, and presence, such as we here contemplate, are concrete realities of being, not mere notions or names. There can be neither knowledge, nor power, nor presence without the appropriate attribute of being. The being must answer for the character of the attribute, and the attribute must answer for all that is affirmed of it. Only a mind possessing the power of absolute knowing can be omniscient. Omnipotence must have its ground in a will of absolute power. Omnipresence, such as the Lutheran Christology affirms of the human nature of Christ, is possible only with an infinite extension of being. Hence, either the finite attributes of the human nature assumed by the Logos must be lifted into the infinitude of the divine attributes, or the divine attributes must be invested in the human nature, which is intrinsically finite, and which in itself, even as the Lutheran Christology concedes, must ever remain finite.

It is at this point that the doctrine encounters insuperable difficulties, even absolute impossibilities. There is no possibility that the human nature of Christ should possess the attributes of omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence which the Lutheran Christology ascribes to it. It is properly regarded as an axiom that the finite has not a capacity for the infinite—finitum non capax infiniti. The principle is absolutely true in application to the points which we here make. The finite attributes of the human nature can neither be enlarged to the infinitude of the divine attributes nor receive into themselves the plenitude of the divine. Neither can the finite nature of man receive the investment of these divine attributes. But there can be no omniscience without the attribute of absolute knowing; no omnipotence without a will of absolute power; no omnipresence of being without an infinite extension. Here are the impossibilities which the Lutheran Christology encounters in the ascription of such attributes to the human nature of Christ.[601]

[601] Dorner:Doctrine of the Person of Christ, div. ii, vol. ii, pp. 53-115; 266-315; Schmid:Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, § 55; Gerhart:Bibliotheca Sacra, January, 1863; Krauth:The Conservative Reformation and its Theology, article x.

3. The Kenotic Christology.—The seed-thought of kenoticism in Christology is credited to Zinzendorf, but it remained fruitless for a long time after he cast it forth. In later years his thought has been developed into doctrinal form. Indeed, there are several forms of this development. Professor Bruce has carefully noted four leading types of the doctrine, as severally represented by Thomasius, Gess, Ebrard, and Martensen.[602] With this classification he proceeds to a careful statement and critical review of each type. A study of this discussion is helpful toward a clear insight into the kenotic Christology. We, however, are mainly concerned with the deeper tenets of the doctrine.

[602]Bruce:The Humiliation of Christ, lect. iv.

Kenoticism is the doctrine that in the incarnation the Logos emptied himself of his divine attributes, or compressed them into the measure and cast of the human; that he parted with his omniscience,

omnipotence, and omnipresence, and subjected himself to the limitations of a merely human life. These are the central ideas of the doctrine, though not all kenoticists hold so extreme a view.

Whether in the incarnation the Logos assumed a human soul as well as a body, or whether in his own humanized form he fulfilled the functions of a human soul in the life of Christ, is a question on which kenoticists are not agreed. The admission of a distinct human soul must mean, for this doctrine, the co-existence of two souls in Christ—two not different in their human cast. In this case there could be no personal oneness of Christ. On the other hand, the denial of a distinct human soul must mean a denial of the divine incarnation. The reality of such an incarnation cannot lie in the assumption of a mere body of flesh and blood. Certainly such a limitation could not answer to the sense of the Scriptures respecting this profound truth. This kenoticism has really no ground in Scripture, though it assumes such ground. The proofs which it brings are not proofs, because it is only by an unwarranted interpretation of the texts adduced that they can give any support to the theory. We give a few instances. “And the Word was made flesh” (John 1:14). This cannot mean any transmutation of the divine Logos into a body of human flesh. Much less can it mean a transformation of the Logos into a man, for this is much farther away from a literal sense than the former. The meaning is simply that in the incarnation the Logos invested himself in a human nature, of which a body of flesh is the visible part. This interpretation places the text in complete accord with other texts of the incarnation. Here are other instances: “God was manifest in the flesh” (1 Timothy 3:16). “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same” (Hebrews 2:14). These texts give the same doctrine of the incarnation, but without any suggestion of the transformation of the Son into a man. That the Logos was made flesh can mean nothing more than these texts. The special reliance of the theory is on a passage from St. Paul: “Who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men” (Php 2:6-7). We have cited the Revised Version, it being more literal than the Authorized. We gave the meaning of this text in the treatment of the incarnation, and therefore require the less in considering its application to the present question.

“Being in the form of God” must mean an existence of the Son either in the nature of God or in the glory of God. If the former be the true sense, then, on the ground of his divine nature, an equality of glory with the Father was his rightful possession. If the latter be the true sense, then we have simply the fact that the Son rightfully existed in the full glory of God. It should be specially noted that this estate of glory was not his merely in right, but his in actual possession. This meaning is in the words, “counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself.” This accords with another text: “And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was” (John 17:5). Here the clear meaning is that the Son actually existed in the glory of the Father prior to his incarnation. Such is the sense of the great text now under special consideration.

What, then, is the truth of the kenosis in this case? The Son emptied himself—■ουτ■ν ■κενωσε. But of what? Surely not of his divine nature, nor of his divine perfections, which are inseparable from his nature. Nor can this act of kenosis mean the compression of his perfections into the cast and measure of mere human powers. Such an idea seems utterly foreign to any idea which the terms of the text either express or imply. This act of kenosis has respect to that estate of glory which, on the ground of his divine nature, the Son rightfully possessed in equality with the Father.

It means a self-emptying or self-divestment of that glory. This accords with his own words as previously cited: “And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.” That glory he once possessed, but had surrendered. The surrender was by the act of kenosis which we have in the text under special consideration. This interpretation brings all the parts of the text into complete harmony. The form of a servant in the likeness of men, which the Son assumed in the incarnation, stands in clear antithesis, not with his divine nature and perfections, but with the estate of glory which he possessed with the Father; which glory he might have rightfully retained, but with which he freely parted, and took instead the form of a servant in the likeness of men. The text gives no support to the kenotic Christology. The aim of kenoticism is twofold: to secure the unity of the person of Christ, and to provide for the human facts of aim of his life. The self-limitation of the Son in the incarnation to a mere human cast and measure is held to be necessary to the personal oneness of Christ, and to the reality of the human facts of his intramundane or historic life. The personal oneness is declared to be impossible on the ground of the traditional doctrine of the divine incarnation. It is readily conceded that this personal oneness is incomprehensible; but surely the mystery is riot solved nor in the least relieved by the theory of a humanized Logos as co-existent with a human soul in Christ. A duality of persons seems absolutely inseparable from such a co-existence; and this attempt to secure and explain the personal oneness of Christ is utterly futile. Further: if, as we formerly pointed out, the deepest truth of the incarnation lies in the divine consciousness of the human, may not this question of personal oneness have for us less pressing concern than we usually concede it? All that we require is such a relation of the divine to the human in Christ as will provide for this consciousness. And may there not be such a relation without the rigid unity of personality which is usually maintained? Let it be observed, however, that, in this hypothetical putting of the case, we do not yield the doctrine of the personal oneness of Christ. But on the ground of this kenoticism there could be no divine consciousness of the human in the incarnation, because the humanized Logos could no longer have any divine consciousness. The implications of this doctrine of the kenosis in Christology are contrary to the deepest truths of Christian theology. If the Son of God could part with his divine attributes Or humanize himself, then divinity itself must be mutable. This consequence can be denied only on a denial of the divinity of the Son. But his divinity is conceded in the very idea of his self-divestment of his divine attributes. The theory is subversive of the divine Trinity. The humanized Son, self-emptied of his divine attributes, could no longer be a divine subsistence in the Trinity. Hence this kenosis of the Son must mean the destruction of the Trinity. The theory is not less subversive of other fundamental truths of Christian theology. No ground of an atonement in the blood of Christ could remain. That the Son once existed in the divine Trinity, and in the plenitude of the divine life, could avail nothing for such an atonement. If self-reduced to the measure of a man, his death could be no more saving than the death of a man. No ground of the sympathy of Christ could remain, as that sympathy is revealed in the Scriptures, and as it must be in order to meet the exigencies of Christian experience. Such a sympathy we have found to be possible only through the divine consciousness of human experiences of suffering and trial. But there can be no such consciousness in the mere human consciousness to which this kenoticism limits the incarnate Logos. A theory with such implications can have no ground of truth in the Scriptures.[603]

[603] Bruce:The Humiliation of Christ; Pope:The Person of Christ, note viii; Goodwin:Christ and Humanity; Martensen:Christian Dogmatics, pp. 237-288; Crosby:The True Humanity of Christ;

Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 430-440; Gess:Scripture Doctrine of the Person of Christ. Translation and additions by Reubelt. This work and Bruce's Humiliation of Christ are specially useful in the study of this question.

132. Part V.—Soteriology.

Part V.—Soteriology.

134. Preliminaries.

Preliminaries. The great facts specially distinctive of Christianity lie in its soteriology. Hence this is the part of theology in which the truth of doctrine most deeply concerns us.

1. Soteriology.—The term soteriology is from σωτηρ■α and λογος, and means the doctrine of salvation. The doctrine includes two great facts: an atonement for sin, and a salvation from sin. Underlying these facts there is the great truth of a Saviour, Jesus Christ, who makes the atonement, and through its provisions accomplishes the salvation. Hence any proper expression of these facts of Christian soteriology must recognize their vital connection with him. We shall attain this recognition in the use of the following formulas for their representation: the atonement in Christ, and the salvation in Christ.

2. Atonement as Fact and Doctrine.—We should distinguish between the fact and the doctrine of atonement. Are the vicarious sufferings of Christ the ground of forgiveness and salvation? In what sense are they such a ground? These are distinct questions, and open to distinct answers. The first concerns the fact of an atonement; the second concerns its nature. Nor does an affirmative answer to the first question determine the answer to the second. Were this so, all who hold the fact of an atonement would agree in the doctrine. But such is not the case. Different schemes of theology, while in the fullest accord on the fact, are widely divergent respecting the doctrine.

Both questions are important, but that concerning the fact is the more vital. If the atonement be a reality, we may accept it in faith, and receive the benefit of its grace before we attain its philosophy. So accepted, it has the most salutary influence upon the religious life. To this both the experience of individual Christians and the history of the Church bear witness.

Yet the question of theory is far from being an indifferent or merely speculative one. The atonement is most fundamental in Christianity. Hence the theory of it must hold a commanding position in any system of Christian doctrine, and largely draw into itself the interest of the system. This is apparent upon a reference to the three great systems, which may be designated as the Arminian, the Calvinian, and the Socinian. As are other cardinal doctrines of each, so is its doctrine of atonement, or, conversely, as its doctrine of atonement, so are its other doctrines. In all profounder study the mind, by an inevitable tendency, searches for a philosophy of things. There is the same tendency in the deeper study of Christian truth. Thus, beyond the fact of an atonement, we search for a doctrine. We seek to understand its nature; what are its elements of atoning value; how it is the ground of divine forgiveness. We attempt its rationale. It must have a philosophy; and one clear to the divine mind, whatever obscurity it may have to the human. Its clear apprehension would be helpful to faith in many minds.[604] [604] Randles:Substitution: Atonement, pp. 2, 3.

3. Relation of the Doctrine to other Doctrines.—That a doctrine of atonement must fairly interpret the facts and terms of Scripture in which it is expressed, we hold to be an imperative law. There is also the law of the highest order in logical method. It is the law of a scientific accordance in intimately related doctrinal truths. It has its application to all scientific systems, and to the science

of theology equally as to any other. In any and every system truth must accord with truth. In systematic theology doctrine must accord with doctrine. Under this law a doctrine of atonement must be in scientific accord with cardinal doctrines vitally related to it. This law, while imperative, neither leads us away from the authority of Scripture nor lands us in a sphere of mere speculation. All Christian doctrine, to be true, must be scriptural. Doctrines in a system, to be true, must be both accordant and scriptural. If discordant or contradictory, some one or more must be both unscriptural and false. Hence this law of a scientific accordance in vitally related truths is consistent with the profoundest deference to the authority of revelation in all questions of Christian doctrine. This law may render valuable service in the construction and interpretation of Christian doctrine. As we may interpret Scripture by Scripture, so may we interpret doctrine by doctrine. Only, the interpreting doctrine must itself be certainly scriptural. As such, no Christian doctrine can be out of accord with it. In any distinction of standard or determining doctrines, preference should be given to the more fundamental; especially to such as are most certainly scriptural. Accepting such a law in the interpretation of atonement, or in the determination of its nature, we are still rendering the fullest obedience to the authority of the Scriptures in Christian doctrine. In the line of these facts and principles this law may be of special service in testing different theories of atonement, as they belong to different systems of theology. We shall better understand the legitimacy and service of this application if we hold in clear view the two leading facts previously noted, that in any system of Christian theology the several doctrines, as constituting a system, must be in scientific agreement, and, as Christian, must be scriptural. Hence, as leading doctrines of the system are true or false, so is the doctrine of atonement which is in accord with them. For illustration we may refer to the three leading systems previously named.

If other peculiar and leading doctrines of the Socinian theology be true and scriptural, so is its atonement of moral influence. If its Christology and anthropology be true and scriptural, this atonement is in full harmony with the system; and, further, is the only one which it needs or will admit. Clearly, it cannot admit either the satisfaction or the governmental theory. Both are out of harmony with its more fundamental and determining doctrines, and hence are excluded by the law of a necessary accordance of such truths when brought into scientific relation. The Socinian scheme, by the nature of its anthropology and Christology, denies the need of such an atonement, and has no Christ equal to the making of one. But if on the leading doctrines of Christianity the truth is with the Calvinistic or the Arminian system, then the Socinian atonement is false. It is so out of harmony with such doctrines that it cannot be true while they are true.

If other cardinal doctrines of Calvinism are true, its doctrine of atonement is true. It is an integral part of the system, and in full harmony with every other part. The doctrines of divine sovereignty and decrees, of unconditional election to salvation, of the effectual calling and final perseverance of the elect, and that their salvation is monergistically wrought as it is sovereignly decreed, require an atonement which in its very nature is and must be effectual in the salvation of all for whom it is made. Such an atonement the system has in the absolute substitution of Christ, both in precept and penalty, in behalf of the elect. He fulfills the righteousness which the law requires of them, and suffers the punishment which their sins deserve. By the nature of the substitution both must go to their account. Such a theory of atonement is in scientific accord with the whole system. And the truth of the system would carry with it the truth of the theory. It can admit no other theory. Nor can such an atonement be true if the system be false.

If the cardinal doctrines of the Arminian system, such as differentiate it from Calvinism, be true, then the atonement of satisfaction, in the Calvinistic sense of it, cannot be true. If the atonement is really for all, and in the same sense sufficient for all, then it must be only provisory, and its saving benefits really conditional. And no other truths are more deeply wrought into Arminianism, whether original or Wesleyan; none have a more uniform, constant, unqualified Methodistic utterance. They are such facts of atonement, or facts in such logical relation to it, that they require a doctrine in scientific agreement with themselves. Such a doctrine is the special aim of this discussion—not without regard to consistency in the system, but specially because these facts are scriptural, and the doctrine agreeing with them scriptural and true.

4. Definition of the Atonement.—A true doctrine of atonement can be fully given only in its formal exposition. Yet we give thus early a definition, with a few explanatory notes, that, so far as practicable by such means, we may place in view the doctrine which this discussion shall maintain. The vicarious sufferings of Christ are an atonement for sin as a conditional substitute for penalty, fulfilling, on the forgiveness of sin, the obligation of justice and the office of penalty in moral government. The sufferings of Christ are vicarious, not as incidental to a philanthropic or reformatory mission, but as endured for sinners under divine judicial condemnation, that they might be forgiven and saved.

They are a substitute for penalty, not as the punishment of sin judicially inflicted upon Christ, but in such rectoral relation to justice and law as renders them a true and sufficient ground of forgiveness.

They are a conditional substitute for penalty, as a provisory measure of government, rendering forgiveness, on proper conditions, consistent with the obligations of justice in moral administration. Subjects of the atonement are none the less guilty simply on that account, as they would be under an atonement by penal substitution, wherein Christ suffered the judicial punishment of sin in satisfaction of an absolute retributive justice. Under a provisory substitution, the gracious franchise is in a privilege of forgiveness, to be realized only on its proper conditions.

Thus the substitution of Christ in suffering fulfills the obligation of justice and the office of penaltyin their relation to the ends of moral government. Justice has an imperative obligation respecting these ends; and penalty, as the means of justice, a necessary office for their attainment. But penalty, as an element of law, is the means of good government, not only in its imminence or execution, but also through the moral ideas which it expresses. Hence its infliction in punishment is not an absolute necessity to the ends of its office. The rectoral service of its execution may be substituted, and in every instance of forgiveness is substituted, by the sufferings of Christ. The interest of moral government is thereby equally conserved. The ends of justice thus concerned involve the profoundest interests. They include the honor and authority of God as ruler in the moral realm; the most sacred rights and the highest welfare of moral beings; the utmost attainable restraint of sin and promotion of righteousness. Divine justice must regard these ends. In their neglect it would cease to be justice. It must not omit their protection through the means of penalty, except on the ground of such provisory substitute as will render forgiveness consistent with that protection. Such a substitute is found only in the vicarious sacrifice of Christ. As fully answering for these ends, his sufferings are an atonement for sin, fulfilling, on forgiveness, the obligation of justice and the office of penalty in moral government.

135. Chapter 1: Reality Of Atonement.

Chapter 1 Reality Of Atonement. In this chapter we treat the atonement simply as a fact, not as a doctrine. The sense in which the vicarious sacrifice of Christ constitutes the objective ground of divine forgiveness is for separate discussion.

I. Witnessing Facts.

There are certain facts that all should receive as scriptural, however diversely they may be interpreted. We claim for them a decisive testimony to the reality of an atonement for sin in the mediation of Christ.

1. A Message of Salvation.—The Gospel is pre-eminently such a message to a sinful and lost world. Its very style as the Gospel—τ■ ε■αγγ■λιον—sets it forth as good tidings. It is “the glorious Gospel of the blessed God” (1 Timothy 1:11); “the Gospel of the grace of God” (Acts 20:24); “the Gospel of salvation” (Ephesians 1:13). A free overture of grace in forgiveness and salvation crowns the Gospel of Christ.

2. The Salvation in Christ.—While the great fact of Revelation is the mission of Christ, the great purpose of this mission is the salvation of sinners. The Scriptures ever witness to this purpose, and specially reveal Christ as the Saviour. The angel of the annunciation gave charge respecting the coming Messiah: “And thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21). The announcement of the blessed advent to the shepherds was in a like strain: “And the angel said unto them. Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great Joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:10-11). Additional texts could only emphasize these explicit -utterances of the salvation in Christ. “For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved” (John 3:17). ‘‘This is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world” (John 4:42). “And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world” (1 John 4:14). These texts, though but a small fraction of a great number, are sufficient for the verification of the fact that the salvation so freely offered in the Gospel is a salvation in Christ.

3. Salvation in His Suffering.—This truth is declared by the very many texts which set forth the mission of Christ as the Saviour of sinners. They are so numerous that their full citation would fill many pages. We may give a few in part: “But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5). This whole chapter is full of the same truth, and clearly anticipates the higher revelation of the New Testament. “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins” (Romans 3:25). “Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him” (Romans 5:9). “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit” (1 Peter 3:18). “And the blood of Jesus Christ

his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (Revelation 1:5-6). These words, so explicitly attributing our salvation to the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, might well be heard as from the very borderland between the earthly and heavenly states. Then like words, and equally explicit, come from beyond the border, attributing the salvation of the saints in heaven to the same atoning blood: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple" (Revelation 7:14-15). These texts sufficiently verify this third fact as a fact of Scripture, that the salvation so freely offered in the Gospel of Christ is a salvation provided in his suffering and death.

4. His Redeeming Death Necessary.—The vicarious sacrifice of Christ was not a primary or absolute necessity, but only necessary to as the sufficient ground of forgiveness. And not only is salvation directly ascribed to his blood, but his redeeming death is declared to be necessary to this salvation. "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:46-47). Thus it behooved Christ to suffer, not for the fulfillment of the prophetic Scriptures, but in order to the salvation which, long before his advent, they had foretold as the provision of his vicarious sacrifice. Only on the ground of his suffering and death could there be either the preaching of repentance, or the grace of repentance, or the remission of sins. This was the imperative behoof. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). The emphasis of this text is in the fact that these things are affirmed of the crucified Christ. "For if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain" (Galatians 2:21). In the context St. Paul is asserting his own realization of a spiritual life through faith in Christ, who loved him, and gave himself for him. This life in salvation he declares to be impossible by the law, and possible only through the sacrificial death of Christ. Were it otherwise, Christ has died in vain. The necessity for his redeeming death in order to forgiveness and salvation could not be affirmed more explicitly, nor with deeper emphasis. "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law" (Galatians 3:21). Here is the same truth of necessity. Life is by the redeeming Christ, and has no other possible source.

5. Only Explanation of His Suffering.—The sufferings of Christ were for no sin of his own. Nor were they officially necessary, except as an atonement for sin. He had power to avert them, and endured them only through love to a lost world and in filial obedience to his Father's will (John 10:18). They were not chosen for their own sake on the part of either, but only in the interests of human salvation. They were a profound sacrifice on the part of both. And while the Son went willingly down into their awful depths his very nature shrank from them. Three times the prayer of his soul was poured out to his loving Father, "my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me" (Matthew 26:39; Matthew 26:42; Matthew 26:44). There must have been some deep necessity for his drinking it. Clearly that necessity lay in this—that only thereby could salvation be brought into the world. And these sufferings of the redeeming Son witness to the reality of an atonement for sin.

6. Necessity of Faith to Salvation.—The facts already given and verified by the Scriptures are decisive of an atonement for sin in the sufferings and death of Christ. They go beyond its reality and conclude its necessity. It is also a significant fact, and one bearing on the same point, that faith in Christ, and as the redeeming Christ, is the true and necessary condition of forgiveness and salvation.

Generally, faith in Christ, with the associated idea of his redeeming death, is set forth as the condition. Proof-texts are numerous and familiar. We may instance the great commission: “And he said unto them. Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:15-16). As Christ laid this solemn charge upon his ministers to preach the Gospel in all the world, and which should be so especially the preaching of himself crucified, it was very proper and profoundly important that he should distinctly set forth the condition of the great salvation so proclaimed. This he did in the most explicit terms. Faith in Christ is the condition so clearly given. This is the imperative requirement. And the Lord emphasizes the fact by declaring the different consequences of believing and not believing. We may add another text in this general view: “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:14-15). As the Israelites, bitten by the fiery serpents and ready to perish, were recovered only on looking upon the brazen serpent which Moses lifted up in the midst of the camp (Numbers 21:7-9), so is our salvation conditioned on our faith in Christ lifted up upon the cross as a sacrifice for sin.

Yet more directly is this fact given: “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be Just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” (Romans 3:25-26). Here the forgiveness of sin is through the propitiatory blood of Christ as its ground, and on faith therein as its condition. Such is the economy of redemption, whereby the divine righteousness is vindicated in the Justification of sinners.

Faith could not be so required were not the blood of Christ a true and necessary atonement for sin. Were repentance a sufficient ground of forgiveness, it would still be necessary to believe certain religious truths for the sake of their practical force. Only thus could there be a true repentance. But such is not the faith on which we are justified. There is a clear distinction of offices in the two cases. The faith necessary to repentance is operative through the practical force of the religious truths which it apprehends; but the Justifying faith apprehends the blood of Christ as a propitiation for sin, trusts directly therein, and receives forgiveness as the immediate gift of grace. No other view will interpret the Scriptures, which most explicitly give us the truth of justification by faith in Christ (Romans 3:19-22; Romans 4:5; Galatians 2:16; Galatians 3:22-24). The justification is in the forgiveness of sin, and must be, as it is the justification of sinners. And the direct and necessary connection of justification with faith in the redemption of Christ, together with the immediateness of the forgiveness itself, concludes this distinct office of justifying faith. Hence, to confound such a faith with another faith in Christ as salutary simply through the practical force of spiritual truths and motives so apprehended, is to jumble egregiously.

There is such a practical faith in Christ, and of the highest moral potency. It may precede or follow the justifying faith. It apprehends the great practical lessons embodied in the Gospel. Their apprehension in faith is the necessary condition of their practical force. The soul thus opens to their moral motives, and realizes their practical influence. This is the philosophy of a chief element of the practical power of faith. It gives the law of moral potency in all practical appeals in view of the love of God and the sacrifice of Christ in the redemptive mediation. Such is the only office of faith in the scheme of moral influence. We fully accept the fact of a great practical lesson in the mediation of Christ; and our own doctrine combines the weightiest elements of its potency. But we object to the accounting this moral lesson, however valuable, an element of the atonement proper—most of all, the very atonement itself. This is the error of the theory of moral influence. But our special objection to this view here is that it denies a distinct office of faith in the propitiatory work of Christ as the condition of justification. It consistently and necessarily does this. But there is such an office of faith, and one clearly distinguished from its office as a practical force in the religious life. And the distinct requirement of faith in the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, in order to forgiveness, is conclusive of a true and necessary atonement for sin in his suffering and death.

7. Priesthood and Sacrifice.—The priesthood of Christ had its prophetic utterance: “The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek” (Psalms 110:4). But the fullest unfolding of his priesthood with its sacrificial and intercessory offices is in the Epistle to the Hebrews: “Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high-priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.” “Seeing then that we have a great high-priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.” “Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: “We have such a high-priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens” (Hebrews 2:17; Hebrews 4:14; Hebrews 8:1). These texts will suffice for what is really placed beyond question. As it was an office of the priesthood, under the law, to offer sacrifices in atonement for sin, so Christ as our high-priest must offer a sacrifice for sin. This is not a mere inference, but the word of Scripture: “For every high-priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer” (Hebrews 8:3). Nor are we left in any doubt respecting his sacrifice. He offers up himself. The fact is so often stated, and in such terms, as to give it the profoundest significance. “Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor” (Ephesians 5:2). “Who needeth not daily, as those high-priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this he did once, when he offered up himself” (Hebrews 7:27). “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.” “Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high-priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself” (Hebrews 9:14; Hebrews 9:25-26; see also chapter 10:5-12). No critical exegesis is required to find in these texts the fact of an atonement in the mediation of Christ. In the statements respecting the sacrifice of Christ there are clear references to the ancient sacrifices; and its interpretation in the light of these references gives us the same fact of an atonement. But we shall not discuss that system; a brief reference will answer for our purpose. The great annual atonement has special prominence. Its many rites, divinely prescribed with exactness of detail, were sacredly

observed. Its leading facts were few and simple, but of profound significance. The high-priest sacrificed a bullock in atonement for himself and family, and, entering with its blood into the holy of holies, sprinkled it upon the mercy-seat. Thus he found access into the divine presence. Then he selected two goats for an atonement for the people. One he sacrificed, and, entering with its blood into the most holy place, sprinkled it upon the mercy-seat before the Lord. Then, with his hands upon the head of the other, he confessed over it the sins of the people, and sent it away into the wilderness, thus signifying the bearing away of their sins (Leviticus 16:5-22). Thus the high-priest made an atonement for sin.[605] [605] John Pye Smith:Sacrifice and Priesthood, pp. 246, 247. The whole idea of atonement may here be denied on an assumption that the means have no adequacy to the end; that it is not in the nature of such a ceremony or such a sacrifice to constitute a ground of forgiveness. It is conceded that there is therein no intrinsic atonement. This, indeed, is the Scripture view (Hebrews 10:1-11). But the idea of atonement is not therefore wanting. The divine reconciliation is real, the forgiveness of sin actual, but on the ground of the vicarious sacrifice of Christ—"the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8). His atonement was not yet formally made, but already existed as a provision of the redemptive economy, and as efficacious for salvation. And the idea of atonement is as real in the typical sacrifice as in that which is intrinsically sufficient. Otherwise, the Levitical atonement has no typical office, and hence is utterly inexplicable. We have thus the idea of atonement in the Levitical sacrifices, and the fact of a real atonement in the sacrifice of Christ. The former were an atonement for sin only typically, not efficaciously; while the latter, represented by them, and the ground of their acceptance, is intrinsically the atonement. As divinely appointed in their sacrificial office, and typical therein of the sacrifice of Christ, they give decisive testimony to the fact of an atonement in his death (Hebrews 9:8-12; Hebrews 10:1). The intercession of Christ in a priestly office fulfilled in heaven is a fact clearly given in the Scriptures: "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Romans 8:34). "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Hebrews 9:12; Hebrews 9:24).

Now mere intercession does not prove atonement; but such intercession does. It is in the order of the priestly office of Christ. This is clear from the texts cited, especially with their connections. It follows the atoning sacrifice of himself, and with clear reference to the service of the Levitical atonement. As the high-priest entered with the blood of the sacrifice into the most holy place, and sprinkled it upon the mercy-seat, the very place of the divine presence and propitiation; so Christ entered with his own blood—not literally with it, but with its atoning virtue and the tokens of his sacrifice—into heaven itself, into the very presence of God, in the office of intercession. Such an intercession, the very pleas of which are in his vicarious sacrifice and blood, affirms the reality of atonement.

8. Christ a Unique Saviour.—Christ is a person in history; but his history is unique, and his character and work unique. Often designated the Son of man, he yet cannot be classed with men. In the fashion of a man, he is yet above men. The facts of his life constitute a new history, distinct and different from all others. They reveal a personal consciousness alone in its kind. A manifest fact of this consciousness is the profound sense of a divine vocation, original and singular in the

moral history of the world, and which he only can fulfill. The moral impression of his life upon the souls of men is peculiar to itself, and fitly responsive to the originality of his own character and work. Amid men and angels, he stands apart in his own personality and mission. His religion is unique. It is such because he, as a religious founder, is original and singular. Here, also, he cannot be classed with others in any exact sense. Every religion is, more or less, what its founder is. His thoughts and feelings are wrought into it. It takes its molding from the cast of his mind. Its aims and forces are the outgoing of his own subjective life. Most eminently has Christ wrought his soul and life into his own religion. In the highest sense its aims and forces are the outgoing of his own mind: so much so that to come into the same mind with him is the highest realization of the Christian life. What he is, his religion is. But his distinctive peculiarity, as the founder of a religion, is not so much in the higher measure of his life wrought into it as in the quality of that life. Hence his religion differs so much from all others, because he differs so much from all other religious founders. His religion is unique as one of salvation. And it is not only the fact of a salvation, but especially the distinctive character of it, that constitutes the peculiarity. It is a salvation in forgiveness of sin and in moral regeneration. So it is realized in the gracious experience of many souls. And this salvation comes not as the fruit of culture, nor in reward of personal merit, nor as the purchase of penance or treasure. A religion grounded in such profound truths respecting God and man, and especially respecting man's moral state and spiritual destiny and needs, never could offer such a salvation on such conditions. The means have no sufficiency for the end. This salvation is provided for and possible only in the grace and spiritual agencies of a redemptive economy. Here sin is taken away and the soul renewed. There is a new life in Christ. In this life is salvation—such a salvation as no other religion provides.

Most of all is Christ a unique Saviour in that he saves us by the sacrifice of himself. The salvation is not in his divinity, nor m his humanity, nor m his unique personality as the God-man, nor in the lessons of religion which he taught, nor in the perfect life which he lived and gave to the world as an example, nor in the love wherewith he loved us, nor in all the moral force of life, and lesson, and love combined, but in his cross—in the blood of his cross as an atonement for sin. The voice of revelation is one voice, ever distinct, unvarying, and emphatic, in the utterance of this truth. This utterance comes forth of all the facts and words which reveal the distinctively saving work of Christ. They need no citation here. A few have already been given. Others will appear in their proper place. For the present, the position need only be stated and emphasized: Christ is a Saviour through an atonement in his blood. He is such a Saviour singularly, uniquely. The fact is too clear and certain for denial. No one familiar with the Scriptures, and frank in his spiritual mood, can question it. This is a cardinal fact, and one not to be overlooked in the interpretation of the redeeming work of Christ. No other has ever claimed to put his own life and blood into the saving efficiency of his religion. No other is, nor can be, such a Saviour as Christ. If a Saviour only through a moral influence, good men are saviours as truly as he, and in the same mode, differing only in the measure of their influence. Can such a theory interpret the Scriptures, or find a response in the highest, best form of the Christian consciousness? Who is there in all the Christian ages whom we can regard as a saviour in the same sense as Christ, and differing only in the measure of his saving influence? As revealed in the Scriptures, and apprehended in the living faith of the Church, and realized in the truest Christian experience, Christ is the only Saviour. And lie is a Saviour only through an atonement in his blood. This is his highest distinction as a Saviour, and one that places him apart from all others. Any theory of Christianity contrary to this view is false to

the Scriptures, false to the soteriology of the Gospel, false to the living religious faith and consciousness of the Christian centuries. And unless we can surrender all essentially distinctive character in the saving work of Christ, and so do violence to all decisive facts in the case, we must maintain a true atonement in his death as the only and necessary ground of forgiveness and salvation.

II. Witnessing Terms.

Advocates of an objective atonement in Christ, while differing on the doctrine, are quite agreed on the Scripture proofs of the fact. Their interpretations are much the same, except where they go beyond the reality of an atonement and press their respective doctrinal views into the exposition. It is in the order of a better method to keep, as far as practicable, to one question at a time. This we shall endeavor to do in treating the leading terms for the fact of atonement. A full treatment of these terms for the purpose in hand would require a volume. The discussion has often been elaborately gone over, and very conclusively for the fact of an atonement. There is, therefore, the less occasion to repeat it. Any one interested in the question will readily find its full and able treatment in the standard works on systematic theology, and in treatises exclusively on the atonement.

1. Atonement.—This term is of frequent use in the Old Testament, but occurs only once in the New. The original, ■■■■■■■, signifies to cover; then to cover sin, to forgive sin, to discharge from punishment: in its noun form, an expiation, a propitiation, a redemption.[606]

[606] Gesenius:Hebrew and English Lexicon; Magee:Atonement and Sacrifice, dissertation xxxvi; John Pye Smith:Sacrifice and Priesthood, pp. 136, 301-304; Cave:The Scriptural Doctrine of Sacrifice, pp. 483-486. In its primary meaning the term has no proper sense of atonement (Genesis 6:14). It acquires such a sense in its use. Its meaning, as in the case of many other terms, is thus broadened. A rigid adherence in such a case to the primary sense is false to the deeper ideas conveyed. Atonement, as expressed by this term, was often for the removal of ceremonial impurities, or in order to a proper qualification for sacred services. It has this sense in application to both things and persons (Leviticus 16:11; Leviticus 16:16; Leviticus 16:18; Leviticus 16:33). We have not yet, however, the full sense, but a foreshadowing of its deeper meaning. In the more strictly moral and legal relations of the term we may admit a lower and a higher sense, and without any concession to those who, on the ground of the former, would exclude the latter. In many instances atonement was made for what are designated as sins of ignorance (Leviticus 4:13-26; Leviticus 5:17-19; Numbers 15:24-28). It may not be rightfully assumed that these sins were without amenability in justice and law. The contrary is apparent. “The ignorance intended cannot have been of a nature absolute and invincible, but such as the clear promulgation of their law, and their strict obligation to study it day and night, rendered them accountable for, and which was consequently in a certain degree culpable.”[607] But were such instances without culpability, and therefore without evidence of an atonement, the fact could not affect the instances of atonement for sins of the deepest responsibility. There are such instances (Leviticus 6:2-7). And to put the lower sense upon examples of the higher—most of all, to deny the higher because there is a lower—is without law in Scripture exegesis.

[607]Magee:Atonement and Sacrifice, dissertation xxxvii. In the higher moral and legal relations of atonement there are the facts of sin and judicial condemnation. The offender is answerable in

penalty. Then there is a vicarious sacrifice, and the forgiveness of the sinner. There is an atonement for sin. The fact is clear in the Scripture texts given by reference. Others equally conclusive will be given elsewhere.

There are instances of atonement without any sacrifice. Moses by an intercessory prayer made an atonement for Israel after the sin of idolatry m worshiping the golden calf (Exodus 32:30-32). Aaron with his censer atoned for the congregation after the rebellion of Korah (Numbers 16:46-48). Phinehas by his religious zeal made an atonement for the people, and turned away from them the divine wrath (Numbers 25:11-13). In view of such facts it is urged that there is no direct and necessary connection between sacrifices of atonement and the divine forgiveness, and hence, that there is no proof in the sacrificial system of an atonement for sin in the sacrifice of Christ. This is inconsequent. The sacrifices of the law were an atonement only typically, not intrinsically (Hebrews 10:1-11). While, therefore, certain kinds might have special fitness for this service, yet mere typical fitness has nothing essential. Hence these sacrifices of atonement might be varied or even omitted, while the atonement in the sacrifice of Christ, as intrinsically such, is both real and necessary.

We get the proof of an atonement in Christ not so much from the direct application of the original term to him as from certain significant types fulfilled in him, and especially from the application of equivalent terms in the Greek of the New Testament to his redemptive mediation. We may give one instance in which the original term is applied to the atoning sacrifice of Christ (Daniel 9:24-26). The passage referred to is clearly Messianic. It determines by historic connections the time of Christ's advent. Then it gives certain ends to be accomplished: "to make an end of sins"—to terminate the typical sacrifices of the law by the one sufficient sacrifice of himself; "and to make reconciliation—■■■■■■■■■—for iniquity." The passage clearly shows that Christ makes an atonement for sin by the sacrifice of himself. And this sense is emphasized in the further fact that "Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself," especially as viewed in the light of intimately related facts and utterances of the Gospel.

2. Reconciliation.—Reconciliation, and to reconcile—καταλλαγ■, καταλλ■σσειν—are terms frequently applied to the redemptive work of Christ, and with the clear sense of a real atonement.

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (Romans 5:10). This is the reconciliation of enemies, and, therefore, of persons under God's displeasure and judicial condemnation. The reconciliation is by the death of his Son. The assurance of salvation lies in the fact of such a reconciliation of enemies. Acceptance in the divine favor comes after this reconciliation as its provisional ground. The death of Christ renders forgiveness consistent with the requirements of justice in moral administration. Such a reconciliation is the reality of atonement. With such a fact, St. Paul might well add: "And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received—τ■ν καταλλαγ■ν—the reconciliation" (Romans 5:11). Here is the joy of an actual reconciliation through the death of Christ.

"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation," etc (2 Corinthians 5:18-21). The facts of this text give the sense of a real atonement. The reconciliation is in Christ. It includes a non-imputation of sin; that is, we are no longer held in absolute condemnation, but have the gracious privilege of the divine forgiveness

and friendship. Hence there is committed to us the ministry of reconciliation, with its gracious overtures and entreaties. And the manner in which God reconciles us to himself in Christ is deeply emphasized: “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” Any fair exposition of this text must find in it the fact of an atonement (see also Ephesians 2:16; Colossians 1:20-22; Hebrews 2:17).

It is urged in objection, that in these texts we are said to be reconciled to God, not God to us. The fact is admitted, while the validity of the objection is denied. It falsely assumes that the only bar to God’s friendship with his rebellious subjects is in their hostility to him; and hence illogically concludes that the reconciliation in Christ is an atonement, not as a rectoral ground of the divine forgiveness, but simply as a moral influence leading them to repentance and loyalty. This is contradicted by many principles and facts previously discussed. It is contrary to those texts according to which God, by the reconciliation in Christ, puts himself into a relation of mercy toward us, and then, on the ground of this reconciliation, urges and entreats us in penitence and faith to accept his offered forgiveness and love. Thus upon the ground of a provisory divine reconciliation there will follow an actual reconciliation and a mutual friendship.

Further, this objection falsely assumes that reconciliation is simply the cessation of hostility in the party said to be reconciled. It properly means, and often can mean only, that he is reconciled in the sense of gaining the forgiveness and friendship of the party to whom he is reconciled. Of this there are familiar instances in Scripture (1 Samuel 19:4; Matthews 5:23, 24). As applied to rebellious subjects the term has its first relation to the ruler. “To be reconciled, when spoken of subjects who have been in rebellion against their sovereign, is to be brought into a state in which pardon is offered to them, and they have it in their power to render themselves capable of that pardon, namely, of laying down their enmity. . . .Wherefore, the reconciliation received through Christ is God’s placing all mankind, ever since the fall, under the gracious new covenant, procured for them through the obedience of Christ; in which the pardon of sin is offered to them, together with eternal life, on their fulfilling its gracious requisitions.”[608] This is an accurate statement of the reconciliation in Christ, and gives us the fact of an atonement therein.

[608]Macknight:On the Epistles,Romans 5:10.

3. Propitiation.—To be propitious is to be disposed to forgiveness and favor. To propitiate is to render an aggrieved or offended party clement and forgiving. A propitiation is that whereby the favorable change is wrought. There are two points to be specially noticed: the nature of the divine propitiousness toward sinners; and the relation of the redemptive mediation of Christ to that propitiousness.

God is propitious to sinners in a disposition toward forgiveness. This is in the definition of the term. The same sense is given in Scripture, without any direct reference to a propitiatory sacrifice. The fact will render the clearer the propitiatory office of the blood of Christ. We will cite a few texts in illustration; but for a clearer view of the sense stated, the original terms—appropriate forms of ■■■■■■, ■■■■■, ■λ■σκομαι—should be consulted, as the term propitious, or to be propitious, is not given in our translation. “For thy name’s sake, Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great” (Psalms 25:11). “But he, being full of compassion, forgavetheir iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath” (Psalms 78:38). “Lord, hear; Lord, forgive” (Daniel 9:19). “God be merciful to me a sinner” (Luke 18:13). “For I will

be mercifulto their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (Hebrews 8:12). These texts, selected from many similar ones, suffice for the position that God is propitious in a disposition toward forgiveness, and in the fact of forgiveness as the exercise of such clemency. Here are sins, and the divine displeasure against them. Here are sinners with a deep sense of sin and of the divine condemnation. Here are their earnest prayers to God, that he would be propitious and forgive. And he forgives them, turns away his wrath and accepts them in favor, as he is propitious to them.

These facts determine the meaning of a propitiation. It is that which renders an aggrieved or offended party clement and forgiving; that which is the reason or ground of forgiveness. Such a propitiation is an atonement.

Christ is a propitiation for sin. He is such in his sacrificial death, and in relation to the divine clemency and forgiveness. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past" (Romans 3:25). Here are all the facts of a true propitiation: the presupposed sins as an offense against God, and his displeasure against them; the blood of Christ as a propitiation for sins; the divine clemency and forgiveness through this propitiation. The blood of Christ fulfills its propitiatory office with God. There is, therefore, an atonement in his blood. Other Scripture texts give the same truth. "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 2:2; 1 John 4:10). Such a propitiation for sin is the reality of an atonement in Christ.

4. Redemption.—Under this term might be classed many texts which, with the utmost certainty, give us the fact of an atonement. Redemption has a clear and well-defined sense. To redeem is to purchase back, to ransom, to liberate from slavery, captivity, or death, by the payment of a price. This gives the sense of redemption or to redeem—λυτρ■ω—in both its classic and Scripture use.[609] [609] John Pye Smith:Sacrifice and Priesthood, pp. 204-207; Hill:Lectures in Divinity, pp. 474, 475.

Under the Mosaic law alienated lands might be recovered by the payment of a ransom or price. This would be a redemption. Such alienated property, if not previously ransomed, reverted without price at the Jubilee; but this reversion was not a redemption, because without any ransom (Leviticus 25:23-28). A poor Israelite might redeem himself from slavery by the payment of a sum reckoned according to the time remaining for which he had sold himself. This would be his redemption. But the freedom which came with the jubilee was not a redemption, because it came without any price (Leviticus 25:47-54). These facts confirm the sense of redemption as previously given. Further, in the case of one who has forfeited his life: "If there be laid on him a sum of money, then he shall give for the ransom of his life whatsoever is laid, upon him" (Exodus 21:30). This is an instance of redemption. The same meaning lies in the fact that for the life of a murderer no ransom was permitted (Numbers 35:31).

Occasional uses of the term simply in the sense of a deliverance are not contrary to the truer and deeper meaning. There is a deliverance as the result of a redemption. The ransom is paid in order to the deliverance. And it is a proper usage to apply the name of a thing to its effect, or to what constitutes only a part of its meaning. This use is entirely consistent with the deeper sense of

redemption, while the deeper sense cannot be reduced to that of a mere deliverance. This is true of the instances previously given, and will be found true of the redemption in Christ.

We shall here select but a few of the many texts which apply the terms of redemption to the saving work of Christ. “The Son of man came . . . to give his life a ransom for many.” “Who gave himself a ransom for all” (Matthew 20:28; 1 Timothy 2:6). The original terms—λ■τον, ■ντ■λυτρον—are the very terms which signify the ransom or price given for the liberation of a captive, the recovery of anything forfeited, or the satisfaction of penal obligation. So, for our deliverance from sin and death, and for the recovery of our forfeited spiritual life, Christ gives his life—himself—as the ransom. Redemption in its deeper sense could not have a clearer expression. Truly are we “bought with a price;” ‘‘not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Peter 1:18-19.). As in other cases silver and gold constitute the ransom, so the blood of Christ is the price of our redemption from sin.

“Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity.”—“And for this cause he is the mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance” (Titus 2:14; Hebrews 9:15). Here are facts of redemption which give us a real atonement. We are sinners, with the penal liabilities of sin; and Christ gives his own life as the price of our ransom.

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written. Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.” “But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons” (Galatians 3:13; Galatians 4:4-5). In the second text we have a different original word—■ξαγορ■ζω—but of like meaning. The subjects of the redemption are under the law, and under the curse of the law—the former state implying all that the latter expresses. Whether “the law “ be the law of nature or the Mosaic, the facts of redemption are the same. Under both men are sinners, and by neither is there salvation. The redemption is from the penalty of sin—from the curse of the law. The same sense is determined by the fact that the redemption is to the end “that we might receive the adoption of sons.” The death of Christ upon the cross is the redemption.

“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace” (Romans 3:24; Ephesians 1:7). Here we have the same facts of redemption. We are sinners and under divine condemnation. The redemption through Christ, and in his blood, is in order to our justification, or the forgiveness of our sins.

Such are the facts of redemption by Jesus Christ. And with the sin and condemnation of men as its subjects, with the forgiveness and salvation which it provides, with the blood of Christ as the ransom whereby the gracious change is wrought, it is unreasonable to deny the fact of an atonement in his redeeming death. “Every one feels the effect of introducing the nouns λ■τρον or ■υτ■λυτρον, in connection with the verb λ■ω, when applied to the case of a discharged debtor or released captive, as making it perfectly clear that his redemption is not gratuitous, but that some consideration is given for the securing it. Nor is the significancy of these nouns in the least

diminished when it is from penal consequences of a judicial nature that a person is released. The λ■τρον, indeed, in that case, is not a price from which the lawgiver is to receive any personal advantage. It is the satisfaction to public law and justice upon which he consents to remit the sentence. But still, the mention of it, in this case as well as in others, is absolutely inconsistent with a gratuitous remission."[610] This statement holds true, with all the force of its facts, in application, as intended, to the redemption in Christ. The deeper ideas of redemption were wrought into the minds of the writers of the New Testament by both their Hebraic and Hellenic education. Nor may we think that they used its terms out of their proper meaning in applying them to the saving work of Christ. Such a redemption is the reality of atonement.

[610]Hill:Lectures in Divinity, vol. ii, p. 483. The passage varies from the same one in the American edition, and is given as quoted by Professor Crawford.

Redemption holds a prominent place in the nomenclature of atonement; indeed, is often used for the designative term instead of atonement itself. It may be pressed into service of an erroneous doctrine. The result is a commercial atonement. But this is carrying the analogy in the case to an unwarranted extreme. Redemption is modified by the sphere in which it is made. The ransom-price of a captive or slave goes to the personal benefit of the party making the surrender; it is his compensation. The transaction is one of barter. When a penalty of death was commuted for a sum of money the ransom was penal and of rectoral service, but also of pecuniary value with the government. In the divine government there can be no such element of redemption. The redemption does not thereby lose the sense of an atonement, but should, therefore, be guarded against an erroneous doctrine. The gist of the analogy is in the fact of a compensatory ransom. This is consistent with a wide distinction in the nature of the compensation. There is a wide distinction in fact: in the one case a personal, pecuniary compensation; in the other, a compensation in rectoral value. In the one case money redeems a captive or slave as a commercial equivalent; in the other, the blood of Christ redeems a soul as the rectoral equivalent of penalty. The ransom is as vitally related to the result in the latter case as in the former. This gives us the reality of an atonement in the redemption of Christ, and will give us a doctrine without any commercial element.

5. Substitution.—Substitution is not formally a Scripture term, but well expresses the sense of numerous texts in their application to the saving work of Christ. Like the term "redemption," it may be pressed into the service of an erroneous doctrine. This, however, can be done only by a wrong interpretation of the substitution. But we are still only on the fact of an atonement, and, for the proof of this, here require nothing more than the substitution of Christ in suffering as the ground of forgiveness. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is clearly Messianic, and clearly gives us the fact of substitutional atonement. We shall attempt no elaborate or critical exposition. This has often been done, and successfully for the sense of a real atonement.[611] We cite the leading utterances: "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him ; and with his stripes we are healed. . . . The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. . . . He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter. . . . For the transgression of my people was he stricken. . . . Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin. . . . And he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Isaiah 53:5-12) These words are decisive of a substitutional atonement in the sufferings of Christ.

[611]Alexander, Lowth, Delitzsch, severally on Isaiah; Terry:Methodist Quarterly Review, January, 1880.

“For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:6-8). Surely here is atonement in substitution. Those for whom Christ died are noted as ungodly, sinners, enemies. Hence they are in a state of condemnation. In the death of Christ for them is the ground of their Justification, which is impossible by the deeds of the law. These facts give us atonement by substitution. This sense is confirmed by the supposed case of one dying for another. It is the supposition of a substitution of one life for another, the rescue of one by the vicarious sacrifice of another. So Christ died for us as sinners, and in order to our forgiveness and salvation. It is a substitution in law; not penal, but rectoral, so that law might still fulfill its office in the interest of moral government. This is vicarious atonement.

“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed” (1 Peter 2:24). Here is a clear reference to the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and also the same sense of atonement by substitution.

“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God” (1 Peter 3:18). Our sins separate us from God, and bring us under his condemnation. There can be reconciliation and fellowship only through forgiveness. Christ provides for this by suffering for our sins in our stead—the just for the unjust. This is the reality of atonement by substitution in suffering.

136. Chapter 2: Necessity For Atonement.

Chapter 2 Necessity For Atonement. The necessity for an atonement is so closely related to the question of its nature that the former might be fully discussed in connection with the latter. Yet its separate treatment, at least so far as our own doctrine is concerned, is in the order of the better method. In our witnessing facts for the reality of an atonement we gave Scripture proofs of its necessity. This necessity, as divinely revealed, is asserted in the most explicit and emphatic terms. It is given with all the force of a logical implication in the requirement of faith in the redeeming Christ as the necessary condition of forgiveness and salvation. It is further verified as the only explanation of the sufferings and death of Christ. The facts of his redemptive mediation are of no ordinary character. Indeed, they are so extraordinary as to require the profoundest necessity for their vindication under a specially providential economy. The incarnation of the Son of God is a marvelous event. Its deeper meaning we read only in the light of his own character and rank. In the form of God, he has a rightful glory in equality with him. This he surrenders, and takes, instead, the form of a servant, in the likeness of men. His estate is in the deepest abasement. He is a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He bears the reproaches and hatreds of men. His sufferings have unfathomed depths. After the profound self-humiliation in the incarnation he yet further humbles himself and becomes obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Psalms 69:9; Romans 15:3; Php 2:6-8; 1 Timothy 3:18). The will of the Father is concurrent with the will of the Son in this whole transaction. While the Son comes in the gladness of filial obedience and the compassion of redeeming love, the Father sends him forth and prepares for him a body for his priestly sacrifice (Psalms 40:6-8; Hebrews 10:5-9). The infinite sacrifice of this concurring love of the Father and the Son affirms the deepest necessity for an atonement as the ground of forgiveness.

I. Ground Of Necessity Of Moral Government.

Only with the fact of a divine moral government can there be the occasion of any question respecting the necessity for an atonement. If we are not under law to God we are without sin. If without sin, we have nothing to be forgiven. Hence there could be for us no necessary ground of forgiveness.

1. Fact of a Moral Government.—God being God, and the Creator of men, and men being what they are, a moral government is the profoundest moral necessity. We have a moral nature, with the powers of an ethical life. Our character is determined according to the use of these powers. Herein is involved our profoundest personal interest. We also deeply affect each other, and after the manner of our own life. Here is a law of great evil. Nor would the fact be other, except infinitely worse, were we wholly without law from heaven. The less men know of a divine law, with its weightier obligations and sanctions, the lower they sink into moral corruption and ruin. The moral powers and the forces of evil are full of spontaneous impulse. Nor do they await the occasion of a revealed law for their corrupting and ruinous activity. And however the absence of all divine law might change our relation to judicial penalty, our moral ruin would be, nevertheless, inevitable and

utter. Now, should we even concede God's indifference to his own claims upon our obedience and love, it would be irrational, and blasphemous even, to assume his indifference to all the interests of virtue and well-being in us. He cannot overlook us. His own perfections constrain his infinite regard for our welfare. Under the condition of such facts there is, and there must be, a divine moral government over us. The moral consciousness of humanity affirms the fact of such a government.[612] [612] Bishop Butler:Analogy of Religion, part i, chaps, ii, iii; Gillett:The Moral System.

2. Requisites of a Moral Government.—Within the moral realm subjects may differ: possibly, in some facts of their personal constitution; certainly, in their moral state and tendencies. A wise government must vary its provisions in adjustment to the requirement of such differences. In some facts the divine law must be the same for all. It must require the obedience of all; for such is the right of the divine Ruler and the common obligation of his subjects. It must guard the rights and interests of all. Beyond such facts, yet for the reason of them, the provisions of law, as means to the great ends of moral government, should vary as subjects differ. The same principles which imperatively require a moral government for moral beings also require its economy in adjustment to any considerable peculiarities of moral condition and tendency. This law has special significance, and should not be overlooked in the present inquiry. We are seeking for the necessity of an atonement in the requirements of moral government; and we shall more readily find it in view of our own moral tendencies and needs. The atonement, while directly for man, has infinitely wider relations than the present sphere of humanity. Indirectly it concerns all intelligences, and is, no doubt, in adjustment to all moral interests. Still, in its immediate purpose it is a provision for the forgiveness and salvation of men. The atonement is, therefore, a measure introduced into the divine government as immediately over us, and its special necessity must arise from the interests so directly concerned.

Subjects should know the will of the Sovereign. There are things to be done, and things not to be done. Nor can such things always be known either by reason or experience. This may be true even with the highest in perfection, and with every thought and feeling responsive to duty. Most certainly is it true of us. The mode in which the law of duty shall be given is not first in importance. It is the law itself that is so essential. How God may reveal his will to angels we know not, because we know neither his modes of expression nor their powers of apprehension. In some mode it is made known, and so becomes the law of their duty. And God has made known his will to us. This is chiefly done through revelation, though we have some light through the moral reason and the direct agency of the Holy Spirit. God gave a law to Adam, communicated his will to the patriarchs, wrote the Decalogue on tables of stone for Israel and for man, spake often to the people by the prophets. And Christ summed up the law of Christian duty in the two great commandments. It is not requisite that every particular duty should lie given in a special statute. This would be for us an impracticable code. We have the law of duty, in a far better form, in the great moral principles given in the gospels. And thus we have the divine will revealed to us as the law of our duty. In the highest conceivable perfection, with the clearest apprehension of duty, with every sentiment responsive to its behests, and with no tendency nor temptation to the contrary, obedience would be assured without the sanction of rewards. In such a state, however munificent the divine favors might be to such obedience, penalty could have no necessary governmental function. But when obedience is difficult and its failure a special liability, duty must have the sanction of rewards. They

must form a part of the law and have as distinct an announcement as its precepts. Otherwise, government is void of a necessary adjustment to the moral state of its subjects.

Such is the requirement of our moral condition. With us there are many hinderances to duty, and the liability to sin is great. There is moral darkness, spiritual apathy, a strong tendency to evil, and the incoming of much temptation. We deeply need the moral sanctions of law in the promise of good and the imminence of penalty. And however defective the virtue wrought merely under the influence of such motives, they are clearly necessary to the ordinary morality of life. Whether in view of human or divine law, or of the history of the race, every candid man must confess the necessity of such support to the social and public morality, and that without it there could be no true civil life. It was in the conviction of such a truth that the ancient sages asserted the necessity of religion to the life of the State and the well-being of society, and that the ancient lawgivers and rulers maintained religious institutions and services for the sake of the support which the expectation of rewards in a future state gave to law and duty in the present life.[613] And for us as a race there is the profoundest need of penalty as a fact of law. With the vicious, as the many would be without the law, the imminence of penalty is a far weightier sanction of law than the promise of reward.

[613]Warburton:The Divine Legation of Moses,books ii, iii.

3. Divine Determination of Rewards.—It is the prerogative of the divine Euler to determine the rewards of human conduct. No other can determine them either rightfully or wisely. Specially are we void of both the prerogative and the capacity for their proper apportionment. Even in the plane of secular duties and interests, and with the gathered experience of ages, questions of penalty are still the perplexing problems of the most highly civilized States; and surely we should not assume a capacity for the adjustment of law and its rewards to the requirements of the divine government. But God comprehends the whole question, and has full prerogative in its decisions. He knows what measure of rewards is befitting his justice and goodness and required by the interests of his moral government. And, accordingly, he has given us the law of our duty, with its announced rewards of obedience and sin.

4. Measure of Penalty.—God determines the measure of penalty, but not arbitrarily. His infinite sovereignty asserts no disregard of the principles of justice nor of the rights and interests of his subjects. He is a wise and good Sovereign, as he is a just and holy one.

Sin has intrinsic demerit. It deserves to be punished; and God has the exact measure of its desert. So far penalty may be carried. Divine justice, in its distinctive retributive function, has no reason for pause short of this. In its own free course it would so punish all sin. But justice cannot carry its penalties beyond the demerit of sin. Nor can it suffer any interests of moral government to carry them beyond this .limit. Nay, punishment cannot go beyond. Whatever transcends the intrinsic demerit of sin ceases in all that transcendence to be punishment. Hence, while the inherent turpitude of sin is the real and only ground of punishment, its own measure is a limitation of penalty.

It is an important office of penalty to conserve the interests of the government. We here use the term government not in any ideal or abstract sense, but as including the divine Sovereign ruling in its administration, and the moral beings over whom he rules. The rights and glory of God are

concerned; the profoundest interests of men are concerned. So far we may speak with certainty, however it may be with other orders of moral beings. Hence the rectoral function of penalty is a most important one. Its importance rises in the measure of the interests which it must conserve.

It must fulfill its rectoral office specially as a restraint upon sin. It must, therefore, be wisely adjusted in its measure to this specific end. Two facts condition its restraining force: one, the strength of our tendency to sin; the other, the state of our motivity to penalty as an impending infliction. Both of these facts deeply concern the measure of penalty required by the highest interests of moral government. With a strong tendency to sin, and a feeble motivity to the imminence of penalty—facts so broadly and deeply written in human history—penalties must be the severer. The interests of moral government may require them even in the full measure of the demerit of sin. Up to this limit, whatever God may see to be requisite to these interests will not fail of his appointment as the penalty of sin. All the fundamental principles which determine his institution of the wisest and best government must so determine him respecting the measure of penalty.

II. Necessity For Penalty. The physical evil and moral wretchedness which follow upon our sinful conduct, but really as consequent to our constitution and relations, are not strictly of the nature of punishment, though such is a very common view. That sin brings misery is in the order of the divine constitution of things. It is not clear that there could be such a constitution of moral beings that suffering would not follow upon sin. Indeed, the contrary is manifest. But what so follows as a natural result, though in an order of things divinely constituted, is not strictly penal. Such naturally consequent evil may have in the divine plan an important ministry in the economy of moral government. But punishment, strictly, is a divine infliction of penalty upon sin in the order of a judicial administration. The necessity for penalty, therefore, is not from necessary causation, but from sufficient moral grounds. Penalty has such a necessity in the interest of moral government, except as its office may be fulfilled by some substitutional measure. In the moral realm there is a divine moral Ruler; and the vital truth of the present question must be viewed in the light of his perfections and rectoral relations. In such light the moral necessity for penalty is manifest.

1. From its Rectoral Office.—Omitting other things for the present, penalty has a necessary office in the good of moral government. Justice itself is directly concerned therein. Nor is any requirement of justice more imperative. Sin must be restrained and moral order maintained for the honor of God and the good of moral beings. The innocent must be protected against injury and wrong. Justice cannot overlook these profound interests. In such neglect it would cease to be justice. It must sacredly guard them. A necessary power for their protection lies in its penalty. This it may not omit, except through some measure equally fulfilling the same rectoral office, while forgiveness is granted to repenting sinners.

2. From the Divine Holiness.—God, as a perfectly holy being, must give support to righteousness and place barriers in the way of sin. He must seek, in the use of all proper means, the prevention or utmost restraint of sin. But in the moral state of humanity penalty is a necessary means for such limitation. Lift the restraint of its imminence from the soul and conscience of men, and, wicked as they now are, they would be immensely worse. Even a presumptive hope of impunity emboldens sin. The divine forbearance in the deferment of merited punishment is made the occasion of a deeper impenitence and a more persistent impiety. “Because sentence against an evil work is not

executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil" (Ecclesiastes 8:11). And a release from all amenability to penalty would be to many a divine license to the freest vicious indulgence. The divine holiness, therefore, must require the restraint of sin through the ministry of penalty, except as the interest of righteousness may be protected through some other means.

3. From the Divine Goodness.—Nor less must the divine goodness support this office of justice. Sin brings misery. It must bring misery, even in the absence of all infliction of penalty. The race would be far more wretched in the absence of all penalty than it is under an amenability to its rectoral inflictions. While, therefore, God punishes with reluctance, and with profound sympathy for the suffering sinner, yet, as a God of love, he must maintain the office of penalty in the interest of human happiness. The only ground of its surrender, even on the part of the divine goodness, must be found in some vicarious measure equally answering the same end.

4. A Real Necessity for Atonement.—The result is, the necessity for an atonement. Without such a provision sinners cannot be forgiven and saved. The impossibility is concluded by the facts and principles which this chapter unfolds. The necessity for the redemptive mediation of Christ lies ultimately in the perfections of God as moral ruler. It is, therefore, most imperative.

5. Nature of the Atonement Indicated.—We have not yet reached the place for the more formal discussion of the true theory of atonement; yet certain facts and principles have already come into view which so clearly indicate its nature that their doctrinal meaning may properly be noted here.

We have the truth of a divine moral government as the ground-fact in the necessity for an atonement. We have found the facts and principles of such a government strongly affirmative of this necessity. They thus respond to the explicit affirmations of Scripture thereon. Further, we have found this necessity to be grounded in the profoundest interests of moral government, for the protection of which the penalties of the divine justice have a necessary function. Here we have the real hinderance to a mere administrative forgiveness, and, therefore, the real necessity for an atonement. The true office of atonement follows accordingly. The vicarious sufferings of Christ answer for the obligation of justice and the office of penalty in the interests of moral government, so that such interest shall not suffer through the forgiveness of sin. This is, however, not the whole service of the redemptive mediation of Christ, but a chief fact in its more specific office, and one answering to the deepest necessity for an atonement. The nature of the atonement is thus determined. The vicarious sufferings of Christ are a provisory substitute for penalty, and not the actual punishment of sin. He is not such a substitute in penalty as to preserve the same retributive administration of justice as in the actual punishment of sinners. The sufferings of Christ, endured for us as sinners, so fulfill the obligation of justice and the office of penalty in the interest of moral government as to render forgiveness, on proper conditions, entirely consistent therewith. Such is the nature of the atonement.

Such a view fully answers to the relation between God and men as sovereign and subjects, and to the facts of their sinfulness and subjection to his righteous displeasure and judicial condemnation. Sin offends his justice and love, incurs his righteous displeasure, and constitutes in them punitive desert. Such are the facts which the Scriptures so fully recognize. And God as a righteous ruler must inflict merited penalty upon sin, not, indeed, in the gratification of any mere personal resentment, nor in the satisfaction of an absolute retributive justice, but in the interest of moral

government, or find some rectorally compensatory measure for the remission of penalty. Such a measure there is in the redemptive mediation of Christ. The conclusion gives us an atonement, not by an absolute substitution in punishment, but by a provisory substitution in suffering.

137. Chapter 3: Schemes Without Atonement.

Chapter 3 Schemes Without Atonement.

Some hold the fact of salvation who yet deny a vicarious atonement. Such consistently deny its necessity. There is, in their view, no element of divine justice, nor interest of moral government, which makes it necessary. Sin may be forgiven or ultimate salvation attained without it. These great blessings have other grounds or modes. In accord with this position, and as consistency requires, certain grounds or modes are alleged as entirely sufficient for our forgiveness or future happiness. Thus we have schemes of salvation without an atonement in Christ, and in the denial of its necessity. It may be proper to notice some of them.

I. Blessedness After The Penalty.

Universalism and Calvinism differ widely in their completed systems—if we may speak of the former as a system. They are infinitely apart respecting the demerit of sin and the measure of its merited penalty. Yet the two are at one in the cardinal principle that sin must be punished according to its desert. We speak of these systems in their more regular form, not in all their phases. But such a principle in Universalism, as in any non-atonement scheme, gives no place for salvation.

1. Salvation Excluded.—In any deep sense of the term, salvation is possible only as a real forgiveness of sin, or its substitutional punishment, is possible. Where the penalty is fully suffered by the offender, as Universalism asserts it must be, there is no salvation. When a criminal has suffered the full penalty awarded him his discharge is no matter of grace, and his further punishment would be an injustice. There is neither forgiveness nor salvation in his release. On the scheme of Universalism the same must be true in every instance of divine penalty. Such a scheme is false to the clearly revealed fact of forgiveness; false to the soteriology of the Scriptures. The fact is deeply wrought into the Gospel of Christ that he is a Saviour through the forgiveness of sin; a Saviour from the punishment of sin; and such a Saviour through an atonement in his blood. These facts have been set forth and verified by the Scriptures, and need not here be repeated.

2. Final Blessedness really a Salvation.—The denial of ultimate happiness as a salvation is a logical implication of this scheme. The same is true whether merited punishment is limited to this life or continues for a greater or less time in the next. There is no salvation in the termination of such a punishment, whether in the present or future world. Justice has no further penal claim. And while the happiness then beginning and flowing on forever might be far above any merit in us, still it could not be a salvation. Certainly it could be no such a salvation as the Scriptures reveal in Christ. In the truest and deepest sense future happiness is a salvation through his atonement (John 3:14-16; John 6:47-51; John 10:37-38; Romans 5:20-21; Romans 6:23; 2 Timothy 2:10; Hebrews 5:9; Hebrews 9:15; 1 Peter 5:10; Revelation 5:9-10; Revelation 7:14-17). Hence the scheme which precludes this fact cannot be true.

3. Impossible under Endless Penalty.—A scheme of ultimate and endless happiness, after a full personal satisfaction of justice in penalty, must limit the duration of punishment, however long it may continue in a future state. If penalty be eternal there can be no after-state of happiness. Here arises a great question, the discussion of which would lead us quite aside from the subject in hand. We simply note in passing that the Scriptures express the duration of penalty in terms most significant of its eternity. What seems specially decisive is, that it is so expressed when placed in immediate contrast with the endless reward of the righteous: “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal” (Matthew 25:46). The same original word—α■■νιον—expresses the duration in the two cases; and there is no more apparent reason for its limitation in the former than in the latter. In such a destiny on account of sin there can be no state of happiness after the penalty. Nor can the necessity for an atonement be so set aside.

II. Salvation Through Sovereign Forgiveness. The necessity for an atonement is denied on the assumption that God, in mere sovereignty or on a merely personal disposition of kindness, and without regard to the ends of justice in the interest of moral government, may and does freely forgive sin. There are many objections to this view, and such as entirely discredit it.

1. An Assumption against Facts.—That God forgives and saves sinners on his mere sovereignty or pleasure, and without regard to the requirements of moral government, is without proof, and the sheerest assumption. Moreover, the facts of a providential history, already filling many centuries, are full in its contradiction. Were the mere pleasure of God, as a kindly personal disposition, his only law, as this position assumes, there would be no instance of punishment. But there are many such. No one can rationally deny it. Now these facts are contradictory to such a mode of forgiveness. As the generations press to their altars with the sense of sin and with sacrifices of atonement the voice of humanity, in the deepest utterances of its religious consciousness, pronounces against it. Revelation, in words the most explicit and emphatic, confirms the judgment of humanity.

2. Contrary to Divine Government.—There is a moral government. There is such a government as divinely instituted. It is without any provision for a mere administrative forgiveness. Nor can it admit any such forgiveness, because it would be contrary to its own principles and measures. God, in full view of our moral state, and with infinite regard for our good, has instituted his government in adjustment to our duty and welfare. Penalty itself arises out of the requirement and interest of moral government. Hence its suspension without regard to any new provision would be contrary to government as divinely instituted, and also to the divine perfections in so ordering its provisions. Further, it would set the divine administration in direct opposition to the divine word. In clearest terms God has announced the penalties of sin. Now it is presumed that he will sovereignly interfere, and, without regard to any new provision, grant a universal forgiveness. Surely it is a bold assumption that God will so contradict himself and set his administration against his own law.

3. Subversive of all Government.—If forgiveness is so granted it must be universal. There could be no other law of salvation. And, otherwise, it would neither answer for our need nor for the divine impartiality. But with such universal forgiveness government really no longer exists. Justice makes no practical distinction between obedience and sin. A law of duty without a penalty for transgression is a mere advisory rule of life, and, for us, void of necessary enforcing sanction. It would virtually say to every man, Do as you please; when it is certain that most men would please

to do wrong and moral ruin be the result. How long could civil government be thus maintained? A partial uncertainty of penalty, a presumptive hope of impunity, emboldens crime. The license of a universal forgiveness would open the flood-gates of evil and hasten both social and political ruin. As a race we are even more propense to the disregard of moral duty and to sin against God. It may be claimed, and freely granted, that the grace of divine forgiveness is a most weighty reason for grateful piety. But the common moral apathy would be insensible to its persuasive force. Facts clearly show that with most men the divine goodness pleads in vain. Even the cross, with the admission of its atoning love, so pleads in vain. Delays of punishment, with salvation for their end, are perverted to a more persistent evil doing. For such a race the free remission of all penalty would be subversive of all government, and whelm in ruin the profound moral interests which the divine government must conserve. Such inevitable consequences utterly discredit the assumption of forgiveness and salvation on mere sovereignty.

III. Forgiveness On Repentance.

It is specially urged that repentance is a proper and entirely sufficient ground of forgiveness, and, hence, that there is no necessity for an atonement. This is a common position with rationalistic schemes.

1. Repentance Necessary.—The necessity for a true repentance, in order to forgiveness and salvation, is not only conceded, but firmly maintained in any proper doctrine of atonement. No provision of a redemptive economy could supersede this necessity. Impenitence after sinning is self-justification and the very spirit of rebellion; while penitence is the only self-condemnation and the only return to obedience. There must, therefore, be a genuine repentance. There can be neither forgiveness nor any real redemption from sin without it.

2. The Only Kind Naturally Possible.—The logic of this question will not concede the gratuitous assumption of a true repentance as possible in the resources of our own nature. A soul with the disabilities of depravity, and under the power of sin, cannot so repent. This accords with the facts of our moral condition as clearly given in the Scriptures, and also with a common experience and observation. There is a certain kind of repentance within our own power. We instinctively shrink from punishment, and, therefore, necessarily regret the sins which expose us to its infliction. But such regret implies no true sense of sin, and constitutes no necessary repentance. It is merely what the Scriptures designate as the sorrow of the world working death, and so discriminate it from a true godly sorrow for sin, working repentance unto salvation (2 Corinthians 7:9-10). The former repentance, and the only kind naturally possible, is no proper ground of forgiveness. Nor has it any true redemptive power in the moral life.

3. Such Repentance Inevitable.—As the immediate product of our mental constitution such a repentance is inevitable, and hence must be universal. As we necessarily shrink from penalty, so we necessarily regret the evil deeds which subject us to its infliction. But what so arises naturally, and without any element of true contrition, can be no sufficient ground of forgiveness. Besides, as a necessary product, and therefore universal, it would involve a universal forgiveness. The result would be the subversion of all government, just as on a universal sovereign forgiveness. With such a policy no civil government could be maintained. Nor could a divine moral government be so maintained. Nor is there validity in any rejoinder that, as the Gospel freely offers forgiveness on a repentance possible to all, it might hence be universal. This is true, but only in an economy of

grace which provides for a true repentance and gives to the ministry of forgiveness the moral support of the redemptive mediation of Christ.

4. Without any Deep Sense of Sin.—In the repentance naturally possible sin is neither felt nor confessed in a true sense of its intrinsic evil, but only selfishly, on account of its result in personal suffering. It therefore can have no real redemptive or reformative power in the moral life. And even were forgiveness permissible on the ground of so defective a repentance, a true salvation is not so possible. Forgiveness so easily granted never could bring the turpitude of sin home to the moral consciousness. To this extent would be the loss of moral benefit. The intenser the sense of sin, and the profounder the grateful love for the mercy of forgiveness, the more thorough is the moral recovery and salvation. It is easy to decide where there are such experiences. They are realized only through the helping and forgiving grace of redemption. As souls gather around the cross they have the deepest contrition for sin and the most grateful love for the gracious forgiveness.[614] Innumerable facts of religious experience so witness. And even if we could set aside the deeper necessity for an atonement, there is yet a profound moral necessity for the redemptive mediation of Christ in order to the moral recovery and salvation of the soul.

[614]Ullman:The Sinlessness of Jesus, p. 251.

5. True Repentance only by Grace.—The moral disabilities consequent upon depravity and sin render a true repentance impossible in the resources of our own nature. Such a state is one of spiritual blindness, insensibility, impotence, death. So the Scriptures represent it (John 6:44; Romans 5:6; Romans 8:3-4; Ephesians 2:1-2; Ephesians 4:18; Colossians 2:13). Hence, they attribute a genuine repentance, both in its privilege and possibility, to the grace of the atonement and the agency of the Holy Spirit so procured. Thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise again, that repentance and remission of sins might be preached in his name. And a special office of the Holy Spirit, in a mission provided through the redemptive mediation of Christ, is to bring the sense of sin home to the conscience in a conviction necessary to a true repentance. So Christ, having redeemed us with his blood, is exalted a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and remission of sins (Luke 24:46-47; John 16:7-11; Acts 5:31). The gracious ability and disposition to a true repentance are through the evangelical mission of the Spirit. Only thus have we an explanation of the mighty work wrought on that memorable day of Pentecost. The Spirit was shed forth, not only upon the apostles in the power of preaching, but also upon the people in the power of religious conviction. And no one who denies this mission of the Spirit as a procurement of the redemptive mediation of Christ can account for the converting power of the Gospel on that day of Pentecost or for the work of religious revival in the history of Christianity. Hence it is an utterly futile attempt to supersede the necessity for an atonement by the sufficiency of repentance, while the repentance itself is possible only through the grace of the atonement.[615]

[615] On the insufficiency of repentance as a ground of forgiveness: Butler:Analogy of Religion, part ii, chap, v, 4, 5; Magee:Atonement and Sacrifice, dissertations iv, v; Watson:Theological Institutes, vol. ii, pp. 96-103; Gilbert:The Christian Atonement, pp. 217, 466; Randles:Substitution: Atonement, pp. 179-186.

IV. Some Special Facts.

There are a few facts specially urged against the necessity for an atonement which should have a brief notice. They are such as may be presented in a plausible light, but are without logical force as urged in the argument.

1. Forgiving One Another.—We are required to forgive one another, and without any regard to an atonement. Now it is claimed that if God requires us so to forgive he will himself thus forgive.[616] Respecting our own duty no issue is made. Such a requirement is clearly in the Scriptures (Matthew 18:21-22; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13). But there is nothing either in the nature or the manner of it which furnishes any ground for the inference that the divine forgiveness is without regard to an atonement. Indeed, one of the texts given in the reference, and which Worcester cites for his position, is entirely to the contrary: “Forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”

[616]Worcester:The Atoning Sacrifice, pp. 127-129

Account is also made of texts in which there is a coupling of our forgiving with the divine forgiving. If we forgive, we shall be forgiven; if we forgive not, we shall not be forgiven (Mathew 6:12, 14, 15; Luke 6:37). But the matter is still our duty of forgiving one another, accompanied, indeed, with its conditional relation to the divine forgiveness, but with no intimation that this is without regard to the atonement in Christ.

There is another view of this case, and one decisive against the inference adverse to the necessity for an atonement. This duty of forgiveness is the duty of private persons simply, and without any rectoral prerogative or obligation. One must so forgive, as the offense concerns one’s self only. Even the Christian ruler must so forgive. But who ever thinks of his carrying this duty into his administration? When the offense is a crime in the law it has public relations, and he has rectoral obligations in the case. What he may and should do in a merely private relation he must not do as a minister of the law. God is moral ruler. Hence our forgiving one another has no such analogy to the divine forgiveness as to be the ground of an inference adverse to the necessity for an atonement.

2. Parental Forgiveness.—There is properly such a forgiveness, yet there must be a limit even here, the disregard of which brings serious evil. Besides, the family circle is small, and rather private than public in its economy. It is constituted in peculiarly intimate and affectionate relations. It is, therefore, eminently a sphere for governing through the moral influences hence arising or so rendered possible. But what may be fitting here is wholly inadmissible in a government of broad domain, and conditioned by very different influences and tendencies. The economy of the family will not answer for the government of the State, much less for the divine government of the world or the universe. God is ruler in a universal moral realm, and no propriety of mere parental forgiveness can prove that he may consistently forgive without an atonement.

3. Parable of the Prodigal Son.—The attempt to press this beautiful parable into the service of anti-atonement rationalistic schemes is in the natural movement of rationalistic thought. “It is remarkable how perfectly this parable precludes every idea of the necessity of vicarious suffering, in order to the pardon of the penitent sinner. Had it been the special purpose of our Lord to provide an antidote for such a doctrine it is difficult to conceive what could have been devised better adapted to that end.” [617]Even Mr. Chubb, certainly without much sympathy with Christianity, has

a treatise on this parable, in which he insists that by special design it teaches the sufficiency of repentance as the ground of forgiveness; that the free and gracious forgiveness of this father exemplifies the free and gracious forgiveness of the heavenly Father; and that such is at once the dictate of reason and the Gospel of Christ.

[617]Worcester:The Atoning Sacrifice, p. 215. But it is certainly a queer kind of exegesis which claims a passage of Scripture that is entirely silent upon the atonement as decisive against both its reality and necessity. There is the greater violation of the laws of interpretation, because so many passages do specially treat the atonement, and in a manner decisive of its reality and necessity. Besides, all the freeness of the divine forgiveness which this parable represents, and which we gratefully accept, is in the fullest consistency with the doctrine of a vicarious atonement.

There is in this hasty and illogical method a neglect of vital and determining facts, and the assumption of a completeness of analogy which does not exist. The father in this parable appears and acts simply as such. Had he been a ruler also, and his son a criminal in the law, then, however gracious his fatherly affection, his rectoral obligations would have required recognition and observance. The vicious logic of this hasty method is thus manifest. It wrongly assumes that God's sole relation to moral beings is that of Father. This error utterly vitiates the conclusion. As we have previously noted, God is a moral Ruler as well as a gracious Father. Here is the vital, yet utterly neglected, distinction between the earthly and the heavenly Father. And what God might do simply as a Father, he may not do as moral Ruler. Nor do these facts rob this parable of its lesson of grace. It is still true that the doctrine of atonement is in the fullest consistency with such a lesson. As this father graciously forgave his repenting son, so does God graciously forgive his repenting children. The one fact illustrates the other. But the Scriptures decide, and reason accords therewith, that it is through the atonement in Christ that God so forgives. He had no need for an atonement in his fatherly disposition, but only in the requirements of his rectoral offices. Now that an atonement has been made, he may and does forgive his repenting children in all the fullness of his paternal grace and love. Thus we hold the full meaning of this lesson. We admire its grace. There is one of an infinitely deeper pathos. We read it in the sacrifice of the cross, as the atoning provision of the Father's love, that he might reach us in a gracious forgiveness.

138. Chapter 4: Theories Of Atonement.

Chapter 4 Theories Of Atonement.

I. Preliminaries.

1. Earlier Views of Atonement.—In the earlier history of the Church the redemption in Christ was viewed rather as a fact than as a doctrine. It was then, as it must ever be, the central truth of the Gospel. Christ was every-where proclaimed as a Saviour through his sacrificial death. Forgiveness and salvation were freely offered in his blood. But the great truth had its proclamation in the terms of Scripture rather than in the formulas of doctrine. This was proper, as it was natural. It is proper now, and will ever be so. Redemption, in all the preciousness of its truth and grace, has a living association with its own Scripture terms; and a disregard of this connection could not be other than a serious detriment. There were early utterances which well accord with strictly doctrinal views; still there was no formal construction of a doctrine.[618]

[618] Oxenham:Catholic Doctrine of the Atonement, pp. 112-114;Knapp: Christian Theology, p. 400; Smeaton:The Apostles, Doctrine of the Atonement, pp. 480-493; Dale:The Atonement, pp. 269-278

Then came the singular notion of redemption by a ransom to Satan. It is not agreed when, nor with whom, it originated. Some find in Irenaeus, of the second century, representative, while others would entirely clear him of such a view. It certainly had a representative in the very gifted but speculative Origen, of the third century. Nor did it run its course without finding entertainment in the great and versatile mind of Augustine. It flourished in the patristic period, and held its position until the beginning of the scholastic, or the time of Anselm, late in the eleventh century.[619]

[619] Hagenbach:History of Doctrines, vol. i, pp. 192, 193; Shedd:History of Christian Doctrine, vol. ii, pp. 212-226; Oxenham:The Catholic Doctrine of the Atonement, pp. 114-124 This very strange opinion was, probably, first suggested by certain texts of Scripture which represent us as in captivity or bondage to Satan, and our redemption by Christ as a deliverance from his possession and power. These representations may have suggested the idea of a right to us in Satan—such a right as that in which slaves or captives in war were held. He had conquered us, and brought us into his possession. In the prevalent ideas of the time this was a valid and rightful possession. Hence, probably, came the idea of the death of Christ as a ransom to Satan for the canceling of this claim. But this notion could not be permanent, and the marvel is that it continued so long. It is so incongruous with all cardinal facts so related to the atonement as to be decisive of its nature, that its dismission was a necessary result of their intelligent apprehension.

2. Inception of a Scientific Treatment.—The treatment of the atonement in a scientific or more exact doctrinal manner really began with Anselm, late in the eleventh century. His book,[620] though but a small one, is not improperly characterized as an “epoch-making book.” It fell far short of controlling the doctrine of the Church on the atonement, yet it exerted a strong influence upon after discussions and opinions, whether accordant or in dissent. It furnished, though not in the full

scientific sense usually claimed, a basis for the doctrine of satisfaction as constructed in the Reformed soteriology. Reviews of Anselm are so common to histories of doctrine, systems of theology, and monographic discussions of atonement, that there is little need of special reference.[621] We question neither the intellectual strength nor the intense religious earnestness of Anselm. And both are deeply wrought into his “Cur Deus Homo.” That the usual estimate of his work greatly exaggerates the scientific result we as little question. Such exaggeration is specially with his more sympathetic reviewers.

[620]Cur Deus Homo. Translated inBibliotheca Sacra, vols, xi, xii

[621]Ritschl:History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation, pp. 22-35; Hagenbach:History of Doctrines, vol. ii, pp. 32-38; Smeaton:The Apostles’ Doctrine of the Atonement, pp. 510-520; Oxenham:The Catholic Doctrine of the Atonement, pp. 166-174

Anselm emphasizes certain principles or facts as fundamental, and makes them the ground of his doctrine of atonement. Sin is the withholding from God his rightful claim, and is to him, on account of his character, an infinite wrong. The sinner is thus brought into an infinite indebtedness to the divine honor. This debt must be paid. God must not and cannot surrender his own personal right and honor, as he would do in a mere gratuitous forgiveness. The sinner never can, by any personal conduct, satisfy this claim. Therefore he must suffer the full punishment of his sins, or, as the only alternative, satisfaction must be rendered by another. It follows that the only salvation is through the compensatory service of a divine Mediator. In this exigency the Son of God, in compassion for perishing sinners, was incarnated in their nature, and in their behalf gave himself up in holy obedience and suffering to the Father. On account of his theanthropic character his obedience and death are a full compensation to the violated honor of God, and, therefore, a true and sufficient ground of forgiveness.[622] [622] Neander:History of the Church, vol. iv, pp. 498, 499; Knapp:Christian Theology, p. 403 But neither essential element of the satisfaction atonement, especially as scientifically wrought into this doctrine, is distinctly given by Anselm. By common consent the substitutive office of the active obedience of Christ is not m his doctrine. This view was first opened by Thomas Aquinas, but long waited for its completion.[623] Nor did Anselm maintain the distinct view of penal substitution. He is so credited, but only as interpreted after the ideas so fully wrought into the Reformed soteriology. Certain avowed principles respecting the nature of sin and the necessity for divine satisfaction, in case of forgiveness, might imply a penal substitution, and do so imply in the doctrine of satisfaction—a fact which gives occasion and currency to such interpretation of Anselm. But he never gave them such a meaning, nor found in penal substitution their necessary implication. He does assert that punishment or satisfaction must follow every sin: “Necesse est ut omne peccatum satisfaction aut paena sequatur.”[624] Here, however, punishment and satisfaction are discriminated and taken as alternately necessary, while in the doctrine of satisfaction the punishment of sin has no alternative. It is the only possible satisfaction of justice, and the two terms are really one in meaning, the ministry of justice varying only by an exchange of penal subjects, not in the execution of penalty. Anselm propounded no such doctrine of satisfaction by penal substitution. Nor are we without the support of good authority in so writing.[625] [623] Shedd:History of Christian Doctrine, vol. ii, pp. 309, 310 [624]Opera Omnia(Migne’s), Tomus Primus, 381

[625]Neander:History of the Church, vol. iv, p. 500; Bruce:The Humiliation of Christ, p. 358; Oxenham:The Catholic Doctrine of the Atonement, p. 172.

Anselm represents the mediation of Christ in holy obedience and suffering as infinitely meritorious, and, therefore, as justly entitled to an infinitely great reward. But as an absolutely perfect being, and in possession of all blessedness, he was not himself properly rewardable: therefore the merited reward might, and on his preference should, go to sinners in forgiveness and salvation.[626] But the doctrine, in its principles and structure, is very different from the doctrine of satisfaction, and in some of its facts really very like the middle theory.

[626]Bibliotheca Sacra, vol. xii, pp. 80-82.

3. Popular Number of Theories.—Historically, or in popular enumeration, theories of atonement are many. Nor is this strange. The subject is one of the profoundest. The facts which it concerns are of stupendous character. Its relations to the great questions of theology are vitally intimate. In scientific treatment it should be accordant to the system of doctrines into which it is wrought. Further, some minds are given to speculation and to fanciful views, or, for a lack of proper analysis and construction, take some one fact—perhaps a merely incidental one—for the whole truth, while others would timidly avoid the deeper principles of the question. In such facts we have reason enough for many theories. Yet authors widely differ respecting the number. Dr. Hodge enumerates five, but omits material modifications, while yet bringing them fully into his discussion.[627] Professor Crawford names thirteen theories as substitutes for what he chooses to call the Catholic doctrine—the Calvinistic doctrine. Then he adds the later theory of Dr. Bushnell, thus giving us in all fifteen.[628] Alford Cave names as many.[629] Such large enumeration, however, is superficial, and made with little regard to analysis and scientific classification.

[627]Systematic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 563-589.

[628]The Scripture Doctrine of Atonement, pp. 285-395.

[629]The Scriptural Doctrine of Sacrifice, pp. 14-16.

4. Scientific Enumeration.—The truth to be interpreted in the doctrine of atonement is the work of Christ in our salvation. But he can save us only by some work or influence within us, or with God for us, or by both. Such work or influence, whatever it is, must answer to the need in the case. Some need there must be, else a redemptive mediation has neither place nor office. Many who deny an absolute need will yet admit a relative one, and so urgent as to give propriety and value to a redemptive economy.

Two facts vitally concern the question of need, respecting which there should be a common agreement: one, that we are sinful and of sinful tendency; the other, that we can be saved only in a deliverance from sin and a moral harmonization with God. Without such facts there is no place for the redemptive work of Christ, and no saving office which he can fulfill. What, then, is the need for the redemptive mediation of Christ in a salvation so realized? Why cannot man achieve his own deliverance from sin and harmonize himself with God? Why cannot God achieve both without a mediation in Christ? Every theory of atonement that may properly be called such must answer to these questions. Every theory must, in logical consistency, accord with the answer given. The true theory will be found in accord with the true answer. We thus have principles whereby we may test

theories, and determine their legitimacy or truth. Some give a determining position to one fact in the need, some to another. Some find all the need in the moral disabilities of man; others find all in God. Every theory must take its place in a scientific classification according to the dominant fact of need which it alleges. By these same principles we may greatly reduce the popular number of theories—such as given by Professor Crawford. Such reduction is specially possible respecting theories wholly grounded in certain disabilities of our moral state. The subjective facts of moral disability, out of which the need for a redemptive mediation is alleged to arise, may be numerically many, and yet so one in kind that one objective law of redemptive help will answer for all. And the law of redemptive help, though revealed in many facts, may still be one law, and working only in one mode. Hence, theories of atonement popularly numbered after such many facts, may all be reduced to unity under one form of moral need, or under one law of redemptive help. In a like mode there may be a reduction, though not an equal one, of theories which ground the necessity for an atonement in the requirements of the divine nature. In truth, the real necessity for an atonement arises in the nature of God, especially in the offices of his justice, and gives place for only two legitimate theories—two alternatively, one of which must be the true theory. For illustration we may apply these principles of classification and reduction to theories, popularly given as such, which are grounded simply in a need arising out of moral disabilities in man. The theories which we shall name in the illustration are in fact but different phases of the theory of moral influence.

One theory is that Christ died as a martyr to his prophetic mission, and for the confirmation of the lessons of moral and religious truth which he gave to the world. This is the Marturial theory. It assumes our ignorance and our need of higher spiritual truth, and offers us redemptive help in Christ only through the moral influence of the lessons of higher religious truth which he gave. In another view, the death of Christ fulfilled its chief office as subservient to his resurrection, that he might thereby more fully disclose and verify the reality of a future life. Such disclosure is for the sake of its helpful religious influence in the present life. Men are strongly propense to a mere secular life. They greatly need, therefore, the practical influence of a revealed future life. Such help Christ brings through his resurrection, for which his death served as the prerequisite.

He died as an example of self-sacrificing devotion to the good of others. He so died that through the moral force of so impressive a lesson we might be led into a life of disinterested benevolence. Man is selfish and needs such an example of self-sacrificing devotion to the good of others as Christ gives. Such are the facts which this view emphasizes. But all the redemptive help which it represents is in the practical force of a moral lesson. In another view the mission and work of Christ were for the manifestation of God as among men in an incarnation; that he might “show us the Father” in his sympathy and forgiving grace. Man lacks faith, is in doubt, is in a servile fear of God, and suffers the moral paralysis of such states of mind. He needs encouragement, assurance of the kindness and love of God. This also is redemptive help only through the salutary influence of a moral lesson.

Such, indeed, are all the popularly named theories which ground the need of a mediatorial economy merely in our own moral disabilities. If any exception should be made it is in the case of the realistic and mystical schemes, in which, however, the chief difference is in the mode of redemptive help. But in all that class of which we have given examples, the need, revealed in many variant facts, is yet one; and the redemptive help, coming in various forms, is operative only

in one mode. Man is ignorant, and needs higher religious truth; of feeble motivity to duty, and needs its lessons in a more impressive form; of strong secular tendency, and needs the practical force of a revealed future life; selfish, and needs the helpful example of self-sacrificing love ; in a servile fear of God, and needs the assurance of his fatherly kindness. So Christ comes in all these forms of needed help. But in the deeper sense, the need is one, and the redemptive help is one. And these theories, many in popular enumeration, are all one theory—the theory of moral influence. Its claims will be considered a little further on. For the present it may be said that no issue will be joined respecting either such need in us or such help in Christ as here alleged. But such is not the real necessity for an atonement, and such is not the true atonement.

5. Ground for only Two Theories.—In a stricter scientific sense there are but two theories of atonement. We have seen how many in popular enumeration are reducible to the one theory of moral influence. Others, as will appear, in their review, are so void of essential facts that they hold no rightful place as theories. Nor is the scheme of moral influence in any strict sense a theory of atonement, because it neither answers to the real necessity in the case nor admits an objective ground of forgiveness in the mediation of Christ. Nor can there be more than two theories. This limitation is determined by the law of a necessary accordance between the necessity for an atonement and the nature of the atonement as answering to that necessity. This fact we have, that the vicarious sufferings of Christ are an objective ground of the divine forgiveness. There is a necessity for such a ground; his sufferings are an atonement only as they answer to this necessity. Hence the nature of the atonement is determined by the nature of its necessity. Now this necessity must lie either in the requirement of an absolute justice which must punish sin, or in the rectoral office of justice as an obligation to conserve the interest of moral government. There can be no other necessity for an atonement as an objective ground of forgiveness. Nor does any scheme of a real atonement in Christ either represent or imply another. Thus there is place for two theories, but only two. There is place for a theory of absolute substitution, according to which the redemptive sufferings of Christ were strictly penal, and the fulfillment of an absolute obligation of justice in the punishment of sin. This is the theory of satisfaction, and answers to a necessity in the first sense given. There is also place for a theory of conditional substitution, according to which the redemptive sufferings of Christ were not the punishment of sin, but such a substitute for the rectoral office of penalty as renders forgiveness, on proper conditions, consistent with the requirements of moral government. This answers to a necessity in the second sense given, and accords with the deeper principles of the governmental theory. The truth of atonement must be with the one or the other of these theories.

II. Summary Reviews.

Most of the theories noticed in this section we call theories only after popular usage. They are not strictly such. While some have peculiar phases or elements, they are mostly based on the principles of the moral theory. We shall attempt but a summary review of them. It will suffice to notice their leading facts, to ascertain the nature of the redemption in Christ which they represent, and to determine their place in a proper classification. A few words may be added upon their respective claims.

1. Theory of Vicarious Repentance.—We may so designate a theory specially represented by Dr. John McLeod Campbell. It is grounded in the idea of the profoundest identification of Christ with

humanity in the incarnation. Therein he takes our experiences into his own consciousness; enters into the deepest sympathy with us, even in our sense of sin, and of the divine displeasure. Thus he takes upon his own soul the burden and sorrow of our sins, and makes the truest, deepest confession of their demerit and of the just displeasure of God against them. Divine justice is therewith satisfied and we are forgiven. “This confession, as to its own nature, must have been a perfect Amen in humunity to the judgment of God on the sin of man.” “He who so responds to the divine wrath against sin, saying, ‘Thou art righteous, Lord, who judgest so,’ is necessarily receiving the full apprehension and realization of that wrath, as well as of that sin against which it comes into his soul and spirit, into the bosom of the divine humanity, and, so receiving it, he responds to it with a perfect response—a response from the depths of that divine humanity—and in that perfect response he absorbs it. For that response has all the elements of a perfect repentance in humanity for all the sin of man; a perfect sorrow ; a perfect contrition ; all the elements of such a repentance, and that in absolute perfection ; all, except the personal consciousness of sin ; and by that perfect response in Amen to the mind of God in relation to sin is the wrath of God rightly met, and that is accorded to divine justice which is its due and could alone satisfy it.”[630] [630] Campbell:The Nature of the Atonement, pp. 118, 119. This scheme recognizes the demerit of sin and a retributive justice in God. It is a scheme of vicarious atonement, but in entire dissent from the theory of satisfaction, as it denies the possibility of penal substitution. It clearly holds repentance to be all that justice requires as the ground of forgiveness. In this it dissents from both the Anselmic and Grotian theories, and identifies itself with the Socinian. It admits no necessity for an objective atonement, either in an absolute penal justice or in the interest of moral government. Any necessity for redemptive help which the scheme may consistently allow must be grounded in an inability in us to a true repentance. If a vicarious repentance is sufficient for our forgiveness, so must be a true repentance in us. This fact also classes the scheme with the moral theory. This special view is open to many objections. The Scriptures give it no support. It will not interpret the explicit terms of atonement, nor answer to the real necessity for one. Nor is there less difficulty in the notion of a vicarious repentance than in that of vicarious punishment. Then the logical sequence of such a vicarious repentance, with its attributed effects, is the releasement of all from the requirement of repentance, and the unconditional forgiveness of all.[631] [631] Cave:The Scriptural Doctrine of Sacrifice, pp. 350-362.

2. Theory of Redemption by Love.—It is according to the Scriptures that our redemption has its original in the love of God. But this fact does not determine the nature of such redemption, or whether it be an objective ground of forgiveness originating in the divine love, or merely the moral influence of its manifestation in Christ, operative as a subduing and reconciling power in the soul. Dr. Young is a special exponent of the latter view. There is really very little in the theory peculiar to himself. This is specially true of its constituent facts. Any peculiarity lies rather in their combination and in the manner of their expression. The author writes with perspicuity and force. His principles are clearly given. It is easy to determine and classify his theory.

Certain facts are postulated respecting spiritual laws. Death is the necessary consequence of sin, as life is of holiness. The only salvation, therefore, is in the destruction of sin as a subjective fact. This is the work of the redemption in Christ. “The laws of nature are owing solely to the will and fiat of the Creator. He ordained them, and had such been his pleasure they might have been altered in ten thousand ways. But the laws of the spiritual universe do not depend even on the highest will.

The great God did not make them; they are eternal as he is. The great God cannot repeal them; they are immutable as he is." "Without aid from any quarter they avenge themselves, and exact, and continue without fail to exact, so long as the evil remains, the amount of penalty—visible and invisible—to the veriest jot and tittle which the deed of violation deserves." "No term of punishment is fixed, none can be fixed. One thing, and one thing only, determines the duration of the punishment, and that is the continuance of evil in the soul. The evil continuing, its attendant penalty is a necessity, which even God could not conquer." "There is one, but there is only one, way in which the tremendous doom of the sinful soul can be escaped in consistency with the great laws of the spiritual universe. If sin were cast out the death which issues solely from sin would be effectually prevented."[632] [632] Young:The Life and Light of Men, pp. 82, 85, 93, 97. The theory of redemption is from facts so stated. There is no need of an objective ground of forgiveness. The whole need is for a moral force working in the soul itself, and in a manner to destroy the power of subjective evil. All this is provided for in the manifestation of the divine love in the sacrifice of the cross. Such is God's method of redemption. "By the one true sacrifice of Christ, an act of divine self-sacrifice by incarnate, crucified love, he aims a blow at the root of evil within man's heart. . . . He breaks the hard heart by the overwhelming pressure of pure, almighty mercy, in our Lord Jesus Christ."[633] [633] Young:The Life and Light of Men, p. 98.

We specially object to the one-sided redemption so constructed. We fully accept the postulates respecting spiritual laws as involving an absolute distinction between holiness and sin; though we do not admit the extreme view of their self-execution, which might dispense with a moral government as under an actual divine administration. God ever rules in the moral realm, and dispenses rewards to both holiness and sin. The necessity of a deliverance from sin as a subjective evil in order to salvation we have already affirmed. Indeed, it is a very familiar truth. And that the divine love revealed in the sacrifice of the cross has a great office in our moral reformation is also a very familiar truth. It ever finds utterance in Christian exhortation and entreaty to a new spiritual life. And it is an affected or mistaken originality when men give prominence to such truths as original discoveries. In principle the scheme is one with that of moral influence. The atonement is all in a power of moral motive as embodied in manifested love, and operative only through the soul's own cognition and motivity. Like every such theory, it utterly fails to answer to the real need of an atonement as revealed in the Scriptures and manifest in the reason of the case. It has no fair interpretation for the many Scripture texts which so directly attribute forgiveness to the redemption in the blood of Christ; nor does it give any proper recognition to the mission of the Spirit through his mediation as the efficient agency in our subjective redemption from sin.

3. Theory of Self-propitiation by Self-sacrifice.—We may so formulate the later theory of Dr. Bushnell. In his own account it supplements rather than supersedes his former theory: "The argument of my former treatise[634] was concerned in exhibiting the work of Christ as a reconciling power in men. This was conceived to be the whole import and effect of it. . . . I now propose to substitute for the latter half of my former treatise a different exposition; composing thus a whole of doctrine that comprises both the reconciliation of men to God and of God to men."[635] He still holds the position that the main office of atonement is in its moral influence with men. Now, however, he finds an element in the divine propitiation; but it is not one that identifies his theory with either the Anselmic or Grotian atonement.

[634]The Vicarious Sacrifice.

[635]Forgiveness and Law, p. 33. The new theory alleges a similarity of moral sentiment in God and men; and then, from an alleged requisite to a thorough human forgiveness, deduces a law of the divine forgiveness. We have retributive sentiments, disgust, and resentment against the turpitude and wrong of sin. It is admitted that these feelings have an important function in moral discipline, and that they must be treated in subservience to that end. “Filling an office so important, they must not be extirpated under any pretext of forgiveness. They require to be somehow mastered, and somehow to remain. And the supreme art of forgiveness will consist in finding how to embrace the unworthy as if they were not unworthy, or how to have them still on hand when they will not suffer the forgiveness to pass. Which supreme art is the way of propitiation—always concerned in the reconciliation of moral natures separated by injuries.”[636] [636] Ibid. p. 38.

What, then, is the mode of this supreme art of reconciliation? What is the essential requisite to its realization in a free and full forgiveness? The requirement is from the nature of the hinderance to the forgiveness in our moral resentments against sin; and hence for some measure of self-propitiation which shall master these resentments, and issue in a thorough forgiveness. How, then, may this self-propitiation be realized? By some manner of self-sacrifice for the good of those against whom we have such resentments. “Suffering, in short, is with all moral natures the necessary correlate of forgiveness. The man, that is, cannot say, ‘I forgive,’ and have the saying end it; he must somehow atone both himself and his enemy by a painstaking, rightly so called, that has power to recast the terms of their relationship.”[637] Such is the requisite to forgiveness; some personal sacrifice for the good of the offender, and not only as a power of moral influence with him, but also as a necessary self-propitiation toward him in the party offended. Such is the law of human forgiveness.

[637]Ibid., pp. 48, 49.

Then this same law is applied to the divine forgiveness. It is so applied on the ground of a “grand analogy, or almost identity, that subsists between our moral nature and that of God ; so that our pathologies and those of God make faithful answer to each other, and he is brought so close to us that almost any thing that occurs in the workings or exigencies of our moral instincts may even be expected in his.”[638] It is hence concluded that God has such hinderance to forgiveness in his moral resentments against sin as we have, and therefore requires the same means of self-propitiation. He forgives just as we do. “One kind of forgiveness matches and interprets the other, for they have a common property. They come to the same point when they are genuine, and require also exactly the same preparations and conditions precedent.”[639] So God must propitiate himself in cost and suffering for our good. This he did in the sacrifice of the cross: “that sublime act of cost, in which God has bent himself downward, in loss and sorrow, over the hard face of sin, to say, and saying to make good, ‘Thy sins are forgiven thee.’”[640] [638] Forgiveness and Law, p. 35.

[639]Ibid., p. 35.

[640]Ibid., p. 73.

Many of these facts might be admitted without accepting the doctrine of atonement thereon constructed. The retributive sentiment is with us an original fact, and in its own nature a hinderance to forgiveness. There are resentments against injury and wrong which may strengthen

the hinderance. But this law is without uniformity. The retributive feeling rarely exists alone. It is usually in association with other feelings which may either greatly hinder or greatly help any disposition to forgiveness. In a cruel, hard nature the associated feelings may co-operate with the retributive sentiment to prevent all disposition to forgiveness, and equally to prevent all acts of personal kindness which might placate the vindictive resentment; while the tendencies of a generous, kindly nature may be helpful to a forgiving disposition. There are gracious, loving natures ever ready with a full forgiveness, without any self-atonement in charities to the offender. The more is this true as the soul is the more deeply imbued with the divine love.

Now the multiformity and contrariety of such facts in men deny to Dr. Bushnell the analogy from which he concludes the necessary means of the divine propitiation and forgiveness. Self-propitiation in a sacrificing charity to the offender is not “with all moral natures the necessary correlate of forgiveness.” And with error in the premise the conclusion is fallacious. But were it even true that this is the only law of forgiveness with men it would not hence follow that such is the only law of forgiveness with God.

It should be distinctly noted that here we have no concern with any requirement of divine justice as maintained either in the satisfaction theory or in the rectoral. Dr. Bushnell rejects both, with all that is vital in them. Nor does he admit any necessity for an atonement on the ground of either. In his scheme the necessity lies in a personal disposition of God as a resentment against the injury and wrong of sin. It is not in the interest of our criticism to deny all hinderance in the divine resentment against sin to a propitious disposition; but we confidently affirm such a transcendent love in God as would, in the absence of all other hinderance, wait for no placation of his personal wrath in self-sacrifice, but instantly go forth to the satisfaction of its yearnings in the freest, fullest forgiveness. If men imbued with the divine love will so forgive, much more would the infinite love. The position has the highest a fortiori proof. That divine love which finds its way to forgiveness through the blood of the cross could suffer no delay by any personal resentment against sin requiring placation in costly ministries to the offender. The grace of redemption in the blood of Christ is infinitely greater than the grace of forgiveness. Hence the free gift of the former in the very state of personal resentment alleged denies the assumed hinderance therein to the freest, fullest forgiveness (Romans 5:10; Romans 8:32). This scheme, therefore, does not answer to the real necessity for the redemptive mediation of Christ. Nor does it rightly interpret the office of his sacrifice. The necessity concerns the profoundest interest of moral government, and hence arises in the very perfections of God as moral ruler, not in his personal resentment against sin. And the sacrifice of Christ answers to this necessity in atonement for sin by rendering forgiveness consistent with the interest concerned.

Such a scheme is far deeper and grander than Dr. Bushnell’s. Indeed, his is neither profound nor grand. It admits no principle or interest as concerned m forgiveness, the disregard of which would be as contrary to the divine goodness as to the divine justice. In the analogy of certain “pathologies,” of personal resentment against sin, the scheme lowers God into the likeness of men; so that in him, as in them, the great hinderance to forgiveness is in these same personal resentments. Thus “one kind of forgiveness matches and interprets the other, for they have a common property. They come to the same point when they are genuine, and require also the same preparations and conditions precedent.” The theory commands no lofty view of the divine goodness. Nor can it give any proper significance to the sacred proclamation of the divine love as

the original of the redemptive economy. Such a love is held in no bonds of personal resentment. The theory has no profound and glorious doctrine of divine love; and, indeed, is found on a true sounding to be shallow. Its scientific position is easily given. As compared with the moral theory it has a somewhat differencing element, which carries the atonement into the reconciliation of God. But this element is insufficient to constitute a really distinct theory. Negatively, and therefore fatally, it is one with the moral theory. It denies all hinderance to forgiveness in the divine justice, whether in its purely retributive function or in its rectoral office. This fact thoroughly differentiates it from both the satisfaction and governmental theories, and closely affiliates it with the moral theory.

4. Realistic Theory.—Closely kindred to this is the mystical theory, next to be noticed. Each is multiform, and the two often coalesce. These facts, with a lack of explicit and definite statement, render it difficult either to apprehend them or to present them in a clear view. In the realistic theory some represent Christ as the typical or ideal man, using these terms vaguely, but with the assumption of some manner of relationship between him and us, whereby we are the recipients of a redemptive influence working for our moral renovation and salvation. Others carry the conception of Christ into the notion of a generic humanity, of which we are individuated forms. The notion must answer somewhat to the scholastic realism, or to that of the Augustinian anthropology, which identifies the human race in a real oneness with Adam. Nor did the incarnation bring Christ into any realistic connection with human nature which is in itself redeeming and saving. It did bring him into union with human nature, but into a thoroughly individual form—as much so as that of any individual man. So far from such a realistic identification, he stands apart from all human nature, except the one individual form of his incarnation. Hence that incarnation had not in itself the efficiency of redemption, but was in order to an atonement in the death of Christ, that he might come to us severally in the grace of forgiveness and in the regenerating agency of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 4:4-5; Hebrews 2:14-15). Such is the Scripture doctrine of atonement and salvation, but which no realism represents.[641] [641] Rigg:Modern Anglican Theology, pp. 130-140; Crawford:The Scripture Doctrine of Atonement, pp. 303-348.

5. Mystical Theory.—This theory, as previously stated, is, at least in some of its facts, closely kindred to the realistic. It is chiefly based on the idea of a real union of Christ with the human soul. In this union is realized his redeeming and saving efficiency. So far the theory finds salvation in a subjective sanctification, and makes little account of justification in the forgiveness of sin. Hence it makes slight account of an objective reconciliation in the death of Christ, in comparison of his subjective work of redemption. The weighty objection to this view is that it gives us a one-sided soteriology. It offers the benefits of an objective atonement without the atonement itself.

There is in our salvation a living union with Christ (John 15:5-6; Romans 8:10; Colossians 3:3-4). This is a truth of all evangelical theology. But in the order of nature forgiveness must precede this spiritual union. So the atonement in the blood of Christ as the only ground of forgiveness is a distinct fact from his saving union with us. Strictly, the mystical scheme omits the atonement proper, and belongs to another part of soteriology.[642] [642] Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 581-583; Bruce:The Humiliation of Christ, p. 315.

6. Middle Theory.—The same theory is also called the Arian—not, however, as originating with Arius, but because of its association with an Arian Christology. It holds that forgiveness is granted to repenting sinners for Christ’s sake. or in view of his mediatorial service. This is not a forgiveness

on the ground of his death as a vicarious atonement for sin, but in reward of his self-sacrificing service in the interest of the human race. Higher ground is thus taken than in the moral theory. The mediation of Christ has a higher office than a mere practical lesson: “Not only to give us an example; not only to assure us of remission, or to procure our Lord a commission to publish the forgiveness of sin: but, moreover, to obtain that forgiveness by doing what God in his wisdom and goodness judged fit and expedient to be done in order to the forgiveness of sin; and without which he did not think it fit or expedient to grant the forgiveness of sin.”[643] [643] John Taylor:Scripture Doctrine of Atonement, No. 152.

Yet, with all these facts, the theory denies a proper substitutional atonement, and hence is unscriptural. It is in very thorough dissent from the theory of satisfaction. In the maintenance of a fitness, or wise expediency, in the mediation of Christ as the reason of forgiveness, especially in its relation to the interest of moral government, it makes some approach toward the rectoral view, but in the full exposition falls far short of it. In some features it reminds one of the theory of Anselm, though the two are far from being identical.

Dr. Hill reviews the theory in a clear analysis and statement, deriving his information of it from Dr. Thomas Balguy, Dr. Price, and others.[644] The treatment is with the characteristic fairness and perspicuity of the author. After a lucid statement of the theory he notes its very serious defects, but at the same time regards it as a well-wrought and beautiful structure.[645] [644] Lectures in Divinity, pp. 422-427.

[645]Buchanan:The Doctrine of Justification, pp. 165-168.

7. Theory of Conditional Penal Substitution.—We do not here appropriate any given formula of atonement, but use terms which properly designate a theory held by not a few. The view is, that the redemptive sufferings of Christ were penally endured in behalf of sinners; that as such they constitute a proper ground of forgiveness; but that the forgiveness is really conditional. There is present the idea of a necessary retribution of sin, or of a vicarious punishment in order to forgiveness. If there be sin, there must also be punishment: this is the idea. Yet the reason of this necessity, and the relation of penal substitution to forgiveness, are not given with any exactness, as in the scheme of satisfaction. The penal substitution is conditional, in the sense that the forgiveness provided is contingent upon the free action of sinners respecting the required terms. They are free to repent and believe, and equally free not to repent and believe. In the former case they are free through enabling grace; in the latter, as not subject to an irresistible power of grace. On a proper repentance and faith they are forgiven on the ground of Christ’s vicarious punishment; but on the refusal of such terms they are answerable in penalty for their sins, and none the less so on account of his penal substitution. The scheme is a construction apparently between the satisfaction and governmental theories. It rejects the absolute substitution of the former, and adds the penal element to the proper conditional substitution of the latter. Such, in substance, is the theory of all who hold both the penal quality of the redemptive sufferings of Christ and a real conditionality of forgiveness. Hence, we were entirely correct in representing it as the theory of not a few. Many leading Arminians may be classed in such a scheme; though we think it for them an unscientific position. Arminius himself maintained both penal substitution and a real conditionality of forgiveness.[646] Grotius held both, though with far less explicitness respecting the former. Some of Richard Watson’s statements would assign to him the same position. It is the theory

maintained in the more recent and very able work of Marshall Randles.[647] [646] Writings (Nichols's): vols, i, pp. 28, 29; ii, pp. 496-499.

[647]Substitution: Atonement. Is there room for such a theory? There is a broad ground of distinction between the satisfaction and governmental theories. But such a difference is not always room for another. Two theories may so appropriate all possible facts and principles of the question that the truth in the case must be with one or the other. Such are the facts respecting these two theories of atonement. Nor can a penal substitution be conditional. Penalty, as an instrument of justice, has only two offices: one in the punishment of sin as such, the other, in the interest of the government. And though punishment is only for the sake of its rectoral end, it is none the less strictly retributive, or inflicted only on the ground of demerit. There is no other just punishment. Nor could any other fulfill its rectoral office. Then, if the punishment be inflicted upon a substitute, the substitution must, in the nature of the case, be real and absolute. Justice can have no further retributive claim against the sinners so substituted; not any more than if they had suffered in themselves the full punishment of their sins. Here the consistency of the case is with the doctrine of satisfaction. All so replaced by a substitute in punishment must be discharged from personal amenability to penalty. Hence a real conditionality of forgiveness has no consistency with penal substitution.

We are fully aware that rigid satisfactionists assert the conditionality of forgiveness. This, however, does not void the intrinsic inconsistency in the case. Nor is what they assert a real conditionality; certainly not such as Arminianism ever maintains. For instance, faith is with them the condition of forgiveness; but they really deny the contingency of faith. In their scheme, it is conditional only as precedent to forgiveness in a necessary order of facts in the process of salvation. It takes its place as a purchased benefit of redemption in the process of salvation monergistically wrought. Irresistible grace is efficient cause to the faith, as to every other fact in the actual salvation. Christ would be wronged of his purchase were it not so wrought in every redeemed soul. Here, indeed, is the real consistency with satisfactionists. But with all who hold a conditional penal substitution, especially with all Arminians, forgiveness has a real conditionality. Here, indeed, is a main issue between Calvinism and Arminianism in an unended polemics of centuries. It is the historic issue of monergism and synergism. The latter, with its full meaning of conditionality in forgiveness and salvation, is ever the unyielding and unwavering position of Arminianism. The question recurs respecting the consistency of such a conditionality with penal substitution ; or whether there can be a conditional penal substitution. Nothing is gained by asserting simply the penal character of Christ's redemptive sufferings, with the omission of their strictly substitutive office. In such a view it would be impossible to show any just ground or proper end of the punishment. Sin is the only ground of just and wise punishment. Penal substitution must never depart from this principle. If Christ suffered punishment, our sin must have been the ground of his punishment. And our sin must have suffered merited punishment in him. This, and only this, could answer to the idea of a necessity for punishment in the case of sin—a necessity arising in the relation of sin to a purely retributive justice. There could be no pretense even to such a punishment, except as our sins were imputed to Christ, and so made punishable in him. But in such a case the penal substitution is real and absolute; sin suffers its merited punishment; absolute justice receives its full retributive claim. No further penalty can fall either upon Christ or upon the sinners replaced in his penal substitution; and no more upon them than upon him. Their discharge is a requirement of justice itself. Hence

there cannot be a conditional penal substitution.

8. Leading Theories.—We here name together the moral, satisfaction, and governmental theories as the leading ones. But we name them simply with a view to the indication of their general character, as prefatory to their more formal discussion.

It is important that formulas of doctrine should consist of thoroughly definitive terms. This, however, is not always an easy attainment. There is no such attainment in these formulas of atonement. No one gives what is cardinal in the theory which it represents, nor clearly discriminates it from the others; and it is only in their discussion that we shall ascertain their respective principles and distinctive facts. Their general sense may be very briefly given. The moral theory regards the redemptive work of Christ as accomplished through his example and lessons of religious truth, operative as a practical influence with men. The theory of satisfaction makes fundamental the satisfaction of an absolute retributive justice by the punishment of sin in Christ as the substitute of sinners in penalty. It admits the offices of atonement represented by the other two theories, but only as incidental. The governmental theory gives chief prominence to the office of justice in the interest of moral government, yet holds to a proper sense of satisfaction, and gives full place to the principle of moral influence, not, however, as a constituent fact of atonement, but as a practical result of the redemptive economy.[648]

[648] Daniel T. Fisk: “The Necessity of the Atonement,”Bibliotheca Sacra, April, 1861. The article of Dr. Fisk presents these theories in a very clear view.

139. Chapter 5: Theory Of Moral Influence.

Chapter 5 Theory Of Moral Influence. This theory has already come into view, and more than once. It is one of the three which we propose to treat more fully than those previously noticed. We do not concede to it a scientific position. Strictly, it is not a theory of atonement; yet it is such in popular enumeration, and one of no little prominence. Its treatment, however, will require no great elaboration, as we already have its principles; and especially as the theory is one of simplicity and clearness. With all its phases its fundamental principle is ever one and easily apprehended.

I. Facts Of The Theory.

1. The Redemptive Law.—The mediation of Christ fulfills its redemptive office in the economy of human salvation through the influence of its own lessons and motives, as practically operative upon the soul and life of men. Such is the office of his incarnation, if admitted; of his example, teachings, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension. By the lessons of truth so given and enforced it is sought to enlighten men; to address to them higher motives to a good life; to awaken love in grateful response to the consecration of so worthy a life to their good; to lead them to repentance and piety through the moral force of such a manifestation of the love of God; to furnish them a perfect example in the life of Christ, and through his personal influence to transform them into his own likeness.[649] [649] Bruce:The Humiliation of Christ, pp. 326-328.

Advocates may vary the summary of facts, as they may differ respecting the Christ, but the result is simply to lessen or increase the possible moral force, without any change of principle. The law of redemptive help is ever one, whether Christ be viewed as essentially divine or only as human. With his divinity and incarnation the synthesis of facts may embody the larger force of religious motive; but this is all the advantage from the higher Christology. Such is the moral theory of redemption. Dr. Bushnell calls it “the moral power view;” but such a formula neither alters the redemptive law nor adds to its saving efficiency. The only advantage is in a little more force of expression.

2. Socinian.—Historically, the theory synchronizes with Socinus, deceased 1604, and, in the stricter sense, originated with him. Hence it may properly be called Socinian. Abelard, following soon after Anselm, propounded similar views, which were favored somewhat by Peter Lombard and others, but gave no exact construction to a new theory in opposition to the more prevalent church doctrine. He exerted but a transient disturbing influence upon this great question, and left the Anselmic doctrine in its chief position.[650]

[650] Shedd:History of Christian Doctrine, vol. ii, pp. 286-288; Cunningham:Historical Theology, vol. ii, pp. 294-301; Hill:Lectures in Divinity, pp. 414-422. With Socinus the moral theory sprung naturally from his system of theology, especially from his Christology. In the assertion of Christ’s simple humanity, doctrinal consistency required him to reject all schemes of a real objective atonement, and to interpret the mediation of Christ in accord with his own Christology. The moral theory is the proper result. It is the scheme which his system of theology required, and the only

one which it will consistently admit. Affiliated forms of Christianity—such as Unitarianism and Universalism—naturally and consistently adopt the same theory. It has a natural affinity with all rationalistic views of Christianity.

3. Its Dialectics.—The moral scheme, arising in a system of theology so diverse from the orthodox faith, and so antagonistic itself to the orthodox atonement, was inevitably polemical, and both defensively and offensively. This naturally arose, in the first part, from the fact that the Scriptures, in what seems their obvious sense, affirm an objective atonement in Christ; and in the second part, from the fact that the doctrine of atonement then most prevalent was open to serious valid objections, and especially to very plausible ones. But little attempt was made to build up the doctrine on the ground of the Scriptures. The main attempt was to set aside the Scripture proofs alleged in support of the church doctrine. In this endeavor the new exegesis had little regard for well-established laws of hermeneutics. It dealt freely in captious criticism, and in the most gratuitous and forced interpretations. The exigency of the case required such a method. Scripture facts and utterances are so clear and emphatic in the affirmation of an objective atonement in the mediation of Christ as the only and necessary ground of forgiveness, that the new scheme found in such a method its only possible defense against their crushing force. We have no occasion to follow the scheme in all this exegesis. The truth of an atonement has none; and the round of following would be a long and weary one: for the whole issue concerns other great questions of doctrine, especially of anthropology and Christology, as well as the direct question of atonement.

Within the sphere of reason the new scheme was boldly offensive in its method. Here it had more apparent strength, and could be plausible even when not really potent. But any real strength bore rather against a particular form of redemptive doctrine than against the truth itself. The array of objections, wrought in all the vigor of rhetoric and passion, is nugatory against the true doctrine—as will appear in our treatment of objections. Nor are we answerable in the case of such as are valid against a doctrine which we do not accept, although brought from a theological stand-point which we utterly reject. The theory of satisfaction, as constructed in the Reformed theology, and now held as the more common Calvinistic view, is open to such objections. And an objection is none the less valid because made in the interest of a theory much further from the truth than the one against which it is alleged.

Beyond the ground of valid objection to the doctrine of satisfaction, Socinianism finds a sphere of plausible objection to the atonement itself. A fluency of words, even with little wealth or potency of thought, may easily declaim against its unreason, its injustice, its aspersion of the divine goodness, its implication of vindictiveness in God, its subversion of moral distinctions and obligations. Very gifted minds have given to such declamation all possible force. It has the force of plausibility on false assumptions and issues, but is impotent in the light of truth. This will appear in our treatment of objections to the atonement.

4. Truth of Moral Influence.—The real issue with the Socinian scheme does not concern the truth of a helpful moral influence in the economy of redemption. This any true doctrine of atonement must fully hold. The issue is against making such influence the only form and the sum of redemptive help; indeed, against making it a constituent fact of the atonement as such. The moral influence of the mediation of Christ is from its own facts, and not a part of the atonement itself. If, in the case of a rebellion, a son of the sovereign should, at great sacrifice, interpose in such

provisional measures as would render forgiveness on proper submission consistent with the interest of the sovereignty; if the sovereign should be concur ring with the son in such provision; and if such grace on the part of both the sovereign and the son should be successfully pleaded with those in rebellion as a reason for submission and loyalty, it would surely be unreason to maintain that such moral influence was the whole atonement in the case. It would be unreason to maintain that it was any part of it. It would be equally so with the submission thus induced as a necessary condition of forgiveness. The moral influence in the case presupposes the atonement and arises out of the grace of its provisions. Without such grace there could be no appeals of moral potency. The very pleas which give persuasive force to the pleading are facts of grace in an atonement previously made. Hence the practical force or moral influence of a provision of forgiveness cannot be that provision itself, nor any part of it. Such are the facts respecting the atonement in Christ. Its power of moral influence lies in the infinite grace revealed in its provisions. The Son of God, as the gift of the Father, died in atonement for our sins, that we might be forgiven and saved. Here is the plea of moral potency. But there can be no such plea, and, therefore, no such moral influence, without the prior fact of such grace. Hence the unreason of accounting the practical lesson, or moral influence of an atonement, the atonement itself, or any constituent part of it.

Thus the question of a helpful practical lesson in the economy of redemption is not one respecting its reality, but one respecting its place. The doctrine of a real atonement for sin gives the fullest recognition to such a moral influence, and represents its greatest possible force. Indeed, such an influence is the very life and power of all evangelistic work. And the real moral power of the cross is with the Churches to which it is a real atonement for sin. Through all the Christian centuries such an atonement has been the persuasive power of the Gospel. It is the living impulsion of all the great evangelistic enterprises of to-day. And, as the history of the past throws its light upon the future, the persuasive power of the Gospel in winning the coming generations to Christ must be in the moral pathos of a real atonement in his blood.

Such a doctrine of atonement embodies a power of persuasion infinitely greater than is possible to any scheme of redemptive help grounded in a Socinian Christology. In the once case we have a divine Mediator; in the other, a human mediator; in the one, a real atonement for sin; in the other, no atonement for sin. In the former, the divinity of Christ, his divine Sonship, his incarnation, the profoundness of his humiliation, the depth of his suffering and shame of his cross—all go into the atonement, and combine in a revelation of the divine holiness and love which embodies the highest potency of moral influence. And we are pleased to quote and adopt a very forceful expression of the marvelous moral power of the cross from one who himself denied an objective atonement for sin in the death of Christ, but was able to give such expression because he accepted all the divine verities respecting Christ upon which a true doctrine is constructed: “This is the unscrutable mystery of incarnate love! the hidden spring of that moral power over the human heart which, in myriads of instances, has proved irresistible. On the one hand, God in Christ—in Christ in his life, in Christ on the cross—is reconciling men to himself and employing his mightiest instrument for recovering, gaining back, redeeming the world. On the other hand, Christ—Christ in his life, Christ on the cross—is God impersonated, so far as a human medium and method of impersonation could reach. Christ is the nature of God brought near and unveiled to human eyes. Christ is the heart of God laid open, that men might almost hear the beat of its unutterable

throbbings, might almost feel the rush of its mighty pulsations. The incarnate in his life and in his death, in his words and in his deeds, in his whole character, and spirit, and work on earth, was ever unveiling the Father, and making a path for the Father into the human soul. But on the cross Christ presses into the very center of the world's heart, takes possession of it, and there, in that center, preaches, as nowhere else was possible, the gospel of God's love![651] [651] Young:The Life and Light of Men, pp. 40, 41.

II. Its Refutation.

We already have the facts for the refutation of this theory. They are of two classes: one respecting the reality of an atonement in Christ, as the objective ground of forgiveness and salvation; the other respecting the necessity for such an atonement. The former we have verified by the Scriptures; the latter by both the Scriptures and the reason of the case. The theory of moral influence, denying, as it does, the atonement as the ground of forgiveness, and limiting the saving work of Christ to the office of a practical lesson of piety, has a most thorough refutation in these facts. We refer to them as previously given. This reference might here suffice; yet it is proper to bring this theory face to face with the facts and truths whereby it has its refutation. But we do not need a formal array of all as previously maintained. Nor need they be presented just in the order then observed. The theory is disproved:

1. By the Fact of an Atonement.—The fact of an objective atonement in Christ is dependent upon the Scriptures for its revelation and proof. Even the conception of a scheme so stupendous in its character never could originate in any finite mind. The idea includes not only the fact of a vicarious sacrifice of Christ in our redemption, but also the vitally related truths of his divinity and incarnation. It includes, also, by necessary implication, the very truth of the divine Trinity and of the unity of personality in Christ as the God-man. Such truths are from above, as the redeeming Lord is, and spoken only from heaven. And as the Redeemer himself can be known only by revelation, so the full purpose of his mission in the incarnation, and the nature of his redeeming work, can be known only by revelation. But the great truths so given, and taking their place in vital relation to the saving work of Christ—truths of his divinity, incarnation, and personality as the God-man—clearly reveal an infinitely profounder purpose in his suffering and death than can be fulfilled in the office of a moral lesson. And Socinianism, in all its phases, consistently rejects these divine truths in a system of theology which maintains the moral theory of atonement. But their rejection is not their disproof. And their truth, as given in all the clearness and authority of revelation, is conclusive against this theory.

Then we have the fact of an atonement, not only as the logical implication of great truths so vitally connected with it, but also in such facts and terms of Scripture as clearly contain and directly assert it.

We have the Gospel as a message of forgiveness and salvation. Such blessings are proclaimed in Christ, and in him only. They are specially offered through his sufferings and death. Here is the fact of an atonement. In the more specific terms of atonement Christ, in his sufferings and death, in his very blood, is our reconciliation, our propitiation, our redemption. He is such for us as sinners, and as the ground of our forgiveness. These are vital facts in the economy of redemption, and the very source of its practical lesson. And how one-sided!—indeed, how no-sided!—the scheme which accounts the lesson all, and rejects the atonement out of which it arises! The theory

of moral influence renders no satisfactory account of these terms. It is powerless for their consistent interpretation. It is, therefore, a false theory. No doctrine of atonement can be true which will not fairly interpret the terms of Scripture in which it is expressed. In other terms, Christ is set forth in his death as a sacrifice for sin, and one to be interpreted in the light of the typical sacrifices appertaining to earlier economies of religion; in his high-priestly office offering up himself as a sacrifice for sin; in his high-priestly office in heaven, into which he enters with his own blood, making intercession for us. These are facts of a real atonement in Christ, and conclusive against the moral theory.

2. By its Necessity.—The necessity of an atonement in the blood of Christ as the ground of forgiveness is a truth the Scriptures. Thus it behooved Christ to suffer and die, that repentance and remission of sins might be preached in his name (Luke 24:46-47). There is salvation in no other (Acts 4:12). If righteousness, or forgiveness, were by the law Christ is dead in vain (Galatians 2:21). If righteousness, or forgiveness, were possible by any law given, then life would be by the law (Galatians 3:21). The same necessity for an atonement in Christ is affirmed by the requirement and necessity of faith in him as the condition of salvation. What will the moral scheme do with such facts? How will it interpret such texts? It has no power fairly to dispose of them, or to interpret them consistently with its own principles. It has, therefore, no claim to recognition as a true theory of atonement. And how will the moral scheme answer for the necessity of an atonement as manifest in the very reason of the case? This necessity concerns the profoundest interests of moral government. They require the conservation of law. Such law requires the enforcing sanction of penalty. Hence its remission imperatively requires some provisional substitute which shall fulfill its rectoral function. The moral scheme offers no such substitute. It must ignore the most patent facts of the case. It must deny the leading truths of anthropology, as clearly given in both sacred and secular history. It must attribute to forgiveness a facility and indifference consistent, somewhat, with mere personal relations, but utterly inconsistent with the interests of government; most of all, with the requirements of the divine moral government. The moral theory, therefore, gives no answer to the real necessity for an atonement. Yet such an answer is an imperative requirement. The theory must be rejected. The necessity for an atonement is its refutation.

3. By the Peculiar Saving Work of Christ.—The theory of moral influence, by its deepest principles and by its very content and limitation, implies and maintains that Christ is a Saviour in no other mode than any good man is, or may be. The good man who, by his example, religious instruction, and personal influence, leads a sinner to repentance and a good life, saves him as really and fully as Christ saves any sinner, and in the very same mode. The law of salvation is identical in the two cases. The mode of redemptive help is one; the saving force one. And the sole difference between Christ and any good man in saving sinners is in the measure of religious influence which they respectively exert. Many special facts respecting Christ may be freely admitted. To him may be conceded a special divine mission, a superior character, higher spiritual endowment, greater gifts of religious instruction, a life of matchless graces, deeds, and sacrifices; and that all combine in a potency of unequaled practical force. Still, he is a Saviour in no peculiar mode, but only through a higher moral influence. This is the sum of his distinction. All his saving work is through a helpful religious lesson. So any good man may save sinners. And so many a good man does save many sinners. But is this all? Is there no other distinction in favor of Christ than that of a higher moral

influence practically operative upon men? Is this all that the typical services mean? all that the promises and prophecies of a coming Messiah signify? all the meaning of the angels in the joyful announcement of the blessed advent? all that Christ meant in the deeper utterances of his saving work? all that the apostles have written in the gospels and epistles? all that they accepted in faith and heralded in preaching? all that the faith of the living Church rightfully embraces? all the hope of a consciously sinful and helpless humanity leaning upon Christ for help? all the meaning and joy of the saints in the presence of the Lamb slain, as there in grateful love and gladsome song they ascribe their salvation to his blood? No, no; this is not all. There is infinitely more in the saving work of Christ. He saves us in a unique mode—one in which no other does or can; saves us through an atonement in his blood. By this fact is the moral theory refuted.

4. Not a Theory of Atonement.—There is here no issue. The facts which we have in the refutation of this theory deny to it all rightful position as a theory of atonement. It will neither interpret the Scriptures which reveal the atonement, nor answer to the real necessity for one. It will not admit any proper definition of an atonement. It is in fact set forth and maintained in the denial of one. So, by the decision of all vitally related facts, and by the position of its advocates, the moral scheme is not a theory of atonement.

140. Chapter 6: Theory Of Satisfaction.

Chapter 6 Theory Of Satisfaction. A careful discrimination of leading theories on any great question of theology is helpful to its clearer apprehension and to more definite doctrinal views. But such discrimination requires a careful study of the theories severally. We propose, therefore, to give special attention to the theory of satisfaction; and the more as the real issue respecting the nature of the atonement is between it and the governmental theory, rightly constructed.[652]

[652] The term satisfaction is usually conceded to the Calvinistic doctrine; not, however, as an exclusive right, but on the ground of an early appropriation, and in view of the absolute form of the satisfaction maintained. Our own doctrine is one of satisfaction, and none the less really such because the nature of the satisfaction differs from that maintained in the Calvinistic doctrine.

I. Preliminaries.

1. Position in Doctrinal Faith.—The theory of satisfaction holds a prominent place in theology. Its advocates freely call it the catholic doctrine. The history of doctrines certainly records a very large dissent. Yet as the doctrine of the Calvinistic system its prominence must be conceded. But even here it is only the leading view. Many Calvinists dissent; and the number is growing. It is difficult, in the face of Scripture and an infinite redeeming love, to maintain the position of a limited atonement; with many, impossible. But this once surrendered and a general one maintained, consistency requires another doctrine of atonement. Here is one law of a large and growing dissent of Calvinists from the doctrine of satisfaction.

2. Formation of the Doctrine.—The doctrine is not from the beginning. With others, it has its place in the history of doctrinal construction. Nor did it reach completeness at once. It went through a long discussion, and appeared in different phases. The principle of penal substitution was settled first, though the exact nature of it is scarcely settled yet. But this was found to be insufficient for the Reformed system. An absolute personal election to eternal life requires a “finished salvation” in Christ. And the necessity for a substitute in penalty is easily interpreted to imply the necessity for a substitute in obedience. The law is no more absolute in the demand for punishment than in the requirement of obedience. Any principles which could admit substitution in the former could equally admit it in the latter. And in this system Christ must take the place of the elect under the law in both facts. He must answer for their sin in a vicarious punishment, and for their duty of personal righteousness in a vicarious obedience.

Thus the doctrine of satisfaction found its place and full expression in the “Federal Theology,” the logical outcome of the Reformed system. “Christ’s atonement was thus the fulfillment of the federal conditions. The Father, who in every part of this great transaction was at once the Lawgiver and the Fountain of the covenant, insisted on the full performance of the law, and yet provided the surety, who was made under the law in the proper sense of the term. It was a true command on God’s side, and a true obedience on Christ’s side. He stood in our covenant, which was the law of works; that is, the law in its precepts and in its curse.”[653] [653] Smeaton:The Apostles’ Doctrine

of Atonement, p. 540 The atonement of satisfaction is often called the Anselmic, and is traced to the scheme of Anselm as its original. We have previously noted the insufficiency of his scheme as a scientific basis for this doctrine; and we have a more rational account of its genesis and growth as the logical requirement and product of the Calvinistic system.

3. Two Factors of the Atonement.—Thus in the completed doctrine there are two elements or factors—substituted punishment and substituted obedience. Nothing less, it is claimed, could satisfy the absolute requirement of justice and law. Sin must be punished; but its punishment neither supersedes nor satisfies the requirement of perfect obedience. The elect have failed in this obedience, and never can fulfill its obligation by their own personal conduct. Hence they need a substitute in obedience as much as in penalty. Christ answers for them in both.

Such is the atonement of satisfaction. Christ takes the place of the elect, in both penalty and precept, and, as their substitute, endures the punishment which, on account of sin, they deserve, and in his obedience fulfills the righteousness required of them. Thus justice and law are satisfied.[654] The vicarious punishment discharges the elect from amenability to penalty on account of sin, and his vicarious obedience renders them deservedly rewardable with the eternal blessedness to which they are predestinated. “The Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself, which he, through the eternal Spirit, once offered unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of his Father, and purchased not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven for all those whom the Father had given unto him.”[655]

[654] Buchanan:The Doctrine of Justification, p. 308; A. A. Hodge:The Atonement, chap, xviii; Shedd:The History of Christian Doctrine, vol. ii, p. 341 [655]Westminster Confession, chap, viii, v.

4. Concerned with the Penal Substitution.—In the review of this theory we shall limit the treatment to the one element of satisfaction by penal substitution. The other element properly belongs to the question of justification. It really belongs to this question in the Calvinistic system, though treated as a constituent fact of the atonement itself. It is held to answer to an absolute requirement of the divine law as really as the substituted punishment, and, by imputation to the elect, constitutes in them the ground of a strictly forensic justification. This is a justification by works, not in forgiveness. “If Christ fulfilled the law for us, and presents his righteousness to its demands as the basis of our justification, then are we justified by the deeds of the law, no less than if it were our own personal obedience and righteousness by which we are justified.”[656] But in any view of the question, satisfaction by obedience respects a different claim and office of justice from satisfaction by punishment. And whatsoever reason satisfactionists may have, as arising from their own soteriology, for the inclusion of both elements in the treatment of atonement, we have no reason for the same method in our review. In this restricted treatment we have the precedence of a master in the soteriology of satisfaction: “By the way, observe I speak only of the penalty of the law, and the passive righteousness of Christ, strictly so called. . . . “What place that active righteousness of Christ hath, or what is its use in our justification, I do not now inquire, being unwilling to inmix myself unnecessarily in any controversy.”[657] [656] Curry: “Justification by Faith,”Methodist Quarterly Review, January, 1845, p. 22.

[657]Owen: Works (Goold’s), vol. x, p. 442.

II. Elements Of The Theory.

Most of the elements of this theory have already appeared; yet it is proper that they here be stated distinctly and in order.

1. Satisfaction of Justice in Punishment.—The satisfaction of justice in its punitive demand is a cardinal fact of the theory. Indeed, it is so essential that such satisfaction must enter into the very nature of the atonement. Both a moral influence with men and an important rectoral office are admitted, but only as incidental. Not even the latter is essential; nor has it any place in the foundation of the doctrine. But the satisfaction of divine justice in the definite sense of the doctrine—satisfaction in the punishment of sin according to its demerit, and solely for that reason—is essential. It is not omitted in the case of the redeemed and saved, nor can it be. The atonement is in a mode to render the satisfaction required. Indeed, such satisfaction is the atonement as it respects the claim of retributive justice against the demerit of sin.

2. Through Penal Substitution.—In this doctrine the satisfaction is by substitutional punishment. The absolute necessity for the satisfaction renders this the only possible mode of redemption. Hence, as maintained, Christ takes the law-place of elect sinners, and suffers in their stead the penalty due to their sins, or such a penalty as satisfies the punitive demand of justice against them.

3. Three Forms of the Substitution.—On the nature of the penal substitution, or in what sense Christ suffered the penalty of sin, advocates of the doctrine have not been of one mind. Indeed, it has been with them a question of diverse views and of no little controversy. The history of the question gives us three forms of opinion.

One view is that of identical penalty; but it has such palpable difficulty that of course the thinkers of a great Christian communion could not agree in it. Yet it has its place in the history of Calvinistic soteriology; and, though now generally discarded, it is still thought worthy of the attention and adverse criticism of the Calvinistic authors holding a different view. Once great divines were among its advocates; for instance, John Owen.[658] And he had a following, and such that it is common to speak of his school.

[658]That which I maintain as to this point in difference I have also made apparent. It is wholly comprised under these two heads—first, Christ suffered the same penalty which was in the obligation; secondly, to do so is to make paymentejusdem, and nottantidem.—Works (Goold's), vol. x, p. 448.

It is needless to array the many difficulties of such a view. An identical punishment by substitution is in any case psychologically impossible. What, then, must be the fact with such a substitute as Christ? Punishment is suffered in the consciousness of the subject. Its nature, therefore, must be largely determined by his own personal character in relation to sin and penalty. It is hence impossible that Christ should suffer in substitution as the actual sinner deserves to suffer, and would suffer in his own punishment. Nor can such a principle render any explanation of the difference between the redemptive sufferings of Christ as only temporary, and the merited punishment of sinners as eternal. Words are easily uttered. Therefore it is easy to attempt a solution of the difficulty by saying that the sufferings of Christ fulfilled the legal requirements of eternal punishment, because, while temporal in fact, they werepotentially or intensively eternal. But such terms have no meaning in such a use.

Christ endured penal sufferings equal in amount to the merited penal sufferings of all the sinners redeemed. This view, also, has its place in historic Calvinism, and a broader one than that of identical penalty. It is now generally discarded. Yet its present disrepute is not properly from any fundamental principle. If possible and necessary, it would be permissible on the very principle of penal substitution. It is rejected as impossible, or certainly not actual, because rendered unnecessary to a sufficient atonement by the superior rank of Christ as substitute in penalty. Strange that it ever should have found favor or friend. It needs no refutation. And all friends of great doctrinal truth should be glad that now it is generally discarded.

Another view is that of equivalent penalty. The sense is, that the penal sufferings of Christ, while far less in quantity than the merited penal sufferings of the sinners redeemed, were yet, in quantity and quality combined, of equal value for the satisfaction of justice, and, therefore, an equivalent substitute in the case. The higher supplementary quality lies in the superior rank of Christ as substitute in penalty. It is as the payment of gold in the place of silver. The claim is satisfied with a reduction of quantity in proportion to the higher quality of the substitute.[659] This is now the common form of penal substitution as held in the doctrine of satisfaction. But justice must have penal satisfaction, either in the full punishment of the actual offender or in an equivalent punishment of his substitute.

[659]Shedd:Theological Essays, pp. 300, 301.

4. An Absolute Substitution.—Atonement by substitution is not a distinctive fact of the theory of satisfaction. The rectoral theory holds the same fact fully and firmly. Nor is an atonement by penal substitution a distinctive fact of that doctrine. Many hold such a penal substitution as, in their view, constitutes a really conditional ground of forgiveness. In this scheme the redemptive sufferings of Christ were, in some sense not exactly defined, the punishment of sin; but not such a punishment that the redeemed sinner must in very justice be discharged. We have previously stated the inconsistency of the position. Penal substitution and a real conditionality of forgiveness must refuse scientific fellowship. We accept, therefore, the view of Dr. A. A. Hodge, that it is “by a happy sacrifice of logic” that Arminius himself, and some of his leading followers, are with the Calvinists on penal substitution;[660] only we reject the epithet qualifying the sacrifice. We do not think it a happy sacrifice of logic on the part of an Arminian, whereby he mistakes the true nature of the atonement, and at the same time admits a principle which requires him, in consistency, to accept along with it the purely distinctive doctrines of Calvinism. But whatever the sacrifice of logic in the case, the fact of such a theory remains the same. And this fact denies to the doctrine of satisfaction the distinctive fact of penal substitution.

[660]The Atonement, p. 14.

It hence follows that the distinctive fact of the satisfaction theory is an absolute penal substitution; absolute in the sense of a real and sufficient punishment of sin in Christ as substitute in penalty; and also in the sense of an unconditional discharge of all for whom he is such a substitute. Such a discharge follows necessarily from the very nature of the substitution alleged, and in the averment of the very masters in the soteriology of satisfaction. This will appear in its place.

III. Justice And Atonement.

1. Their Intimate Relation.—Were there no justice there could be no sin in any strictly forensic sense. There could be neither guilt nor punishment. The judicial treatment of sin is from its relation to justice and law. It can neither be judicially condemned nor forgiven, except in such relation. Hence, as the atonement is the ground of the divine forgiveness, there must be a most intimate relation between it and justice. And for a true doctrine of atonement we require a true doctrine of justice.

It follows that in any scientific treatment the theory of atonement must accord with the doctrine of justice upon which it is constructed. The atonement of satisfaction is exceptionally rigid in its conformity to this law. The same law is observed in the rectoral atonement ; yet here its relation to justice has not been as fully and exactly treated as it should be, and as it must be in order to a right construction and exposition of the doctrine. These facts require some specific statements respecting justice which may be appropriate here, though the fuller treatment will be in connection with the principles specially concerned in the question, as we find them in the satisfaction and rectoral theories.

2. Distinctions of Justice.—Technically, Justice is of several kinds; but, strictly, such distinctions are from its different relations and offices rather than intrinsic to itself.

Commutative justice has a commercial sense, and is specially concerned with business transactions. The rendering or requiring an exact due or equivalent, and whether in money or other commodity, is commutative justice. It has no admitted place in the atonement, except in the now generally discarded sense of identical or equal penalty. Whether that of equivalent penalty is logically clear of the principle we may yet inquire.

Distributive justice is justice in a moral and judicial sense. It regards men as under moral obligation and law; as obedient or disobedient; as morally good or evil in their personal character; and is the rendering to them reward or punishment according to their personal conduct. Some divide it into premial and punitive; but the sense is not thereby changed.

Public justice, in its relation to moral government, is not a distinct kind, but simply divine justice in moral administration. It is really one with distributive justice, properly interpreted. We do not accept the interpretation of satisfactionists. On the other hand, advocates of the rectoral atonement have unduly lowered the truth of public justice. On a right exposition of each, the two are one. But we shall find a more appropriate place for the treatment of public justice when discussing the governmental atonement.[661]

[661] Wardlaw:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 368-372; Owen:A Dissertation on Divine Justice, part i, Works (Goold’s), vol. x.

3. Punitive Justice and Satisfaction.—Punitive justice is justice in the punishment of sin, or the office of which is to punish sin. And punitive, as a qualifying term, best expresses that principle of justice which the theory under review claims to have been satisfied by the penal substitution of Christ.

Remunerative justice has respect to obedience and its reward. The law, as its expression, requires perfect obedience as the ground of the reward. And, on the theory of satisfaction, Christ by his personal obedience meritoriously fulfilled the law in behalf of the elect. But his righteousness so

represented as an element of atonement in the satisfaction of justice respects an essentially different principle from that concerned in his penal substitution, and, as before noted, has no proper place in the present discussion.

Then the essential fact of punitive justice is, that it punishes sin according to its demerit, and on that ground; and must none the less so punish it in the total absence of every other reason or end. Such is the justice which the theory under review claims to have been satisfied by the penal substitution of Christ.

IV. Principles Of The Theory. The theory of satisfaction necessarily posits certain principles as underlying the doctrine of atonement which it maintains. They must constitute the very basis of the doctrine. Yet for the present they require but a brief statement.

1. The Demerit of Sin.—Sin has intrinsic demerit. It deserves the retribution of divine justice on account of its intrinsic evil, and entirely irrespective of all salutary results of its punishment.

We accept this principle, and in the fullest persuasion of its truth. It is a truth in fullest accord with the Holy Scriptures. Their announced penalties represent this demerit. Such penalties have no other ground in justice. And our moral consciousness, especially under divine enlightenment and quickening, responds to the voice of Scripture. But the punitive demerit of sin, so given and affirmed, is in no discord with our own doctrine of atonement.

3. A Divine Punitive Justice.—There is a punitive justice in God. And it is ‘a fact of his very nature, as specific and real as any other fact. It is no mere phase of his benevolence, nor simply a reaction of his pity for one wronged, against the author of his wrong. God, in his very justice, condemns sin as such. Nor is such condemnation a mere judgment of its discordance with his own uttered precepts, or with some ideal or impersonal law, or with the welfare of others, but the profoundest emotional reprobation of it because of its inherent evil. So we maintain. Hence we reject the view of Leibnitz, and of all agreeing with him, “ that justice is a modification of benevolence;”[662] a view that has received too much favor from advocates of the rectoral atonement. Whether the love of God is his supreme law in moral administration is really another question, and one not negatived by the truth of his justice. But our own moral nature, as divinely constituted, joins with the Holy Scriptures in attesting the truth of such a divine justice. Our moral reason distinguishes between the turpitude of a sinful deed and the injury which it may inflict. A like injury, innocently done, awakens no such reprobation. We reprobate the intention of injury where the doing is hindered. Thus our moral reason witnesses for a divine justice. Such justice, in its deepest, divinest form, condemns Bin as such, and is a disposition to punish it. We maintain this view.

[662]Gilbert:The Christian Atonement, p. 185.

3. Sin Ought to be Punished.—This proposition is freely affirmed, but with little regard to its proper analysis, and, therefore, with little apprehension of its meaning. A sinner may say, and with all sincerity, that he ought to be punished; but all he means is, that he deserves to be punished. He has in mind and conscience his own demerit, and not the obligation of another respecting him. Often the term is used respecting sin in the same sense—that it deserves to be punished; but this adds nothing to what we already have. The proposition is identical in meaning with a former one, which affirms the punitive desert of sin. But the term ought, as used in the theory of satisfaction, must have a ground in obligation, and that obligation must lie upon God as moral Ruler. Such is

the requirement of the theory. If sin ought to be punished, God is under obligation to punish it. Such is the inevitable logic of the proposition. This carries satisfactionists into a very high position, and one very difficult to hold, but which they must hold or suffer a destructive breach in their line of necessary principles. For such divine obligation, whether understood as included in the meaning of the proposition or not, is a logical implication and necessity of the scheme. And this obligation must be maintained simply on the ground of demerit in sin, and apart from all the interests of moral government.

4. Penal Satisfaction a Necessity of Justice.—Sin must be punished. It must be punished on its own account, and none the less in the total absence of all .salutary influence of punishment, whether upon the sinner himself or upon the public virtue and welfare. It is a necessity of judicial rectitude in God. Divine justice must have penal satisfaction. This principle is really one with that immediately preceding. It is the last that we need name. And here we part with the theory of satisfaction. We do not admit this principle. We reject it, not only as without evidence of its truth, but also because of evidence to the contrary. The irremissibility of penalty is the determining principle of the theory of satisfaction. Merited penalty is absolutely irremissible on any and all grounds whatsoever. The scheme allows a substitute in place of the offender; but such an exchange of subjects in punishment is no omission of penalty. The offender is discharged, but his substitute suffers the deserved penalty in his stead; or suffers, at least, its penal equivalent with the divine law. This, indeed, is the very averment of the doctrine. Nor is there any omission of punishment in an exchange of measure which justice permits in view of the higher rank of the substitute. In any and every way there is, and there must be, the infliction of deserved penalty. The sinner or his substitute must be punished according to the demerit of the sin. This is the necessity for an atonement in the scheme of satisfaction. Hence the absolute irremissibility of penalty determines the atonement to be by penal substitution. There is no other possible atonement. We know and welcome the account made of the rank and worth of Christ as penal substitute; an account logically valueless and unnecessary with the forms of identical and equal penalty, but consistent with that of equivalent penalty. But even here they are of account only as they give punitive value to his atoning sufferings; so that, as before noted, justice is satisfied with a less quantity in proportion to the higher quality. Still it is only penal suffering that counts in this element of atonement. And the very substance of such an atonement is substituted punishment in satisfaction of an absolute punitive justice.

V. The Satisfaction Impossible By Substitution.

If sin must be punished in the measure of its desert, penal substitution is the only conceivable mode of atonement. But such an atonement is possible only as the substitution may fulfill the absolute obligation of justice in the punishment of sin. The requirement is a crucial test of the theory. There is much perplexity in its treatment. The vacillations of opinion and diversities of view clearly show this perplexity.[663] [663] Bruce:The Humiliation of Christ, pp. 436-447;Methodist Quarterly Review, July, 1846. The effect of the imputation of sin to Christ, and the nature and degree of his penal sufferings, are questions entering deeply into the difficulties of the subject. Did imputation carry over sin, with its turpitude and demerit, or only its guilt, to him? Did he suffer, instead of the elect, the same punishment which, otherwise, they must have suffered? Did he endure penal suffering equal in amount, though differing in kind, to the merited punishment of the redeemed? Did he suffer an equivalent punishment, less in amount but of higher value, and thus a

penal equivalent with justice? Did he suffer the torment of the finally lost? Was his punishment potentially or intensively eternal? Such questions have been asked and answered affirmatively; though a negative is now mostly given to those of more extreme import. The boldness of earlier expositors is mainly avoided in the caution of the later. The former are more extravagant, the latter less consistent. But the theory, in every phase of it, asserts the just punishment of sin in Christ; and, therefore, asserts or implies all that is requisite to such punishment. A denial of any such requisite is suicidal. In denying the possible satisfaction of a purely retributive justice by a substitute in penalty we are content to make the issue with the more moderate and carefully guarded position of satisfactionists. This is but polemical fairness, as such is now the more common position.

1. The Satisfaction Necessary.—The necessary satisfaction of justice, as maintained in this theory, respects not merely a punitive disposition in God, but specially and chiefly an obligation of his justice to punish sin according to its demerit, and on that ground. It is because the punishment of sin is a necessity in the rectitude of divine justice that the only possible atonement is by penal substitution. This position is so important in the present question that we should have the views of leading satisfactionists respecting it. “The law of God, which includes a penalty as well as precepts, is in both a revelation of the nature of God. If the precepts manifest his holiness, the penalty as clearly manifests his justice. If the one is immutable, so also is the other. The wages of sin is death. Death is what is due to it in justice, and what, without injustice, cannot be withheld from it.”[664] “Justice is a form of moral excellence. It belongs to the nature of God. It demands the punishment of sin. If sin be pardoned, it can be pardoned in consistency with the divine justice only on the ground of a forensic penal satisfaction.”[665] “The Scriptures, however, assume that if a man sins he must die. On this assumption all their representations and arguments are founded. Hence the plan of salvation which the Bible reveals supposes that the justice of God, which renders the punishment of sin necessary, has been satisfied.”[666] The position maintained in these citations is clearly given, and fully agrees with our statement. From the nature of justice the punishment of sin is necessary. The obligation is such that any omission of punishment would be an act of injustice. Thus, from the very nature of divine justice, the necessary punishment of sin is deduced as a consequence. It is as essential and immutable in God as any other attribute; therefore he must punish sin according to its desert, and on that ground. Thus his justice binds him to the infliction of merited punishment upon sin, just as other moral perfections bind him to holiness, goodness, truth.

[664]Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. i, p. 423.

[665]Ibid., vol. ii, p. 488 [666]Ibid., vol. ii, p. 492.

We may give other authorities. “But again, concerning this justice, another question arises. Whether it be natural to God, or an essential attribute of the divine nature—that is to say, such that the existence of sin being admitted, God must necessarily exercise it, because it supposes in him a constant and immutable will to punish sin, so that while he acts consistently with his nature he cannot do otherwise than punish and avenge it—or whether it be a free act of the divine will, which he may exercise at pleasure?”[667] This is submitted as a question. There are really two questions; but we are concerned simply with the fact that Owen maintains the position of the former; and we are now concerned with this only in its relation to penal substitution. It asserts a

necessity in the very nature of God for the punishment of sin simply as such; a necessity, not from the domination of a punitive disposition, but from the requirement of judicial rectitude. “God is determined, by the immutable holiness of his nature, to punish all sin because of its intrinsic guilt or demerit; the effect produced on the moral universe being incidental as an end.”[668] “Law has no option. Justice has but one function. . . . The law itself is under law; that is, it is under the necessity of its own nature; and, therefore, the only possible way whereby a transgressor can escape the penalty of law is for a substitute to endure it for him.”[669] Here, again, we have the same doctrine of an immutable obligation of divine justice to punish sin, and none the less in the absence of every other reason than its own demerit. We here make no issue with the doctrine, but, as before noted, give it prominence on account of its vital logical connection with the doctrine of penal substitution.

[667]Owen: Works (Goold’s), vol. x, p. 505.

[668]A. A. Hodge:The Atonement, p. 53.

[669]Shedd:Theological Essays, p. 287.

2. The Substitution Maintained.—There is also a vital logical connection between the imputation of sin to Christ and his penal substitution in atonement. In any proper treatment of the question the two facts must be in scientific accordance. And we have, with the carefully guarded doctrine of substitution, an equally cautious exposition of the imputation of sin to Christ. In such exposition sin is treated analytically, not as a concrete whole. This is necessary to the moderation of the theory maintained. For to treat sin as a whole, and to allege its imputation to Christ and just punishment in him, is to involve the facts of the more extravagant theory. Guilt is distinguished from the attributes of turpitude, criminality, demerit, and claimed to be separable from sin in the deeper sense, both in thought and fact. It is freely admitted that the transference and substitutional punishment of sin in the former sense is an impossibility; but it is fully claimed that guilt—the amenability of sin to the penalty of justice—could be transferred to Christ and justly punished in him.

We shall give this view from Dr. Charles Hodge. It has no better authority. “By guilt, many insist on meaning personal criminality and ill desert; and by punishment, evil inflicted on the ground of such personal demerit. In these senses of the words the doctrine of satisfaction and vicarious punishment would, indeed, involve an impossibility. . . . And if punishment means evil inflicted on the ground of personal demerit, then it is a contradiction to say that the innocent can be punished. But if guilt expresses only the relation of sin to justice, and is the obligation under which the sinner is placed to satisfy its demands, then there is nothing . . . which forbids the idea that this obligation may, on adequate grounds, be transferred from one to another, or assumed by one in the place of others.” [670]The omissions cannot in the least affect the sense of the author. Leading facts are clearly given in the passage cited. One is, that moral character is absolutely untransferable; another, that if punishment is a judicial infliction upon the ground of personal demerit, the satisfaction of justice by penal substitution is impossible. Hence the distinction of sin into personal demerit and guilt, and the assumption that the latter, as the legal amenability of sin, could be transferred to Christ, and punished in him in fulfillment of the punitive obligation of justice.

[670]Systematic Theology, vol. ii, p. 532.

3. No Answer to the Necessity.—We now have the facts respecting the alleged necessity for the punishment of sin, and also the facts of penal substitution as meeting that necessity. Do the latter answer to the requirements of the former? Does the penal substitution maintained fulfill the alleged absolute obligation of justice to punish sin according to its demerit? There is no such answer or fulfillment. So we affirm, and proceed to the proof. The analytic treatment of sin is entirely proper if it be remembered that such treatment is in thought only. And we may distinguish between the demerit and the guilt of sin, using the former term in the sense of its intrinsic evil, and the latter in the sense of its amenability to retributive justice. In the former sense, we have sin in the violation of obligation; in the latter, under judicial treatment. Is such distinction a sufficient ground for the more moderate theory of substitutional punishment constructed upon it? If so sufficient, will such substitution answer to the absolute necessity for the punishment of sin which the theory asserts?

It should here be specially noted that the principles of the theory Are not even modified, much less surrendered. They are still asserted and held in all their integrity and strength as the very necessity for an atonement, and as determinative of its nature in the substitutional punishment of sin. We have previously seen what these principles are. And they are inseparable from the doctrine of satisfaction. We have also given citations from leading authors in the unqualified assertion of an absolute necessity for the punishment for sin. Advocates of the more moderate theory of imputation and penal substitution are no exception. All agree in the obligation of divine justice to punish sin according to its demerit, and on that ground. But it is denied that the turpitude and demerit of sin can be transferred to Christ. All that is claimed, or even admitted to be so transferred, is the guilt of sin; guilt as an amenability to the retribution of justice. Is such a substitution the merited punishment of sin?

Nothing could be punished in Christ which was not transferred to him, ad in some real sense made his. This is self-evident. Hence, if sin, with its demerit, could not, as now admitted, be put upon Christ by imputation, no punishment which he suffered fell upon such demerit, or intrinsic evil of sin. And we think it impossible to show how sin is punished according to its demerit, and on that ground, in the total absence of such demerit from the substitute in punishment. With the admission of the theory, its only resource is in guilt as a distinct fact of sin. If guilt, as the amenability of sin to the penalty of justice, is separable from sin, and as a distinct fact transferable to Christ, and if his punishment, as so constituted guilty, is the punishment of sin according to its demerit and on that ground, then the penal substitution maintained answers to the asserted absolute necessity for the punishment of sin. If any one of these suppositions fails the theory, then the theory itself inevitably fails.

Guilt, as distinctively treated in this theory, arises in the relation of sin to divine justice, and as an obligation of sin to suffer the merited penalty of justice. It is so defined and discriminated from the turpitude of sin in the carefully exact statement recently cited from Dr. Charles Hodge. He makes the same distinction elsewhere.[671] But guilt, considered as apart from sin, exists only in conception, not in objective reality. It may be said that it becomes a concrete fact in Christ by imputation to him. Then the result is a guilty Christ. But guilty of what? Not of gin, for that is not transferred to him, nor in any proper sense made his. Guilty of guilt, we may suppose. For as guilt is the only thing imputed, and the imputation makes him guilty, we find no better expression of the fact in the case. There seems a harshness even in such an expression; yet it is mollified, by the fact that at most Christ is guilty of only a conceptual guilt.

[671]Systematic Theology, vol. ii, p. 189. But the original difficulty remains. Guilt, apart from sin, is still guilt in the abstract, and exists only in conception, as much so as roundness, concavity, redness. And how could such a conceptual guilt render Christ guilty, or constitute in him a just ground of punishment? It were as easy to transform a cube into a globe by imputing sphericity to it. But is not guilt a reality? Certainly, and a terrible one; but only as a concrete fact of sin. And with the imputation of such an abstract guilt to Christ, while sin, with its turpitude and demerit, with all that is punishable and all that deserves to be punished left behind, how can the redemptive suffering which he endured be the merited punishment of sin?

4. No such Answer Possible.—Guilt cannot exist apart from sin. It is impossible by the very definition of it as the obligation of sin to the retribution of justice. The necessary conjunction of facts is obvious. On the one side is justice, with it precept and penalty; on the other, sin; hence, guilt. There is guilt, because justice asserts a penal claim upon sin. The demerit of sin, the intrinsic evil of sin, is the only ground of such a claim. Nothing but sin can be guilty, or render any one guilty. And there can no more be guilt apart from sin than there can be extension without either substance or space. It is not in itself punishable, but simply the punitive amenability of sin to justice. It cannot, therefore, be so put upon Christ as to render him punishable, unless the very sin is put upon him. But this is conceded to be impossible.

Indeed, sin itself is a punishable reality only as a personal fact. In the last analysis only a person, only a sinful person, is punishable. It is not any impersonal sin, or sin in generalized conception, but only a sinful person, that is answerable to justice in penalty. Sin has no real existence apart from the agent in the sinning. The guilt of sin lies upon him, and can no more be put upon a substitute as a punitive desert than his sinful act can cease to be his and be made the sinful act of such substitute. But the principles of the satisfaction scheme still remain, with the necessity for the punishment of sin according to its demerit, and on that ground. So imperative is this obligation, that any omission of such punishment would be an injustice in God. With this the very masters in the theory fully agree. Indeed, there is no dissent. Is sin so punished in Christ? It is not, even if we admit the separability of guilt and its transference to Christ. Guilt is not sin. The theory itself carefully discriminates the two. Such is its necessity, as it denies the transferability of sin. For, otherwise, it has nothing which it may even claim to be transferred as the ground of merited punishment. By the alleged facts of the theory no penalty is inflicted upon sin. Yet its punishment is the asserted absolute requirement of moral rectitude in divine justice. The conclusion is most certain that the penal substitution which the theory of satisfaction holds can give no answer to the necessity for the punishment of sin which it asserts.

5. The Theory Self-destructive.—The necessary punishment of sin and the nature of penal substitution, which the theory maintains and seeks to combine in the doctrine of satisfaction, absolutely refuse all scientific fellowship. Yet the theory can neither dispense with the one nor so modify the other as to agree with it. The former is its very ground-principle, and therefore cannot be dispensed with. The necessary modification of the latter, in order to a scientific agreement with the former, would require a transference of the turpitude and demerit of sin to Christ; therefore, such modification must be rejected. Consequently, whether there be or be not an absolute necessity for the punishment of sin, the theory of satisfaction is self-destructive. For, with such a necessity, not only does the penal substitution maintained utterly fail to answer to its imperative requirement, but no possible substitution can so answer. But without such a necessity for the

punishment of sin the theory is utterly groundless. Therefore, whether there be or be not the asserted necessity for the punishment of sin the theory is self-destroyed.

VI. Facts Of The Theory In Objection.

Much has been anticipated which might have been arranged under objections. Yet much remains, but requiring only a brief treatment in view of previous discussions.

1. The Punishment of Christ.—It is a weighty objection to the theory under review that it makes the punishment of Christ necessary to atonement. The punishment is in satisfaction of justice. Its desert in .him is imputed sin. Justice must punish sin: therefore it must punish sin in Christ as a substitute in atonement. There is no other possible atonement. But the imputation of sin has insuperable difficulties. This is especially true of its imputation to Christ. Such is the confession in the caution which discriminates between sin and guilt, and admits only the latter in imputation. It shocks our moral reason to think of Christ as a sinner even by imputation. Yet such imputation is a nullity for all purposes of this theory, unless it makes our sins in some real sense his. For otherwise there can be no pretense even of their merited punishment in him. If the imputation of sin is in order to its just punishment, and sufficient for that end, really the view of Luther is none too strong: “For Christ is innocent as concerning his own person, and therefore he ought not to have been hanged upon a tree; but because, according to the law of Moses, every thief and malefactor ought to be hanged, therefore Christ also, according to the law, ought to be hanged; for he sustained the person of a sinner and of a thief—not of one, but of all sinners and thieves.”[672] There is much more such, and some even worse. Others maintain a like position, if not with the same boldness of utterance. It is only through such an imputation that justice could fulfill, by substitution, its asserted absolute obligation to punish sin according to its demerit.

[672]Commentary on Galatians, chap, iii, 13.

Such implication is not avoided by the assumption of an imputation merely of guilt. It is still the guilt of sin, and renders Christ guilty in a sense that he may be justly punished. Nor are we confounding the discriminated reatus culpae and reatus paenae of theologians; though the distinction is useless for the purpose of finding a guilt that may exist and be punished apart from sin, and especially with the notion that sin is thereby punished. The guilt which answers to justice in penalty is the guilt of sin. If Christ so answered as a substitute for the elect, he must have been guilty of all their sins. Hence the theory under review should neither discard the bold utterances of Luther nor seek shelter under an utterly futile distinction between sin and guilt. On any consistent supposition it must hold Christ as guilty of all the sins which suffered their merited punishment in him. But he never could be so guilty: hence the doctrine of atonement which implies and requires such a fact cannot be the true doctrine.

2. Redeemed Sinners Without Guilt.—The atonement of satisfaction has this logical implication, that all for whom it is made are without guilt. Such an atonement is, by its very nature, a discharge from all amenability to the penalty of justice. Explicit statements of its leading advocates are in full accord with this position. Nor has such a consequence any avoidance by any real distinction between meritum culpae and meritum poenae. In any reality of such distinction there may be personal demerit without legal guilt; though we have denied, and do deny, to the theory under review, the truth of the converse, that there may be such guilt without such demerit. But here we

raise no question whether sinners, simply as redeemed, are still in a state of personal demerit. Our position respects guilt as the amenability of sin to the penalties of justice, and asserts that, according to the atonement of satisfaction, the elect for whom it is made are, in their whole life, and however wicked, entirely free from such guilt. There is for them neither judicial condemnation nor liability to punishment. The penalties of justice, impending in the divine threatenings, have no imminence for them. The scheme ever asserts an absolute necessity for the punishment of sin. It equally asserts such a penal substitution of Christ in the place of the elect as fully satisfies the penal claim of justice against them. Thus justice fulfilled its own retributive obligation in the punishment of sin, just as though it had inflicted the merited penalty upon them. God has accepted the penal substitution for their own punishment. All is in strict accord with a covenant agreement between the Father and the Son, as the theory asserts. Now such an atonement, by its very nature, cancels all punitive claim against the elect, and by immediate result forever frees them from all guilt as a liability to the penalty of sin. We know that such a consequence is denied, though we shall show that it is also fully asserted.

It is attempted to obviate this consequence by a distinction between a pecuniary and a penal obligation: “Another important difference between pecuniary and penal satisfaction is that the one ipso facto liberates. The moment the debt is paid the debtor is free, and that completely. No delay can be admitted, and no conditions can be attached to his deliverance. But in the case of a criminal, as he has no claim to have a substitute take his place, if one be provided, the terms on which the benefits of his substitution shall accrue to the principal fire matters of agreement or covenant between the substitute and the magistrate who represents justice.”[673] Such a distinction will not accord with the penal substitution of Christ. The ground-principle of the doctrine is, that sin must be punished according to its demerit, and on that ground; must be, because of an immutable obligation of justice so to punish it. Then by the penal substitution of Christ sin is so punished in him, and the obligation of justice fulfilled. Such are the facts of the doctrine. On the ground of such facts, a discharge must immediately follow upon such penal substitution, just as on the payment of a debt.

[673]Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 470, 471. So Dr. Hodge gives the facts in less than two pages in advance of the previous citation. “If the claims of justice are satisfied they cannot be again enforced. This is the analogy between the work of Christ and the payment of a debt. The point of agreement between the two cases is not the nature of the satisfaction rendered, but one aspect of the effect produced. In both cases the persons for whom the satisfaction is made are certainly freed. Their exemption or deliverance is in both cases, and equally in both, a matter of justice.”[674] We shall attempt no improvement here; for we can give neither a better statement of the fact in the case nor a better reply to the citation made just before from the same author.

[674]Systematic Theology, vol. ii, p. 472. See also pp. 482, 487, 494.

We may add a few authorities. “Will God punish sin twice, first in the person of the Surety, and then in the persons themselves, in whose place he stood? It will be acknowledged, without a dissenting voice, that in any other case this would be a manifest injustice. But ‘is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid: the Judge of all the earth will do right.’”[675] “The death of Christ being a legal satisfaction for sin, all for whom he died must enjoy the remission of their offenses. It is as much at variance with strict justice or equity that any for whom Christ has given

satisfaction should continue under condemnation, as that they should have been delivered from guilt without any satisfaction being given for them at all."[676] A satisfactionist could hardly put the case more strongly. "For if, in consequence of his suretyship, the debt has been transferred to Christ and by h.im discharged, every one must see that it has been taken away from the primary debtors, so that payment cannot be demanded of them. They must forever afterward remain free, absolved from all obligation to punishment."[677] [675] Dick:Theology, vol. ii, p. 556.

[676]Symington:Atonement and Intercession, p. 190.

[677]Turrettin:The Atonement of Christ, p. 146.

Such authorities may suffice for our position. Indeed, we did not really need any, as such freedom from guilt is the inevitable consequence of an atonement by penal substitution. But such moral support should silence all cavil. The position is sometimes taken that, in a penal satisfaction, the actual forgiveness is subject to such time and conditions as the sovereign authority may determine. It cannot be maintained. Otherwise, all the reasonings in the above citations, and given from the very masters in this doctrine, are fallacious. It is overthrown by the analogy of result between a pecuniary and a penal satisfaction. In the latter case, as in the former, the claim of the obligee is fully satisfied, and the discharge of the party in obligation must immediately issue. The case can admit no delay and no conditions for the discharge. And no sin of the redeemed, once justly punished in Christ as an accepted substitute, can for an instant be answerable to justice in penalty, or in any sense be liable to punishment. The redeemed are without guilt. Is such a position in accord with the real fact in the case? Sin is sin, whenever and by whomsoever committed. As such it has legal guilt as well as personal demerit. It is under judicial condemnation, and in peril of retribution. Such facts are in full accord with a common experience of souls in coming into the spiritual life. In such an experience there is more than a deep sense of personal demerit; there is also a deep sense of peril in the apprehension of divine penalty. Many a soul just on the verge of the new life is full of trembling in this apprehension. Really, there is no cause, if the true doctrine of atonement is in the just punishment of sin by substitution. But there is cause in every such case, and for the reason of guilt and judicial condemnation. The trembling apprehension is the recognition of a terrible reality. Among the eminent for piety, and, therefore, certainly of the elect and redeemed, are some who once were very wicked. Were they then without guilt or judicial condemnation? Was there for them no imminence of penal retribution? Was it so with Paul, and Augustine, and John Newton, and many others such? If so, there was a deep deception in their profoundest religious consciousness. And such a mistake is ever arising under the immediate work of the Holy Spirit in conviction for sin. As under his revealing light and convincing power the soul awakes, it not only feels within the deep evil of sin, but ever sees without the threatening penalty of divine justice. And there is no delusion in such cases. And what of the divine threatenings against all sin and all sinners? Have they no meaning for the redeemed? Or are they like the overtures of grace which a limited atonement freely makes to all, but with real meaning for only the elect and redeemed part? On the doctrine of satisfaction, such divine threatenings signal no imminence of divine wrath for the redeemed. And what of all the Scripture terms of forgiveness and remission of sins? Have they no meaning of an actual discharge from guilt and penalty in the hour of an actual salvation? Or is their full meaning given simply in the declaration of a discharge long before actually achieved through penal substitution? When Jesus said, as often to one or another, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," was it no actual forgiveness then

granted? Without such a forgiveness, there is no pertinence in the proof which he gave of a “power on earth to forgive sins” (Matthew 9:6). A doctrine of atonement encountering such facts as we have given, and facts so decisive against it, cannot be the true doctrine.

3. A Limited Atonement.—The theory has this consequence, and avows it. Such an atonement is in its own nature saving. The salvation of all whom Christ represents in his mediatorial work must issue. “The advocates of a limited atonement reason from the effect to the cause” (Schaff: Creeds of Christendom, vol. i, p. 521). Dr. Schaff is entirely correct in this, as might be shown by many examples. Nor is there a contrary instance. But the reasoning is logically valid for a limited atonement only on the ground that such an atonement is necessarily saving. For thus only is the fact of a limited actual salvation conclusive of a limited atonement. Hence Calvinistic divines who hold a general atonement consistently reject the doctrine of satisfaction. But the full force of this objection to the satisfaction theory cannot be given here. It lies in the Scripture fact of universality in the atonement, which will be treated in its place. For the present we name it as fatal to the theory of satisfaction. If, in the divine destination, the atonement is really for all, as we shall prove it to be, then this theory cannot be the true one.

4. Element of Commutative Justice.—The theory is complicated with commutative justice. We know well the vigorous denial. But denial does not void a logical implication. Commutative justice has its principle as well as its usual commodities. In any obligation the principle claims the sum due, either in the identical thing or in its equivalent in value. One or the other it must have. It freely admits substitution. A surety or proxy may satisfy the claim as well as the debtor himself. One thing may be accepted in the stead of another, if its equivalent in value.

Such is the principle, and such are the characteristic facts, in the doctrine of satisfaction. Justice requires the punishment of sin as a rightful claim. It will accept a substitute in penalty, and also a less punishment, if of such higher quality as to be of equal value. Thus in principle and characteristic facts it is at one with commutative justice. The actual and necessary discharge of the redeemed from all amenability to the penalty of justice, on account of the satisfaction of its claim by penal substitute, is a legitimate consequence of the same principle. Nor is there any avoidance of such complication by an alleged difference between a pecuniary and a penal claim—one on the property of the debtor, and the other on his person. Both are personal to the debtor—one for satisfaction in his property, and the other for satisfaction in his punishment. The likeness still remains. There is a oneness of the two. The theory is seriously complicated with commutative justice.

141. Chapter 7: Governmental Theory.

Chapter 7 Governmental Theory. This theory also has already come into view more than once. But it is proper to treat it more directly and fully as we have the other leading theories. Yet the discussion will require the less elaboration, as many of the principles and facts appertaining to the theory have been more or less considered. It mainly concerns us now to bring them together, and to set them in the order of a proper method and in the light of a more exact and definitive statement.

We have indicated our acceptance of this theory as the true theory of atonement. But we so accept it in what it really is, and not in any particular exposition of it as hitherto given. It has not always been fortunate in its exposition. It was not entirely so in the beginning. Its cardinal principles have been clearly enough given; and with these in hand, a true construction of the doctrine should follow. Such, however, has not always been the case. The treatment has often been deficient in analysis or scientific method. Alien elements have been retained ; vital facts omitted or wrongly placed. We hold the doctrine as we shall construct and maintain it. As such it is the doctrine of a real and necessary atonement in Christ.

I. Preliminary Facts. The discussion of the nature of the atonement, as represented in the governmental theory, will run through this chapter and the next. It will also be involved in the last one—universality of the atonement. The question of its extent is more than a question of facts; it concerns the doctrine also. With this satisfactionists fully agree. And the next chapter, while given to the elements of sufficiency in the redemptive mediation of Christ, treats them in view of the principles of atonement, and thus involves its nature.

1. Substitutional Atonement.—The sufferings of Christ are an atonement for sin by substitution, in the sense that they were intentionally endured for sinners under judicial condemnation, and for the sake of their forgiveness. They render forgiveness consistent with the divine justice, in that justice none the less fulfills its rectoral office in the interest of moral government. The honor and authority of the divine Ruler, together with the rights and interests of his subjects, are as fully maintained as they could be by the infliction of merited penalty upon sin.

2. Conditional Substitution.—The forgiveness of sin has a real conditionality. The fact is given in the clearest utterances of Scripture. It is also given as the only explanation of the fact that, with a real atonement for all, some perish. An atonement for all by absolute substitution would inevitably achieve the salvation of all. Therefore a universal atonement, with the fact of a limited actual salvation, is conclusive of a real conditionality in its saving grace. It follows, inevitably, that such an atonement is provisory, not immediately and necessarily saving.

3. Substitution in Suffering.—The substitution of Christ must be of a nature agreeing with the provisory character of the atonement. It could not, therefore, be a substitution in penalty as the merited punishment of sin, for such an atonement is absolute. The substitution, therefore, is in suffering, without the penal element. This agrees with the nature of the atonement as a moral

support of justice in its rectoral office, thus rendering forgiveness consistent with the interest of moral government. Nor have the vicarious sufferings of Christ, without the penal element, less value for any legitimate purpose or attainable end of substitutional atonement. Such an atonement has great ends in the manifestation of the divine holiness, justice, and love; of the evil of sin, and the certainty of penalty, except as forgiveness may be obtained in the grace of redemption. But for all such ends the theory of vicarious punishment has no advantage above that of vicarious suffering. The punishment of sin does manifest the divine holiness and justice. But this fact gives no advantage to the scheme of substitutional punishment; and for the reason that sin is not punished in Christ. If he is punished, it is in absolute freedom from all demerit of sin. And the recoil of so many minds from such a fact, as one of injustice, is not without reason.

Punishment does declare the evil of sin, but only as it falls upon the demerit of sin. But here, again, the scheme of satisfaction is denied all advantage, because, according to its own admissions, such is not the fact in the substitution of Christ. And the substitution in suffering, as the only and necessary ground of forgiveness, will answer for such declaration as fully as the alleged substitution in punishment. A ground of forgiveness provided in a divine sacrifice infinitely great is a marvelous manifestation of the divine love ; but that sacrifice, in every admissible or possible element, is as great in the mode of vicarious suffering as in that of vicarious punishment. The gift of the Father is the same. Nor are the sufferings of the Son less, or other, in any possible element. In neither case could there be any remorse or sense of personal demerit. He could have no sense of the divine wrath against himself. Nor could there be such a divine wrath. The doctrine of satisfaction will so deny. It would repel any accusation that even by implication it attributes to the Father any wrathful bearing toward the Son. “Christ was at no time the object of his Father’s personal displeasure, but suffered only the signs—the effect, not the affection—of divine anger.”[678] The incarnation, the self-divestment of a rightful glory in equality with the Father, the assumption, instead, of the form of a servant in the likeness of men, are all the same on the one theory as on the other. There is the same infinite depth of condescension. Equal sorrow and agony force the earnest prayer and bloody sweat in Gethsemane, and the bitter outcry on Calvary.

[678]Bruce:The Humiliation of Christ, p. 338.

Any question, therefore, between these two theories respecting the sufferings of Christ concerns their nature, and not either their measure or redemptive office. And in these facts—in the divine compassion which embraced a perishing world, in the infinite sacrifice of that compassion, in the gracious purpose and provision of that sacrifice—is the manifestation of the divine love. “Herein is love.” “God so loved the world.” And to call his sufferings penal—or had they been so in fact—would add nothing either to the measure or manifestion of the divine love in human redemption.

Yet, without the penal element in the sufferings of Christ, we may attribute to them a peculiar depth and cast arising out of their relation to sin in their redemptive office, and find the explanation in the facts of psychology. It is no presumption so to apply such fact. The human nature was present as a constituent element in the person of Christ. And there is no more reason to deny its influence upon his consciousness than to deny such influence to his divine nature. So far, therefore, as his consciousness shared in experiences through the human nature, they would be kindred to our own.

We have our own experiences in the clear apprehension of justice, and sin, and penalty. The feelings hence arising would be far deeper on hearing a verdict of guilt and a judgment pronounced upon the criminal. The higher and purer our spiritual nature, still the deeper would these feelings be. And could one with the highest attainable moral perfection redeem a criminal simply by vicarious suffering, his inevitable contact with sin in the realizations of a most vivid apprehension of its demerit and punishment would give a peculiar cast and depth to his sufferings. So was it in the redemptive sufferings of Christ, but in an infinitely deeper sense. In such redemption he must have had in clearest view the divine holiness, and justice, and wrath; the turpitude and demerit of sin, and the terribleness of its merited penalty. Only in such a view could he comprehend his own work or sacrifice in atonement for sin. And, remembering the moral perfection of his nature, and that his contact was with the sins of all men in the full apprehension of their demerit, of the divine wrath against them, of the terribleness of their just doom, and that his own blood and life, in the conscious purpose of their offering, were a sacrifice in atonement for all, we have reason enough for their peculiar cast and awful depth.

It is urged that penal substitution is necessary, not only for the satisfaction of justice, but also “for satisfying the demands of a guilty conscience, which mere pardon never can appease.”[679] The connection of this citation holds the rectoral atonement to be as powerless as the moral for the contentment of conscience. It cannot have rest, except with the merited punishment of sin; therefore, in the case of forgiveness, such punishment must be endured by a substitute.

[679]Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, p. 526. See also Shedd:Theological Essays, pp. 298, 299

We fully accept the fact of a deep sense of punitive demerit on account of sin in a truly awakened conscience. This feeling may be so strong as to result in a desire for punishment. There may even be some relief of conscience from the penal endurance. But such a feeling has respect simply to personal demerit, and can be appeased only through personal punishment—if punishment be really necessary to the appeasement.

What is the law of pacification in substitutional punishment? We know not any; nor can there be any, except such punishment be in relief of personal character. But this will not be claimed as possible. Further, it is claimed in behalf of atonement by penal substitution, that, more than any thing else, it deepens the sense of sin and personal demerit. But if its tendency is to the very state of mind involving the deepest unrest, it is impossible to see how it can be necessary to the pacification of the conscience. And if we can find rest only through merited punishment, personal or vicarious, we shall never find it either in this world or in the next.

All relief from the trouble and disquietude arising in the sense of sin and guilt must come in the forgiveness of sin. And to be complete, the forgiveness must be so full and gracious as to draw the soul into a restful assurance of the loving favor of the forgiving Father. It is no discredit to infinite grace to say that the sense of demerit for sins committed can never be eradicated, not even in heaven; though the remorse of sin may be taken away here and now. But even such a sense of demerit tends to a measure of unrest forever, and, apart from every other law, would so result. There is still a law of complete rest—such as we have just given. The true rest will come in a full forgiveness, in the assurances of the divine friendship and love, and in a grateful, joyous love answering to the infinite grace of salvation. In many a happy experience there is already the beginning of this rest. And the atonement in vicarious suffering answers for such facts as fully as

that in penal substitution. Nor has the atonement in vicarious suffering any tendency or liability to Antinomianism. From its own nature it is a provisory or conditional ground, not a causal ground of forgiveness and salvation. From such an atonement no license to sin can be taken. Antinomianism is utterly outlawed. We know very well that satisfactionists very generally discard this heresy. They will deny that it has any logical connection with their theory. Yet in the history of doctrines Antinomianism stands mostly, with this soteriology. Nor does it seem remote from a logical consequence to such an atonement. There is substituted punishment, and also substituted righteousness. Whatever penalty we deserve Christ bears; whatever obedience we lack he fulfills. He takes our place under both penalty and precept. What he does and suffers in our stead answer for us in the requirements of justice and law just as though personally our own. In view of such facts, Antinomianism is far worse in its doctrine than in its logic. But the atonement in Christ does not make void the law. Nor has the true doctrine any liability to such a perversion. The atonement in vicarious suffering has this advantage, and is thereby commended as the true one.

4. The Grotian Theory.—The theory of atonement now under discussion is often called the Edwardean, and also the New England, theory. It has the former title from the younger Edwards, who contributed much, and among the first, to its American formation. Some find, or think they find, its seed-thoughts in the writings of the elder Edwards, and hence so style it. But satisfactionists deny this source, and earnestly disclaim for him all responsibility for the doctrine.[680] It is called the New England theory because specially elaborated by leading New England divine.[681] But priority and the true originality are with Grotius. Nor can we accord to these very learned and able divines an independent origination of the doctrine. They could not have been ignorant of the work of Grotius, nor that in the deeper principles they were at one with him. With differences respecting many points, there is yet such an agreement.[682] [680] Smeaton:The Apostles' Doctrine of Atonement, p. 536

[681]The Atonement. Discourses and Treatises by Edwards, Smalley, Maxey, Emmons, Griffin, Burge, and Weeks. With an Introductory Essay by Edwards A, Park. In this large volume Professor Park has collected the best New England literature on this subject. His own Introductory Essay adds much to the value of the book.

[682]W. F. Warren: "The Edwardean Theory of Atonement,"Methodist Quarterly Review, July, 1860. By common consent, and quite irrespective of all dissent from him in doctrine, Grotius was a man of very extraordinary ability and learned attainment. The literary achievements of his youth are a wonder;[683] nor did his mature life falsify the promise of such marvelous precocity. His great abilities and vast learning gave him eminence in science, in philosophy, in statesmanship, in law, in theology. He wrote many books, but to only one of which have we here any occasion for reference.

[683]New American Cyclopaedia, 1859, art. "Grotius." In theology he was an Arminian, and at a time when he, with many others, suffered no little persecution. But all the tendencies of his mind, as well as the logic of his reason, gave him preference for this system as in comparison with the Calvinism of Gomarus or the Synod of Dort. There was no narrowness in the cast of his soul. On all great questions his views were at once broad and profound. On the rights of conscience, and of religious and political freedom, he was very far in advance of his time. "And, indeed, the Arminian doctrine, which, discarding the Calvinistic dogma of absolute predestination, teaches that man is

free to accept or to refuse grace, could not fail to suit a mind such as that of Grotius."[684] Yet he was no latitudinarian; nor was his theology a matter of mere sentiment. It was the fruit of profound study. And the more protracted and the profounder his study the more thorough was his Arminianism.

[684]McClintock & Strong:Cyclopaedia, vol. iii, p. 1017.

Grotius held firmly the fact of an atonement in Christ. In this faith he undertook its discussion, having in special view its defense against the assumptions and objections of the Socinian scheme. Such is the import of the title which he gave to his work.[685] It is not clear that he began the discussion with full forecast of the outcome. He probably had no new theory previously constructed or even outlined in thought. On the authority of Scripture he was sure of an atonement in the blood of Christ. He was sure, therefore, of the error of the Socinian doctrine, and of the fallacy of its objections against this fact. But in its defense he opened his own way to the new theory ever since rightfully connected with his name.

[685]Defensio Fidei Catholicae de Satisfactione Christi Adversus F. Socinum. Translated inBibliotheca Sacra, January and April, 1879.

It is rarely the case that the originator of a new theory, especially in a sphere of profound and broadly related doctrinal truth, clears it of all alien elements, or achieves completeness in scientific construction. Such, on this subject, is the fact with Anselm. It is also true of Grotius. We do not, therefore, accept all his positions. Some are not essential to his doctrine. In others he is not entirely self-consistent. We accept what really constitutes his theory, and have little concern for any thing else. He had an equal right with Anselm to construct a doctrine of atonement, and achieved a higher scientific result. Hence the history of doctrines records less modification in his theory than in the Anselmic. We have no occasion either closely to review or to defend him. This would only anticipate much of the discussion assigned to the present chapter. It would be easy to cite reviews from various authors, and to give references to many others. But their very commonness to discussions of the atonement renders this unnecessary. Yet a few references will follow; and we here give a summary statement of his doctrinal position.

"The fundamental error of the Socinian view was found by Grotius to be this: that Socinus regarded God, in the work of redemption, as holding the place merely of a creditor, or master, whose simple will was a sufficient discharge from the existing obligation. But, as we have in the subject before us to deal with punishment and the remission of punishment, God cannot be looked upon as a creditor, or an injured party, since the act of inflicting punishment does not belong to an injured party as such. The right to punish is not one of the rights of an absolute master or of a creditor, these being merely personal in their character; it is the right of a ruler only. Hence God must be considered as a ruler, and the right to punish belongs to the ruler as such, since it exists, not for the punisher's sake, but for the sake of the commonwealth, to maintain its order and to promote the public good."[686]

[686] Bibliotheca Sacra, vol. ix, p. 259. The citation is from a mainly satisfactory review of the Grotian theory by Baur. The passage just cited is a very free rendering of the original of Grotius, yet sufficing for the leading ideas. It is given as opening up, especially by the logic of its principles, his theory of atonement. It has not entire acceptability. Respecting the right to punish sin as purely

a rectoral one, the principle may apply to man, but not to God. He has such a personal right. If Grotius allows an inference to the contrary, so far we think him in error. The case of forgiveness is different; and it is correct to say that God may not forgive sin irrespective of the interests of his moral government. This is a vital principle in the governmental theory. It is the ground on which Grotius maintains the necessity for an atonement and defends it against the objections of Socinianism. Nor did he hold any doubtful view respecting either the intrinsic evil of sin or the imperative office of penalty. Sin deserves eternal penalty, and the penalty must not be remitted, except on rectorally sufficient ground. Thus, after setting forth the reasons for punishment, he says: “God has, therefore, most weighty reasons for punishing, especially if we are permitted to estimate the magnitude and multitude of sins. But because, among all his attributes, love of the human race is pre-eminent, God was willing, though he could have justly punished all men with deserved and legitimate punishment, that is, with eternal death—and had reasons for so doing—to spare those who believe in Christ. But, since we must be spared either by setting forth, or not setting forth, some example against so many great sins, in his most perfect wisdom he chose that way by which he could manifest more of his attributes at once, namely, both clemency and severity, or his hate of sin and care for the preservation of his law.” [687]In these views, while essentially divergent from the theory of satisfaction, he is thoroughly valid and conclusive against Socinianism.

[687]Bibliotheca Sacra, vol. xxxvi, p. 287.

While thus asserting the intrinsic evil of sin, Grotius denies an absolute necessity arising therefrom for its punishment. The punishment of sin is just, but not in itself an obligation. The intrinsic evil of sin renders its penal retribution just, but not a requirement of judicial rectitude. Threatened penalty, unless marked by irrevocability, is not absolute. A threat differs from a promise. The latter conveys a right and takes on obligation; the former does not.[688] [688] Ibid., pp. 153-155; Dale:The Atonement, p. 296. In this sense he regarded the divine law as positive, and its penalty as remissible. The law, in precept and penalty, is a divine enactment; in execution, a divine act. The execution is not a judicial obligation, except for rectoral ends. And this is the permissible relaxation of law which Grotius maintains. There is such a relaxation, as there is reality in the divine forgiveness of sin. Nor have satisfactionists any consistent ground for its denial, nor any sufficient reason for their adverse criticism of Grotius on this account. By their own concession that sin, with its demerit, is not and cannot be transferred to Christ, they admit by inevitable implication that it is not punished in him, and hence, that the law in its penalty is relaxed in every instance of non-execution upon the actual sinner.

Holding thus the remissibility of penalty so far as the demerit of sin is concerned, Grotius, as previously noted, maintains, with its justice, its profound importance in the interest of moral government. Forgiveness too freely granted, or too often repeated, and especially on slight grounds, would annul the authority of the law, or render it powerless for its great and imperative rectoral ends. Thus he finds the necessity for an atonement—for some vicarious provision—which, on the remission of penalty, may conserve these ends. Such a provision he finds in the death of Christ, set forth as a penal example. So he styles it. And he makes a very free use of the terms of penal substitution. Yet he does not seem to regard the sufferings of Christ as penal in any very strict sense—certainly not as a substitutional punishment of sin in the satisfaction of a purely retributive justice. Such an example he regards as at once a manifestation of the goodness and

severity of God and the odiousness of sin, and as a deterrent from its commission.

Thus his theory of atonement accords with his view of punishment and its remission. These are rectoral rather than personal acts. So the atonement, taking the place of penalty in its rectoral ends, regards God in his administration rather than in his personal character or absolute retributive justice. And thus he grounds the atonement in the principles which properly constitute the governmental theory. The Acceptilatio of Duns Scotus is very freely charged upon Grotius, especially by satisfactionists. Bauer joins in the accusation in the article previously given by reference; though he does not withhold the fact that Grotius himself formally rejected the principle. This he certainly did, and denied that acceptilation could have any place with the punishment of sin. Repelling this accusation as brought by Socinus against the atonement, he says: “For, in the first place, this word may be applied, even when no payment precedes, to the right over a thing loaned, but is not, and cannot be, applied to punishment. We nowhere read that indulgence of crimes was called by the ancients acceptilation. For that is said to be accepted which can be accepted. The ruler properly exacts corporal punishment, but does not accept it; because from punishment nothing properly comes to him.”[689] It is as a logical implication that Bauer makes the charge; but Grotius certainly understood the question, and the logic of its facts and principles, as thoroughly as his reviewer. We join issue, and deny that acceptilation is in any logical sense consequent to the theory of Grotius; while we affirm its close affinity with that of Anselm.

[689]Bibliotheca Sacra, vol. xxxvi, p . 298.

Leading divines of the Church—Abelard, Bernard, Peter Lombard, Duns Scotus, and others—contemporaries of Anselm, or his close followers in time, were not all close followers of his “Cur Deus Homo.” Some diverged so widely as to propound really new theories. But Duns Scotus, the heretical acceptilationist, really propounded no new theory in kind. He dissented from Anselm, not respecting the nature of an atonement in the meritorious obedience and suffering of Christ, and in satisfaction or payment of a divine claim—a claim arising out of the wrong which God had suffered on account of sin—not on these determining facts, but respecting the amount of the debt and the relative value of the payment. With Anselm, the debt was infinite ; with Duns, not strictly infinite. With the former, the payment was in full ; with the latter, only in part ; which, however, God graciously accepted in lieu of the whole. This is the Acceptilatio of Duns Scotus, as known in historical theology.[690] His divergence was specially from a difference in Christology, or respecting the redemptive sufferings of Christ. With Anselm, his sufferings as the God-man were of infinite value, and therefore a payment in full ; while with Duns they were strictly limited to his human nature, and, therefore, of finite value, and a payment only in part. But he all the while adheres to the same atonement in kind—atonement by payment toward the satisfaction of a divine claim. This is proof that his Acceptilatio has a close affinity to the theory of Anselm. It is only with such a theory that it can have any affinity. It is grounded in the ideas of debt and payment. There must be a divine claim payable in meritorious obedience and suffering. Whatever is paid must go to the account in claim. This is acceptilation. These ideas of debt and payment have full place in the Anselmic theory, as in the satisfaction theory. But Grotius held no theory of sin and penalty, and no theory of atonement, which admits any such sense of debt and payment. His adverse critics clearly prove that he did not. And as he formally denied acceptilation, and the very possibility of it in the case bf penalty for Bin, so the principles of his doctrine deny for him all the ideas of debt and payment—and in part as in whole—without which it has no place.

[690]Hagenbach:History of Doctrine, vol. ii, pp. 39, 44.

Mr. Watson, while freely citing Grotius as an authority, accuses him of unduly leaning to that view of the atonement which regards it “as a merely wise and fit expedient of government.”[691] He probably had specially in view this passage in Grotius: “It becomes us only to make this preliminary remark—that Socinus is not right in postulating that we must assign a cause which shall prove that God could not have acted otherwise. For such a cause is not required in those things which God does freely. But he who will maintain that this was a free action may refer to Augustine, who declares not that God had no other possible way of liberating us, but that there was no other more appropriate way for healing our misery, neither could be. But also before Augustine, Athanasius had said: ‘God was able by a mere utterance to annul the curse without coming himself at all. But it is necessary to consider what is useful to men, and not always what is possible to God.’ Nazarius says: ‘It was possible for God even without the incarnation (of Christ) to save us by his mere volition.’ Bernard: ‘Who does not know that the Almighty had at hand various methods for our redemption, justification, liberation? But this does not detract from the efficacy of that method which he has selected out of many.’”[692] [691] Theological Institutes, vol. ii, p. 139.

[692]Bibliotheca Sacra, vol. xxxvi, p. 286.

We do not understand Grotius to indorse all these citations, though from authors so eminent. If he did, we certainly could not follow him. And his doctrine of atonement has a far deeper sense than that of a dispensable expedient of government. His position here is that of the divine freedom in the particular manner of human redemption within the limit of a sufficient redemption. Only a divine person could redeem the world; and the redemption could be effected only by a great personal sacrifice. The necessity is from the office which the atonement must fulfill. But, with the profoundest conviction of truth in these facts, we should greatly hesitate to say—indeed, we do not believe—that in the resources of infinite wisdom the precise manner of the mediation of Christ was the only possible manner of human redemption. We are not sure that Grotius means any thing more.

5. The Consistent Arminian Theory.—In the reference to Arminianism we include the Wesleyan school, and take the position of consistency with special reference to it.

Wesleyan Arminianism has ever been true to the fact of an atonement in Christ. In her hymns and prayers, in her utterances of a living Christian experience, in her sermons and exhortations, this great fact ever receives the fullest recognition. In her soteriology “Christ is all, and in all” (Colossians 3:11). In the fullness and constancy of her faith in the reality and necessity of an atonement in Christ, Wesleyan Methodism has no reason to shun any comparison with the most orthodox soteriology.

What is our doctrine of atonement? The answer to this question Is not so simple or unperplexed as many, at first thought, would suppose. The Scripture terms of atonement have, with all propriety, been in the freest use with us. Nor have we been careful to shun the terminology of the strictest doctrine of satisfaction. An inquiry for the ideas associated with these terms in the popular thought of Methodism respecting the nature of the atonement would probably bring no very definite answer. In view of all the facts, we are constrained to think that the dominant idea has been that of a real and necessary atonement in Christ, while the idea of its nature has been rather indefinite.

We are very sure that, while the popular faith of Methodism has utterly excluded the Socinian view, it has not been at one with the theory of satisfaction. Our earlier written soteriology has a like indefiniteness. It is always clear and pronounced on the fact of an atonement, but not definite respecting its nature. This, however, should be noted, that our written soteriology, until recently, contains comparatively little on this question.

Mr. Watson's discussion is mainly a dispute with the Socinian scheme and with Calvinistic limitationists. With rare ability he maintains the fact of an atonement against the one, and its universality against the other.[693] But on the question of theories we cannot accord to him any very clear view. Grotius, as it appears, was his chief authority ; and next to him, Stillingfleet, who wrote mainly in defense of Grotius.[694] But Grotius, while giving the principles of a new theory, did not, as previously noted, give to its construction scientific completeness. He wrote from the stand-point of the Reformed doctrine, but with such new principles as really constitute another doctrine. But, clear and determining as his principles are, he failed to give either theory in scientific completeness. This is just what Mr. Watson has failed to do. And he is less definite than Grotius himself.

[693]Theological Institutes, vol. ii, chapters xix-xxix.

[694]Works, vol. iii, p. 227.

He rejects the doctrine of satisfaction in its usual exposition, and requires for its acceptance such modifications as it cannot admit. He interprets satisfaction much in the manner of Grotius, and hence in a sense which the Reformed doctrine must reject. And the doctrine which he arraigns and refutes as the antinomian atonement is the Calvinistic doctrine of satisfaction, with the formal rejection of its antinomian implications. He is, therefore, not a satisfactionist.[695] [695] Theological Institutes, vol. ii, pp. 138-143. The principles of moral government in which Mr. Watson grounds the necessity for an atonement mainly determine for him the governmental theory.[696] The same is true of his discussion of the "vinculum" between the sufferings of Christ and the forgiveness of sins.[697] And when we add his broader views in soteriology as including the universality of the atonement, its strictly provisory character, and the real conditionality of its saving grace —views necessarily belonging to all consistent Arminian theology, and which Mr. Watson so fully maintained—his principles require for him the governmental theory. The more certainly is this so, as it is impossible to construct any new doctrine of a real atonement between this and the satisfaction theory.

[696]Ibid., pp. 87-103.

[697]Ibid., pp. 143-145. So far as we know. Dr. Whedon has never given his theory of atonement in the style of the governmental; yet it is in principle the same. In his statement of the doctrines of Methodism it is given thus: "Christ as truly died as a substitute for the sinner as Damon could have died as a substitute for Pythias. Yet to make the parallel complete, Damon should so die for Pythias as that, unless Pythias should accept the substitution of Damon in all its conditions, he should not receive its benefits, and Damon's death should be for him in vain ; Pythias may be as rightfully executed as if Damon had not died. If the sinner accept not the atonement, but deny the Lord that bought him, Christ has died for him in vain; he perishes for whom Christ died. If the whole human race were to reject the atonement, the atonement would be a demonstration of the

righteousness and goodness of God, but would be productive of aggravation of human guilt rather than of salvation from it. The imputation of the sin of man, or his punishment, to Christ, is but a popular conception, justifiable, if understood as only conceptual; just as we might say that Damon was punished instead of Pythias. In strictness of language and thought neither crime, guilt, nor punishment is personally transferable."[698] Any one at all familiar with theories of atonement will see at a glance that the principles contained in this statement are thoroughly exclusive of the satisfaction theory, and that they have a true scientific position only with the rectoral theory. The same is true of the doctrine in the sermon to which reference is given.

[698]Bibliotheca Sacra, vol. xix, pp. 260, 261. Dr. Whedon gives the same views in his sermon on Substitutional Atonement. On the theory of atonement we understand Dr. Raymond to Be with Dr. Whedon. He states the doctrine thus: "The death of Christ is not a substituted penalty, but a substitute for a penalty. The necessity of an atonement is not found in the fact that the justice of God requires an invariable execution of deserved penalty, but in the fact that the honor and glory of God, and the welfare of his creatures, require that his essential and rectoral righteousness be adequately declared. The death of Christ is exponential of divine justice, and is a satisfaction in that sense, and not in the sense that it is, as of a debt, the full and complete payment of all its demands."[699] The principles given in this passage exclude the satisfaction atonement, and require as their only scientific position the rectoral theory. All this is even more apparent when the passage cited is interpreted in the light of the further references given.

[699]Systematic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 257, 258. See also pp. 231, 264-268. With this view Dr. Raymond's doctrine of justification, as that of every consistent Arminian, fully accords. It is not a discharge of the sinner through the merited punishment of his sin in his substitute, but an actual forgiveness, and such as can issue only in the non-execution of penalty.[700] [700] Ibid., vol. ii, p. 258. The principles and office of the atonement in Christ, as maintained by Dr. Bledsoe, agree with the governmental theory. This will be clear to any one who will read with discrimination his discussion of the question.[701] And with Arminians he is rightfully a representative author on questions of this kind.

[701]Theodicy, pp. 276-293. The Wesleyan soteriology, taken as a whole, excludes the satisfaction theory, and requires the governmental as the only theory consistent with itself. The doctrines of soteriology, with the atonement included, must admit of systemization, and be in scientific accord. If not, there is error at some point, as no truth can be in discord with any other truth. Now certain cardinal doctrines of the Wesleyan soteriology are very conspicuous and entirely settled. One is that the atonement is only provisory in its character; that it renders men salvable, but does not necessarily save them. Another, and the consequence of the former, is the conditionality of salvation. Nor is this such as Calvinism often asserts, yet holds with the monergism of the system, but a real conditionality in accord with the synergism of the truest Arminianism. On these facts there is neither hesitation nor divergence in Methodism. With these facts, the atonement of satisfaction must be excluded from her system of doctrines, and the rectoral theory maintained as the only doctrine of a real atonement agreeing with them.

II. Public Justice.

We previously treated justice in its distinctions as commutative, distributive, punitive—the last being a special phase of the distributive. We also named public justice, but deferred it for

discussion in connection with the rectoral theory of atonement. We have now reached the proper place for its treatment.

1. Relation of Public Justice to Atonement.—Any theory of atonement embodying enough truth to be really a theory must take special account of divine justice. The relation between the two is most intimate; so intimate, indeed, that the view of justice must be determinative of the theory of atonement. This we found to be true of the theory of satisfaction. It is not only in accord with the principles of justice asserted in connection with it, but is imperatively required by them. They will admit no other doctrine. If justice must punish sin simply for the reason of its demerit, penal substitution is the only possible atonement. So the governmental theory must be consistent with the doctrine of justice maintained in connection with it; and, to be true, must accord with justice as a divine attribute, and in all its relations to sin and to the ends of moral government. As in the satisfaction theory, so in the rectoral, the sufferings of Christ are an atonement for sin only as in some sense they take the place of penalty. But they do not replace penalty in penalty the same sense in both. In the one they take its place as a penal substitute, thus fulfilling the office of justice in the actual punishment of sin; in the other they take its place in the fulfillment of its office as concerned with the interests of moral government. It is the office of justice to maintain these interests through the means of penalty. Therefore, atonement in the mediation of Christ must so take the place of penalty as to fulfill this same office, while the penalty is remitted.

Such being the office of atonement in the governmental theory, it is clear that for a proper exposition of the doctrine we require a exact and discriminating statement of public Justice, or of penalty as the means of Justice for the conservation of moral government. We shall thus secure a right construction of the doctrine, and, also, obviate certain objections which have no validity against the doctrine itself, whatever force they may have against defective forms of it. No ground will remain for objecting either that the theory makes light of the demerit of sin, or that it transforms justice into mere benevolence, or that it regards the substitution of Christ in suffering as a mere expedient, in place of which some other provision would answer as well.

2. Public Justice one with Divine Justice.—Public Justice is not a distinct kind of Justice; not other than divine Justice. It is divine justice in moral administration. God is moral Ruler only as he has moral subjects. Therefore, in the eternity anteceding their creation he existed without any rectoral office of Justice. Their creation gave him no new attribute, though it brought him into new relations. In these new relations to moral beings his justice, an essential and eternal attribute of his nature, found its proper office in moral government. In the fulfillment of this office it rules through the means of reward and penalty. So, in the moral system, public justice is the one divine justice in moral administration.

3. One with Distributive Justice.—In principle public justice is one with distributive justice. Subjects differ in moral character. Some are obedient to the law of duty; others, disobedient. This makes a difference in character. The difference is real and intrinsic. So the law of God discriminates the two classes. In this our moral reason is in full consent with the divine law. In the profoundest convictions of our moral consciousness we are assured of the reality of moral obligation, and of an essential ethical difference between obedience and disobedience; and equally, that the former has merit or rewardableness, and the latter, punitive desert. So in moral administration God deals with men according to their conduct, rewarding their obedience and punishing their sin. The fact does

not require exact Justice in the present state of probation. Such is the law of our responsible being. But this, in essential principle and rectoral office, is simply public justice, or justice in moral administration. All its use of reward and penalty, and for whatever reason or end, is in the view of moral character in the subjects of government. Public justice is, therefore, no law of mere expediency, or of mere expedients; in essential principle and in office it is one with divine justice, one with distributive Justice.

4. Ground of its Penalties.—Within the realm of the divine government the sole ground of the penalties of administrative or public justice lies in the demerit of sin. The fact is not other, nor in any sense modified by any or all the ulterior ends or utilities of penalty in the interest of moral government. All penal infliction falls upon the demerit of sin as really and restrictedly as though its punishment were the sole thing in the divine view. This is justice, and this only. Public justice has no other ground for its penalties. Nor may it, except on such ground, inflict any penalty for any ulterior end or interest, however great and urgent. This truth cannot be too deeply emphasized.

We are speaking of divine justice in moral administration. Any thing qualifying the administration of justice in human government arises, in part, from a want of punitive prerogative over the intrinsic demerit of sin; in part, from an inability to know in any given case what the real demerit is. We may infer the guilt from the apparent motive, but we cannot search the heart. Hence, in dealing with human conduct, our rightful use of penalty is not really to punish sin as having intrinsic demerit, but to protect society from its injury. The former is the divine prerogative. God searches the heart, and knows all the secret springs and motives of human action. He knows all the sinfulness of such action. It is his sole right to punish it, simply as such. In all the universe, and for any and all purposes, he has nothing but sin to punish. On this ground public justice is one with distributive justice, one with divine justice; and as wrought into a proper rectoral atonement even more rigidly adheres to the principle than the purely retributive justice as wrought into the theory of satisfaction. This theory equally asserts the same principle, but departs from it in the futile attempt to separate guilt from demerit, to carry it over by imputation to Christ, and so to have the merited penalty inflicted upon him, while the sinner and the sin are left behind. This is a real departure from the principle. We may technically distinguish between sin and guilt, taking the former for personal demerit and the latter for answerableness in penalty. We go further, and say that on such distinction there may be personal demerit without guilt—as a soul graciously forgiven still has such demerit but not such guilt. But the converse, that there may be guilt apart from demerit—guilt as an amenability to penalty—does not follow and is not true. Yet it is the very truth of this converse which the scheme of satisfaction requires as vital to its doctrine of atonement by penal substitution.

We emphasize the principle, that in moral government personal demerit is the only source of guilt, and the only ground of just punishment. If there be any thing valid in the imputation of another's sin, it must transfer the demerit before guilt can arise or the punishment be just. On this principle all divine penalties, whether executed or only uttered, and in the utterance as in the execution, at once express both the divine justice and the demerit of sin. Hence the execution is not really necessary to that expression. The use and value of this fact will come directly. And we shall find with it a sure basis for the governmental theory.

5. End of its Penalties.—We have not a full exposition of justice simply in its relation to the demerit of sin. In this demerit we have the real and only ground of punishment. But in making the retribution of sin the sole office of penalty we deny a proper public justice. Penalty has no reformatory purpose respecting the subject of its infliction, no exemplary character, no office as a deterrent from sin. With such functions of penalty we have a public justice. Also, we havoc weighty reasons for punishment besides the demerit of sin. Any doctrine of justice which omits such facts, or holds it simply to the retribution of sin, is very narrow, and utterly fails to measure its vast sphere. Justice, as concerned in moral government, must deeply regard all legislation, that laws be in accord with the obligations, rights, and interests of subjects; that the sanctions of reward and penalty, while equitable, be wisely adjusted to their high rectoral ends. In all moral administration it must be supremely concerned for the promotion of virtue, and the protection of the rights and interests of all. Thus we have profound reasons for penalty additional to the demerit of sin. Nor has penalty any rational account simply as retributive. It does not so answer to the common moral judgment respecting it, nor to the severe denunciations of Scripture against criminal injuries, nor to the many appeals therein to instances of divine retribution as deterrents from sin. And for a right exposition of justice we must take large account of its strictly rectoral ends.

There is another extreme view, even more impotent, if possibly so, for any philosophy of penalty. It is in making the strictly rectoral ends of punishment the whole account of it. This omits the proper retributive element. Punishment thus becomes an injustice. No interests of government, however great and urgent, could render it just. Only demerit in the subjects of its infliction can do this. Besides, such a view denies to penalty all capacity for service in such interests. Except in the most restricted measure, such service can be rendered only through a right moral impression. Unmerited punishment never could make such an impression. The moral nature never can respond in loyalty to injustice. And however such punishment might influence outward action, it would ever turn away the heart into rebellion rather than win it to obedience. “Take away from punishment this foundation of justice and you destroy its utility; you substitute indignation and abhorrence for a salutary lesson and for repentance, both in the condemned and in the public; you put courage, sympathy, all that is noble and great in human nature, on the side of the victim; you rouse all energetic souls against society and its artificial laws. Thus even the utility of punishment rests upon its justice. The punishment is the sanction of law, not its foundation.”[702] All this is as true in the divine government as in the human sphere. And, whatever temporary service might be rendered in the latter case, in the divine government, the consequences would be fatal: for here only the loyalty of the heart will answer. This never could be secured by a measure of injustice from which it must revolt. And personal demerit, as the only ground of justice in punishment, is absolutely necessary to all the service of penalty in the interests of moral government. A true doctrine of public justice never departs from this principle.

[702]Cousin:History of Modern Philosophy, vol. ii, pp. 279, 280.

We thus combine the two elements in the exposition of public justice. Only thus have we a public justice. Omitting the rectoral element, justice is purely retributive, having regard to nothing except the punishment of sin. Omitting the retributive element, justice is injustice. Holding the distinction of justice as retributive and rectoral, and combining the two elements in the one doctrine, we free the question of punishment from the perplexity which its history records.[703] The distinction is valid. There are the two offices of justice. But they must never be separated. Penalty, as a means

in the use of justice, has an end beyond the retribution of sin; But, whatever its ulterior end, it is just only as it threatens, or falls upon, demerit. And only thus can it fulfill its high office in the interests of moral government.

[703]Cousin:Psychology, translated by C. S. Henry, pp. 317, 318.

It is in the failure first properly to discriminate the two offices of justice in the punishment of sin and the protection and then to properly combine the two elements in the one doctrine of punishment, that the rectoral atonement exposes itself to really serious objections, which yet have no validity against a true construction of the theory. It is against such an erroneous construction that objections are chiefly urged. They are specially urged against it as embodying, or as assumed to embody, that view of justice which makes its strictly rectoral ends the sole account of penalty. “It is on this false principle that the whole governmental theory of atonement is founded. It admits of no ground of punishment but the benefit of others.”[704] We represent no such a theory. We discard it as fully as Dr. Hodge, or any other advocate of the satisfaction atonement. Our previous discussions so certify. Hence the objection which the quotation implies is utterly void against the doctrine of atonement, as we construct and maintain it.

[704]Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, p. 579.

It is in the same line of objection that we have cited “a story of an English judge who once said to a criminal, ‘You are transported, not because you have stolen these goods, but that goods may not be stolen.’”[705] We would not defend the propriety of such a delivery. Indeed, we think it very injudicious. A criminal should feel that he deserves the penalty inflicted upon him; otherwise, his punishment can have no tendency toward his amendment. An impression of such desert should also be made upon the public mind, as necessary to the public benefit. But in neither case can the necessary salutary impression be made where all mention of punitive desert is omitted, or where any reference to it is entirely to dismiss it from all connection with the punishment inflicted. Yet there is a deep sense in which such an utterance is true. It is clearly so in human jurisdiction. Nor is the view either novel or rare. “The proper end of human punishment is, not the satisfaction of justice, but the prevention of crimes.”[706] “As to the end or final cause of human punishments, this is not by way of atonement or expiation for the crime committed—for that must be left to the just determination of the Supreme Being—but as a precaution against future offenses of the same kind.”[707]

[705] Ibid.

[706]Paley:Moral and Political Philosophy, book vi, chap. ix.

[707]Blackstone:Commentaries(Sharswood’s), vol. ii, book iv, pp. 11.

There is really no error here. And all is consistent with the doctrine of punishment which we have maintained. Demerit is still the only ground of punishment. Penalty falls upon sin, and upon that only. But prominence is given to its exemplary or strictly rectoral function. It is inflicted for the sake of its governmental ends, yet only on sin as deserving it. Against such a doctrine of punishment the adverse criticism of Dr. Hodge is utterly nugatory. The same principles are valid in respect to the divine administration. While divine penalty falls only upon sin, the supreme reason for its infliction is in the rectoral ends with which moral government is concerned. Nor is the penal

infliction a moral necessity apart from these ends. And this distinction between the ground and end of penalty, together with such a connection of the two that penalty is never inflicted for the sake of its end except on the ground of demerit, gives us the true philosophy of punishment. With such principles, it is easy to show the fallacy of another objection urged against the governmental atonement. It is, that the theory of penalty which the scheme represents would justify the punishment of the innocent in case groundless the common welfare could thereby be the better served. “If the prevention of crime were the primary end of punishment, then if the punishment of the innocent—the execution, for example, of the wife and children of a murderer—would have a greater restraining influence than the punishment of the guilty murderer, their execution would be just.”[708] An advocate of the satisfaction theory should be a little cautious how he charges upon even a hypothetic penal substitution of the innocent, lest he suffer in the recoil of his own objection. Certainly he will find trouble in the matter of self-consistency, for his own principles render the supposed instance admissible, so far as justice is concerned. But why the supposition of so impossible a thing? Dr. Hodge well knows that such a benefit, by such means, is utterly impossible. And neither the attainableness nor actual attainment of such a result could render such penal substitution just. This follows from our doctrine of justice, as it does not from that of the satisfactionists. In ours, only personal demerit is a ground of just punishment; while in theirs mere guilt, apart from demerit, and carried over by imputation to another, constitutes in him a ground of just punishment. But we need not further answer to the arraignment in the quotation given above, for, whatever weight the objection which it urges may have against the doctrine of others, it has no validity against our own.

[708]Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. i, p. 423.

6. Remissibility of its Penalties.—There is no sufficient reason why sin must be punished solely on the ground of its demerit. The forgiveness of the actual sinner, as a real remission of penalty at the time of his justification and acceptance in the divine favor, is proof positive to the contrary. And, all other ends apart, retributive justice may remit its penalty. It may do this without an atonement. Indeed, it does not admit of an atonement in satisfaction of such remission. It is here, as noticed before, that we part by a fundamental principle with the theory of satisfaction. It denies the remissibility of penalty, as due solely to the demerit of sin, on any and all grounds. Hence, it requires for any discharge of the actual sinner a vicarious punishment in full satisfaction of a purely retributive justice. We maintain the proper retributive character of divine justice in all the use of penalty in moral administration; but the retributive element of justice does not bar the remissibility of its penalties. The law of expediency determines the measure of divine penalties within the demerit of sin. And from their ends in the interest of moral government they are remissible on such ground, but only on such ground, as will equally secure these ends. This principle is fundamental with us, and determinative of our theory of atonement.

7. Place for Atonement.—Thus the way is open for some substitutional provision which may replace the actual infliction of penalty upon sin. The theory of satisfaction, as we have seen, really leaves no place for vicarious atonement. Its most fundamental and ever-asserted principle, that sin as such must be punished, makes the punishment of the actual sinner an absolute necessity. But as penalties are remissible so far as a purely retributive justice is concerned, so, having a special end in the interest of moral government, they may give place to any substitutional measure equally securing that end. Here is a place for vicarious atonement.

8. Nature of the Atonement Determined.—The nature of the atonement in the sufferings of Christ follows necessarily from the above principle. It cannot be of the nature required by the principles of the satisfaction theory. In asserting the absoluteness of divine justice in its purely retributive element, the theory excludes the possibility of a penal substitute in atonement for sin. And, therefore, the sufferings of Christ are not, as they cannot be, an atonement by penal substitution. But while his sufferings could not take the place of penalty in the actual punishment of sin, they could, and do, take its place in its strictly rectoral end. And the atonement is thus determined to consist in the sufferings of Christ, as a provisory substitute for penalty in the interest of moral government.

III. Theory And Necessity For Atonement.

1. An Answer to the Real Necessity.—The redemptive mediation of Christ implies a necessity for it. There should be, and in scientific consistency must be, an accordance between a doctrine of atonement and the ground of its necessity. The moral theory finds in the ignorance and evil tendencies of man a need for higher moral truth and motive than reason affords ; a need for all the higher truths and motives of the Gospel. There is such a need—very real and very urgent. And Christ has graciously supplied the help so needed. But we yet have no part of the necessity for an objective ground of forgiveness. Hence this scheme does not answer to the real necessity for an atonement. Did the necessity arise out of an absolute justice which must punish sin, the theory of satisfaction would be in accord with it, but without power to answer to its requirement, because such a necessity precludes substitutional atonement.

We do find the real necessity in the interests of moral government—interests which concern the divine glory and authority, and the welfare of moral beings. Whatever will conserve these ends while opening the way of forgiveness answers to the real necessity in the case. Precisely this is done by the atonement which we maintain. In the requirement of the sacrifice of Christ as the only ground of forgiveness the standard of the divine estimate of sin is exalted, and merited penalty is rendered more certain respecting all who fail of forgiveness through redemptive grace. And these are the special moral forces whereby the divine law may restrain sin, protect rights, guard innocence, and secure the common welfare. Further, the doctrine we maintain not only gives to these salutary forces the highest moral potency, but also combines with them the yet higher force of the divine love as revealed in the marvelous means of our redemption. Thus, while the highest good of moral beings is secured, the divine glory receives its highest revelation. The doctrine has, therefore, not only the support derived from an answer to the real necessity for an atonement, but also the commendation of a vast increase in the moral forces of the divine government.

2. Grounded in the Deepest Necessity.—We are here in direct issue with the doctrine of satisfaction: for here its advocates make special claim in its favor, and urge special objections against ours. We already have the principles and facts which must decide the question. In their scheme, the necessity lies in an absolute obligation of justice to punish sin, simply as such, and ultimately in a divine punitive disposition. But we have previously shown that there is no such necessity. We have maintained a punitive disposition in God; but we also find in him a compassion for the very sinners whom his justice so condemns. And we may as reasonably conclude that his disposition of clemency will find its satisfaction in a gratuitous forgiveness of all as that he will not forgive any, except on the equivalent punishment of a substitute. Who can show that the punitive

disposition is the stronger? We challenge the presentation of a fact in its expression that shall parallel the cross in expression of the disposition of mercy. And with no absolute necessity for the punishment of sin, it seems clear that but for the requirements of rectoral justice compassion would triumph over the disposition of a purely retributive justice. Hence this alleged absolute necessity for an atonement is really no necessity at all.

What is the necessity in the governmental theory? It is such as arises in the rightful honor and authority of the divine Ruler, and in the rights and interests of moral beings under him. The free remission of sins without an atonement would be their surrender. Hence divine justice itself, still having all its punitive disposition, but infinitely more concerned for these rights and interests than in the mere retribution of sin, must interpose all its authority in bar of a mere administrative forgiveness. The divine holiness and goodness, infinitely concerned for these great ends, must equally bar a forgiveness in their surrender. The divine justice, holiness, and love must, therefore, combine in the imperative requirement of an atonement in Christ as the necessary ground of forgiveness. These facts ground it in the deepest necessity. The rectoral ends of moral government are a profounder imperative with justice itself than the retribution of sin, simply as such. One stands before the law in the demerit of crime. His demerit renders his punishment just, though not a necessity. But the protection of others, who would suffer wrong through his impunity, makes his punishment an obligation of judicial rectitude. The same principles are valid in the divine government. The demerit of sin imposes no obligation of punishment upon the divine Ruler; but the protection of rights and interests by means of merited penalty is a requirement of his judicial rectitude, except as that protection can be secured through some other means. It is true, therefore, that the rectoral atonement is grounded in the deepest necessity.

3. Rectoral Value of Penalty.—We have sufficiently distinguished between the purely retributive and the rectoral offices of penalty. The former respects simply the demerit of sin; the latter, the great ends to be attained through the ministry of justice and law. As the demerit of sin is the only thing justly punishable, the retributive element always conditions the rectoral office of justice; but the former is conceivable without the latter. Penal retribution may, therefore, be viewed as a distinct fact, and entirely in itself. As such, it is simply the punishment of sin because of its demerit, and without respect to any other reason or end. But as we rise to the contemplation of divine justice in its infinitely larger sphere, and yet not as an isolated attribute, but in its inseparable association with infinite holiness, and wisdom, and love, as attributes of the one divine Ruler over innumerable moral beings, we must think that his retribution of sin always has ulterior ends in the interests of his moral government. We therefore hold all divine punishment to have a strictly rectoral function.

Punishment is the ultimate resource of all righteous government. Every good ruler will seek to secure obedience, and all other true ends of a wise and beneficent administration, through the highest and best means. Of no other is this so true as of the divine Ruler. On the failure of such means there is still the resource of punishment which shall put in subjection the harmful agency of the incorrigible. Thus rights and interests are protected. This protection is a proper rectoral value of penalty, but a value realized only in its execution.

There is a rectoral value of penalty simply as an element of law. It has such value in a potency of influence upon human conduct. A little analysis will reveal its salutary forces. Penalty, in its own

nature, and also through the moral ideas with which it is associated, makes its appeal to certain motivities in man. As it finds a response therein, so has it a governing influence, and a more salutary influence as the response is to the higher associated ideas.

First of all, penalty, as an element of law, appeals to an instinctive fear. The intrinsic force of the appeal is determined by its severity and the certainty of its execution; but the actual influence is largely determined by the state of out subjective motivity. Some are seemingly quite insensible to the greatest severity and certainty of threatened penalty, while others are deeply moved thereby. Human conduct is, in fact, thus greatly influenced. This, however, is the lowest power of penalty as a motive; yet it is not without value. Far better is it that evil tendencies should be restrained, and outward conformity to law secured, through such fear than not at all. The chief rectoral value of penalty, simply as an element of law, is through the moral ideas which it conveys, and the response which it thus finds m the moral reason. As the soul answers to these ideas in the healthful activities of conscience and the profounder sense of obligation, so the governing force of penalty takes the higher form of moral excellence. As it becomes the clear utterance of justice itself in the declaration of rights in all their sacredness, and in the reprobation of crime in all its forms of injury or wrong, and depth of punitive desert, so it conveys the imperative lessons of duty, and rules through the profounder principles of moral obligation. Now rights are felt to be sacred, and duties are fulfilled because they are such, and not from fear of the penal consequences of their violation or neglect. The same facts have the fullest application to penalty as an element of the divine law. Here its higher rectoral value will be, and can only be, through the higher revelation of God in his moral attributes as ever active in all moral administration.

4. Rectoral Value of Atonement.—The sufferings of Christ, as a proper substitute for punishment, must fulfill the office of penalty in the obligatory ends of moral government. The manner of fulfillment is determined by the nature of the service. As the salutary rectoral force of penalty, as an element of law, is specially through the moral ideas which it reveals, so the vicarious sufferings of Christ must reveal like moral ideas, and rule through them. Not else can they so take the place of penalty as, on its remission, to fulfill its high rectoral office. Hence the vicarious sufferings of Christ are an atonement for sin as they reveal God in his justice, holiness, and love; in his regard for his own honor and law; in his concern for the rights and interests of moral beings; in his reprobation of sin as intrinsically evil, and utterly hostile to his own rights and to the welfare of his subjects. Does the atonement in Christ reveal such truths? We answer. Yes. Nor do we need the impossible penal element of the theory of satisfaction for any part of this revelation.

God reveals his profound regard for the sacredness of his law, and for the interests which it conserves, by what he does for their support and protection. In direct legislative and administrative forms he ordains his law, with declarations of its sacredness and authority; embodies in it the weightiest sanctions of reward and penalty; reprobates in severest terms all disregard of its requirements, and all violation of the rights and interests which it would protect; visits upon transgression the fearful penalties of his retributive justice, though always at the sacrifice of his compassion. The absence of such facts would evince an indifference to the great interests concerned; while their presence evinces, in the strongest manner possible to such facts, the divine regard for these interests. These facts, with the moral ideas which they embody, give weight and salutary governing power to the divine law. The omission of the penal element would, without a proper rectoral substitution, leave the law in utter weakness.

Now let the sacrifice of Christ be substituted for the primary necessity of punishment, and as the sole ground of forgiveness. But we should distinctly note what it replaces in the divine law and wherein it may modify the divine administration. The law remains, with all its precepts and sanctions. Penalty is not annulled. There is no surrender of the divine honor and authority. Rights and interests are no less sacred, nor guarded in feebler terms. Sin has the same reprobation; penalty the same imminence and severity respecting all persistent impenitence and unbelief. The whole change in the divine economy is this—that on the sole ground of the vicarious sacrifice of Christ all who repent and believe may be forgiven and saved. This is the divine substitution for the primary necessity of punishment. While, therefore, all the other facts in the divine legislation and administration remain the same, and in unabated expression of truths of the highest rectoral force and value, this divine sacrifice in atonement for sin replaces the lesson of a primary necessity for punishment with its own higher revelation of the same salutary truths; rather, it adds its own higher lesson to that of penalty. As penalty remains in its place, remissible, indeed, on proper conditions, yet certain of execution in all cases of unrepented sin, and, therefore, often executed in fact, the penal sanction of law still proclaims all the rectoral truth which it may utter. Hence the sacrifice of Christ in atonement for sin, and in the declaration of the divine righteousness in forgiveness, is an additional and infinitely higher utterance of the most salutary moral truths (Romans 3:25-26). The cross is the highest revelation of all the truths which embody the best moral forces of the divine government. The atonement in Christ is so original and singular in many of its facts that it is the more difficult to find in human facts the analogies for its proper illustration. Yet there are facts not without service here. An eminent lecturer, in a recent discussion of the atonement, has given notoriety to a measure of Bronson Alcott in the government of his school.[709] He substituted his own chastisement for the infliction of penalty upon his offending pupil, receiving the infliction at the hand of the offender. No one can rationally think such a substitution penal, or that the sin of the pupil was expiated by the stripes which the master suffered instead. The substitution answered simply for the disciplinary ends of penalty. Without reference either to the theory of Bronson Alcott or to the interpretation of Joseph Cook, we so state the case as most obvious in the philosophy of its own facts. Such office it might well fulfill. And we accept the report of the very salutary result, not only as certified by the most reliable authority, but also as intrinsically most credible. No one in the school, and to be ruled by its discipline, could henceforth think less gravely of any offense against its laws. No one could think either that the master regarded with lighter reprobation the evil of such offense, or that he was less resolved upon a rigid enforcement of obedience. All these ideas must have been intensified, and in a manner to give them the most healthful influence. The vicarious sacrifice of the master became a potent and most salutary moral element in the government maintained. Even the actual punishment of the offender could not have so secured obedience for the sake of its own obligation and excellence.

[709]Joseph Cook:Boston Monday Lectures, “Orthodoxy.” pp. 156-162.

We may also instance the case of Zaleucus, very familiar in discussions of atonement, though usually accompanied with such denials of analogy as would render it useless for illustration. It is useless on the theory of satisfaction, but valuable on a true theory.

Zaleucus was lawgiver and ruler of the Locrians, a Grecian colony early founded in southern Italy. His laws were severe, and his administration rigid; yet both were well suited to the manners of the people. His own son was convicted of violating a law, the penalty of which was blindness. The

case came to Zaleucus both as ruler and father. Hence there was a conflict in his soul. He would have been an unnatural father, and of such a character as to be unfit for a ruler, had he suffered no conflict of feeling. His people entreated his clemency for his son. But, as a statesman, he knew that the sympathy which prompted such entreaty could be but transient; that in the reaction he would suffer their accusation of partiality and injustice; that his laws would be dishonored and his authority broken. Still there was the conflict of soul. What should he do for the reconciliation of the ruler and the father? In this exigency he devised an atonement by the substitution of one of his own eyes for one of his son's.[710] [710] Warburton:Divine Legation of Moses, vol. i, pp. 180-184; Anton:Classical Dictionary, p. 1492. This was a provision above law and retributive justice. Neither had any penalty for the ruler and father on account of the sin of the son. The substitution, therefore, was not penal. The vicarious suffering was not in any sense retributive. It could not be so. All the conditions of penal retribution were wanting. No one can rationally think that the sin of the son, or any part of it, was expiated by the suffering of the father in his stead. The transference of sin as a whole is unreasonable enough; but the idea of a division of it, a part being left with the actual sinner and punished in him, and the other part transferred to a substitute and punished in him, transcends all the capabilities of rational thought. The substitution, without being penal, did answer for the rectoral office of penalty. The ruler fully protected his own honor and authority. Law still voiced its behests and sanctions with unabated force. And the vicarious sacrifice of the ruler upon the altar of his parental compassion, and as well upon the altar of his administration, could but intensify all the ideas which might command for him honor and authority as a ruler, or give to his laws a salutary power over his people.

This, therefore, is a true case of atonement through vicarious suffering, and in close analogy to the divine atonement. In neither case is the substitution for the retribution of sin, but in each for the sake of the rectoral ends of penalty, and thus constitutes the objective ground of its remissibility. We have, therefore, in this instance a clear and forceful illustration of the rectoral value of the atonement. But so far we have presented this value in its nature rather than in its measure. This will find its proper place in treating the sufficiency of the atonement.

5. Only Sufficient Atonement.—Nothing could be more fallacious than the objection that the governmental theory is in any sense acceptilational, or implicitly indifferent to the character of the substitute in atonement. In the inevitable logic of its deepest and most determining principles it excludes all inferior substitution and requires a divine sacrifice as the only sufficient atonement. Only such a substitution can give adequate expression to the great truths which may fulfill the rectoral office of penalty. The case of Zaleucus may illustrate this. Many other devices were also at his command. He, no doubt, had money, and might have essayed the purchase of impunity for his son by the distribution of large sums. In his absolute power he might have substituted the blindness of some inferior person. But what would have been the signification or rectoral value of any such measure? It could give no answer to the real necessity in the case, and must have been utterly silent respecting the great truths imperatively requiring affirmation in any adequate substitution. The sacrifice of one of his own eyes for one of his son's did give the requisite affirmation while nothing below it could. So in the substitution of Christ for us. No inferior being and no inferior sacrifice could answer, through the expression and affirmation of great rectoral truths, for the necessary ends of penalty. And, as we shall see in the proper place, no other theory can so fully interpret and appropriate all the facts in the sacrifice of Christ. It has a place and a need for

every element of atoning value in his substitution.

6. True Sense of Satisfaction.—The satisfaction of justice in atonement for sin is not peculiar to the doctrine of satisfaction, technically so-called. It is the distinctive nature of the satisfaction that is so peculiar. The rectoral atonement is also a doctrine of satisfaction to divine Justice, and in a true sense. The narrow view which makes the retribution of sin, simply as such, an absolute obligation of justice, and then finds the fulfillment of its office in the punishment of Christ as a substitute in penalty, never can give a true sense of satisfaction. But with broader and truer views of justice, with its ends in moral government as paramount, and with penalties as the rightful means for their attainment; then the vicarious sufferings of Christ, as more effectually attaining the same ends, are the satisfaction of justice, while freely remitting its penalties. This is a true sense of satisfaction. Consistently with these views we may appropriate the following definition, and none the less consistently because of its appropriation by Dr. Symington, although a satisfactionist in the thorough sense of the Reformed soteriology: “By satisfaction, in a theological sense, we mean such act or acts as shall accomplish all the moral purposes which, to the infinite wisdom of God, appear fit and necessary under a system of rectoral holiness, and which must otherwise have been accomplished by the exercise of retributive justice upon transgressors in their own persons.”[711]

[711] John Pye Smith:On Sacrifice and Priesthood, p. 287. Watson gives a similar definition:Theological Institutes, vol. ii, p. 139; also Raymond:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, p. 259.

IV. Theory And Scripture Interpretation.

We have previously stated that any theory of atonement, to be true, must be true to the Scriptures. It must also fairly interpret the more specific terms of atonement, and be consistent with all truths and facts having a determining relation to it. We freely submit the theory here maintained to this test. It will answer to all the requirements of the case. Nor will an elaborate discussion be necessary to make the fact clear.

1. Terms of Divine Wrath.—The Scriptures abound in expressions of the divine wrath (Psalms 78:31; Jeremiah 10:10; Romans 1:18; Ephesians 5:6). Our theory fully recognizes the fact. And these terms of expression have not their full meaning simply as rectoral or judicial. Nor have we any need of such a restriction.

There is ground for a distinction as we think of God personally and rectorally. There is the same distinction respecting a human ruler. He has his personal character and also his rectoral sphere. Judicial obligation may constrain what the personal feeling not only fails to support, but strongly opposes. Yet a personal disposition in condemnation of crime is very proper in a minister of the law. It is necessary, and must extend to the criminal, if law is to be properly maintained. And the denial of all personal displeasure of God against sin and against sinners would be contrary to his holiness. Even with men, the higher the moral tone the profounder is the reprobation of sin. In the moral perfection of God it has its infinite depth. Yet it is not vindictive or revengeful, and co-exists with an infinite compassion. These dispositions, so diverse in kind and ministry, are yet harmonious in God.

It is in no contrariety to this, that, while punishment is with God in sacrifice of his disposition of clemency, his punitive disposition is in moral support of the sacrifice. Without a retributive

disposition in man, law has no sufficient guarantee of enforcement. Mere benevolence toward the common welfare would not answer for the protection of society through the means of penalty. We will not allege such a disability in the divine benevolence; but it is clear that without a retributive disposition in God the punishment of sin would impose a far greater sacrifice upon his compassion. And his punishment of sin is not simply from his benevolence toward the common welfare, nor from the requirement of judicial rectitude, but also from the impulse of a personal punitive disposition. Hence the terms of the divine wrath have a personal as well as an official sense. The doctrine we maintain so interprets them, and thus shows their consistency with itself. But the divine wrath, so interpreted, asserts no dominance in the mind of God, and is in fullest harmony with his love. It has no necessity for penal satisfaction either in personal contentment or judicial rectitude. As personal, it neither requires nor admits a substitute in penalty as the ground of its surrender. It is in the nature and necessity of such a disposition that any penal satisfaction must be found in the punishment of the actual sinner. To exaggerate it into a necessity for satisfaction, and then to find the satisfaction in the punishment of Christ as substitute in penalty, is to pervert Scripture exegesis, and equally to pervert all theology and all philosophy in the case. In entire consistency with his personal displeasure, God may and does wish the absence of its provocation and the repentance of the rebellious, that he may save them. And real as the divine displeasure is against sin and against sinners, atonement is made, not in its personal satisfaction, but in fulfillment of the rectoral office of justice. Hence, on the truth in the case, our theory fully interprets the terms of divine wrath.

2. Terms of Divine Righteousness.—The Scripture texts which in different ways attribute righteousness to God form a very numerous class (Genesis 18:25; Psalms 48:10; Daniel 9:7; Romans 1:17; Revelation 16:5). He is righteous; righteousness belongeth unto him; and his doings are righteous. These terms, so applied, are often synonymous with holiness; often with goodness; sometimes with justice; and they give no place to the narrow view which mostly restricts the divine righteousness to the retribution of sin.

If, as asserted, the punishment of sin according to its demerit is an absolute requirement of judicial rectitude in God. So that he is righteous only as he so punishes, or unrighteous in any omission, it follows that our doctrine will not properly interpret these terms. But, as we have previously shown, the divine righteousness is under no such law. In that God legislates, not arbitrarily or oppressively, but wisely and equitably, as with respect to his subjects; inflicts no unjust punishment, but by means of just penalty protects all rights and interests which might suffer wrong from the impunity of sin; and rewards his children according to the provisions and promises appertaining to the economy of grace, he is righteous in the truest and highest sense of judicial righteousness which the Scriptures attribute to him. But these facts are in the fullest accord with our doctrine of atonement. It, therefore, fairly and fully interprets the Scripture terms of the divine righteousness.

3. Terms of Atonement.—The more special terms of atonement previously given, are atonement itself, reconciliation, propitiation, redemption, and the appropriated term substitution. All these terms have a proper interpretation in the governmental theory. As an expression of the office and results of the redemptive mediation of Christ they are properly rectoral terms. Yet in a deeper sense they imply the personal displeasure of God against sinners, and a change in his personal regard in actual reconciliation. Now they are no longer held in reprobation, but accepted in a loving

friendship. Yet the atoning sacrifice of Christ neither appeases the personal displeasure of God nor conciliates his personal friendship. This appears in the fact that, although the subjects of reconciliation in the death of Christ, yet as sinners we are none the less under the personal displeasure of God, and so continue until, on our repentance and faith, there is an actual reconciliation. The atonement, therefore, is in itself provisory. It renders us salvable consistently with the rectoral office of justice. But these personal regards of God respect man simply in his personal character, condemning him in his sinning, and accepting him in friendship on his repentance and obedience. Hence, these terms of atonement, while deeply implying the personal displeasure of God against sinners as such, represent the sufferings of Christ, not as appeasing such displeasure, nor as conciliating his personal favor, but as the ground of his judicial reconciliation; yet always and only on such conditions of a new spiritual life us to carry with his judicial reconciliation his personal reconciliation and friendship. Such is their true sense, and such is their interpretation in the governmental theory.

4. Terms of Atoning Suffering.—Any issue on these terms respects neither the intensity of the sufferings of Christ nor the fact of their atoning office, but the question whether they were in any proper sense penally retributive. This may be noted first, that there is neither term nor text of Scripture which explicitly asserts the penal substitution of Christ in atonement for sin. It is a noteworthy fact ; and the assertion of it will stand good until the contrary be shown. As a fact, it is against the theory of atonement by penal substitution and in favor of that by vicarious suffering. The punishment of Christ as substitute in atonement is rendered familiar by frequency of utterance in theological discussion; but this is the utterance of theology, not the assertion of Scripture. Exegesis often asserts the same thing; but this is interpretation, not the texts themselves. They neither require nor warrant the interpretation. Redemption by vicarious suffering, without the penal element, will give their proper meaning. Nor is there any term or text of Scripture expressive of the atoning suffering of Christ which this doctrine cannot freely appropriate in its deepest sense. Yet we do not think it necessary to review all the texts in question. It will suffice briefly to notice a few of the stronger.

“For he hath made him to be sin (■μαρταν) for us” (2 Corinthians 5:21), A common rendering of the original is sin-offering. This has ample warrant, and avoids the insuperable difficulties attending any restriction to a primary or ethical sense of sin. That the Scriptures often use the original term in the sense of sin-offering there is no reason to question (Exodus 29:14; Exodus 29:36; Leviticus 4:24; Leviticus 5:9; Hosea 4:8). In the references given, after a description of the sin-offering, we have for it the simple phrase, “■μαρτ■α ■ςτ■,” and so used several times ; also, after the perceptive instruction respecting the daily sacrifice of atonement, we have the phrase, “το μοσχ■ριον το τ■ς ■μαρτ■ας ποι■σεις,” the last two words being the very same used in the text under review. On ■μαρτ■α, as used in the references given in Leviticus, Sophocles says that “it is equivalent to θυσ■α ■■αρτ■ας” (Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods). Thus we have in Scripture usage ample warrant for rendering the same term in the text under review as sin-offering. Nor do we thereby surrender any vital truth or fact of atonement. Christ is all the same a sacrifice for sin.

If this rendering be denied, what then? Will sin be held in any strictly ethical sense, or under any legitimate definition of sin proper? Certainly not. Christ could not so be made sin. No one who can analyze the terms and take their import will so maintain. Sin must still be subject to interpretation.

Shall the rendering be the turpitude or demerit of sin? Even satisfactionists must discard this, as they deny the possibility of its transference. Shall it be the guilt of sin? This some will allege. But guilt as a punishable reality cannot be separated from sin as a concrete fact in the person of a sinner. Only punishment remains as a possible rendering. But here is a like difficulty, that sin as punishable is untransferable.

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse (κατ■ρα) for us : for it is written. Cursed (Επικατ■ατος) is every one that hangeth on a tree” (Galatians 3:13). The more literal sense is obvious, and is specially emphasized by the citation in the text. Nor would we conceal or avoid any force of the terms used. The curse of the law on us, and from which Christ redeems us, is the law’s condemnation and the imminence of its penalty. And he redeems us by being made a curse for us in his crucifixion. But in what sense a curse? In the literal sense of the terms, and as emphasized by the quotation? This in the Hebrew text is, “for he that is hanged is accursed of God” (Deuteronomy 21:23). The doctrine of satisfaction requires this full sense. If the curse is the divine punishment of sin, then whoever is so punished is accursed of God. So, if our sins were thus punished in Christ, then was he accursed of God. Will the doctrine of satisfaction hold the literal sen.se, with its inevitable implications? Only in a sense consistent with the facts in the case is he that hangeth on a tree the subject of a divine curse. In many instances the most holy and beloved of the Father have been so executed. They were not accursed of God. And along with the fact of the divine malediction we must ever take the criminality of the subject. As such, and only as such, is any one accursed of God. Thus it is written of odious criminals, executed for their crimes and then exposed in suspension upon a tree, that they are accursed of God. Was Christ so accursed? Did the malediction of God fall upon him in his crucifixion as upon a criminal in the expiation of his sins under a judicial punishment? We must depart from such a sense of this text. Its implications in. the case of our Lord and Saviour would be yiolative of all truth and fact, and repugnant to all true Christian sentiment. We never again can go back to Luther’s shocking exposition of the text; which, however, is in the order of its more literal sense, and within the limit of its inevitable implications. And that Christ in our redemption submitted to a manner of death which, as the punishment of heinous crime, was in the deepest sense an accursed death, will without the curse and wrath of God on him, or any penal element in his suffering, answer for all the requirements of a proper exegesis.[712] [712] Wood: Works, vol. iv, p. 72; Barnes:The Atonement, pp. 294-296.

“Who his own self bare our sins, τ■ς ■μαρτ■ας ■μ■ν, in his own body on the tree” (1 Peter 2:21). The apostle no doubt had in mind the words of the prophet uttered in his marvelous prevision of the redemptive work of Christ (Isaiah 53:4-12). Hence the two passages here stand together. They are much in the style and sense of those previously considered. That they fully mean the fact of an atonement for sin in the vicarious suffering of Christ there is no reason to question. And but for the insuperable difficulties previously stated, we might admit an element of penal substitution; but the texts neither assert nor require it. Nor will the doctrine of satisfaction appropriate the terms literally. Let it put upon “our sins” any proper definition according to the literal sense, and then answer to the question, whether Christ really bore them in his own body on the tree? It will not answer affirmatively. From such a sense the strongest doctrine of penal substitution will now turn aside, and proceed to an interpretation in accord with its more moderate views. As previously stated, we have in these texts the fact of an atonement for sin in vicarious suffering. This fact justifies the use

of their strongest terms of substitution, and answers for their interpretation. With the sufferings and death of Christ as the only and necessary ground of forgiveness and salvation, we can most freely and fully appropriate them. Nor do we need the penal element for such appropriation. And on no other doctrine than on that which we maintain can it be said of Christ more truly, or with deeper emphasis, that “he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed:” “who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree.”

V. Theory And Scripture Facts.

There are a few special facts, clearly scriptural and with decisive bearing on the nature of the atonement, which may be noted here. They will be found witnessing for the theory which we maintain, and against that in special issue with it.

1. Guilt of Redeemed Sinners.—It is an obvious fact both of the Scriptures and of the reason of the case, that all sinners are under divine condemnation and guilt. There is no exception in favor of elect sinners, whose sins are alleged to have suffered merited punishment in Christ as substitute in penalty. The divine law condemns all alike; the penalty of justice threatens all alike.

“Why should this be true of any one whose sins have suffered merited punishment in Christ as his accepted substitute? It cannot be true. Whoever suffers the just punishment of his own sins is thereafter as free from guilt or answerableness in penalty as though he had not sinned. If such punishment be possible and actual by substitution, the same consequence must follow. And we have previously shown, by quotations from the highest authorities on the doctrine of satisfaction, that justice itself imperatively requires the discharge of all sinners, the just punishment of whose sins Christ has suffered in their behalf. And the discharge must take place at once. Indeed, guilt is never actualized in them. The punishment anticipates their sin. Then so must their justification or discharge. And all that is said respecting the requirement of proper conditions, or the divine determination when the discharge shall issue, is either irrelevant or inconsistent, and therefore nugatory. Guilt and punishment are specific facts. The penalty of justice once inflicted, the subject is free. And on the theory of satisfaction redeemed sinners can no more be answerable in penalty for their sins at any time than Christ as their substitute could be answerable again for the same after he has once suffered their merited punishment. “So far as the guilt of an act—in other words, its obligation to punishment—is concerned, if the transgressor, or hisaccepted substitute, has endured the infliction that is set over against it, the law is satisfied, and the obligation to punishment is discharged.”[713] This is consistent, and to the point.

[713]Shedd:Theological Essays, pp. 300, 301. The illogical jumbling which asserts an atonement for sin by actual penal substitution, and then makes it over into a kind of deposit, to be drawn upon or dispensed at the option of the depositary, and that may be utterly refused to any and all, should be discarded. It is in utter contrariety to the Reformed soteriology, into which the doctrine of satisfaction by penal substitution is so deeply wrought, as it is to that doctrine itself. Yet we often meet this very Jumbling. Here is a specimen: “God is under no obligation to make an atonement for the sin of the world; and, after he has made one, he is at perfect liberty to apply it to whom he pleases, or not to apply it at all. The atonement is his, and he may do what he will with his own.”[714] We have no adverse criticism, except upon what is so palpably inconsistent with the doctrine of satisfaction, and with the citation just before given from the same author and taken

from the same discussion. Whenever the payment of a debt is accepted, and from whomsoever, the debtor is free. Whenever a sin is justly punished, and in whomsoever, the sinner is free. Any detention, either in punishment or in liability to it, is an injustice. And the atonement of satisfaction is not a deposit which may go to the payment of our debt of guilt. but the actual payment ; not something that may be accounted to us for the punishment of our sins, but their actual punishment. The making of such an atonement is the application of it. And now to represent it as a deposit that may be drawn upon—to write of its optional application, and of its rightful refusal to any or to all—is to jumble egregiously.

[714]Ibid., p. 314.

It is still a fact of the Scriptures, as also of the reason of the case, that sinners as such, though the subjects of redemption, are in a state of guilt. It is a fact contrary to the theory of satisfaction and in its disproof, as we have previously shown. But the atonement in substituted suffering, not in substituted punishment, and a provisory ground of forgiveness, not only agrees with such a fact, but requires it. Therefore, as the only alternative to the doctrine of satisfaction for a real atonement in Christ, the fact of guilt in redeemed sinners witnesses with all the force of its logic to the truth of the governmental theory.

2. Forgiveness in Justification.—As sin in the redeemed has real guilt, and no less so on account of the redemption, therefore Justification, whatever else it may be, must include an actual forgiveness of sin. There must be a discharge from guilt as then real, a remission of penalty as then imminent. There is such a forgiveness. Nor is it really questioned, except for the exigency of a system, by truly evangelical minds. The Scriptures are full of it. It is in all the warnings against impending wrath; in all the urgent entreaties to repentance and salvation; in all the requirement and urgency of faith as the necessary condition of justification; in the deep sense of guilt and peril realized in a true conviction for sin; in the earnest prayer springing from such distress of conscience, and importuning the mercy of heaven; in the peace and joy of soul when the prayer is answered and the Spirit witnesses to a gracious adoption. Justification is not merely the information, given at the time of such experience, of a discharge from guilt long before achieved through the merited punishment of sin in a substitute. As up to this time the guilt is real, so the forgiveness is real. And it is much against the theory of satisfaction that it cannot give us a true doctrine of forgiveness in justification. But the doctrine which we maintain encounters no such objection. Such an atonement, while a sufficient ground of forgiveness, leaves all the guilt with the sinner until his justification by faith. Then his sins are really forgiven. So witness the Scriptures; and so witnesses many a happy experience.

3. Grace in Forgiveness.—The satisfactionist thinks his own doctrine pre-eminently one of grace. Is it such in the forgiveness of sin? This is the special point we make here. Forgiveness is in the very nature of it an act of grace. That the divine forgiveness in our justification is such an act the Scriptures fully testify. Still, it is true that a debt paid, and by whomsoever, is not forgiven; that a penalty inflicted, and upon whomsoever, is not remitted. And let it be remembered that the absolute irremissibility of penalty is the ground-principle in the theory of satisfaction. But since the economy of redemption is of God ; since it originated in his infinite love ; and since he provided the sacrifice in atonement for sin, is not his grace in forgiveness free and full ? So the satisfactionist reasons. Nor would we abate aught of the love of God in human redemption. There is infinite

grace in his forgiveness of sin ; but on the doctrine of atonement which we maintain, and not on that of satisfaction. If a doctrine is constructed, as that of satisfaction, in the fullest recognition of a distinction of persons in the divine Trinity, and also of the specific part of each in the economy of human salvation, then it must not, for any after-exigency, ignore or suppress such distinction. If in the atonement, and as the only possible atonement, the Father inflicted the merited punishment of sin upon the Son, and the Son endured the punishment so inflicted, then they fulfill distinct offices in redemption. Yet the fact is often ignored or suppressed, in order to defend the doctrine of satisfaction against the objection that it denies to the Father a gracious forgiveness of sin. If, in the obligation of an absolute retributive justice the Father must inflict merited punishment upon sin, and if in the atonement he inflicted such punishment upon his Son as the substitute of sinners, then he does not remit the penalty. No dialectics can identify such infliction with remission. And where there is no remission of penalty there can be no grace of forgiveness. Hence, the doctrine of satisfaction does not admit the grace of the Father in forgiveness ; which fact of grace, however, is clearly given in the Scriptures. But this great fact of grace is in full accord with the governmental theory. A provisory atonement in substituted reality of suffering, rendering forgiveness consistent with the rectoral office of justice, yet in itself abating nothing of the guilt of sin, as its punishment must, gives place for a real and gracious forgiveness. There is a real forgiveness in our justification, and an infinite grace of the Father therein. And the rectoral theory, agreeing with these facts so decisive of the nature of redemptive substitution, and the only theory of a real atonement so agreeing, gives us the true doctrine.

4. Universality of Atonement.—We have previously noted the fact that the doctrine of satisfaction requires, on the ground of consistency, a limited atonement; and also that its universality, as given in the Scriptures, disproves the theory. But the governmental theory is consistent with the universality of the atonement, with a real conditionality of its saving grace, and with the fact that the subjects of redemption may reject its overtures of mercy and perish. It is the only theory of a real atonement in accord with these facts, and, therefore, the true one.

5. Universal Overture of Grace.—Who will hesitate in such an overture? Who will question its obligation? But without a universal atonement the offer would be made to many for whom there is no grace of forgiveness; hence there could be no such obligation. And if the atonement be for all, it must be of a nature to render its universality consistent with all the facts of soteriology. It is such only in the rectoral theory.

6. Doctrinal Result.—The fact of a real atonement in Christ is with the satisfaction and governmental theories. Hence the question of its nature is between them. We appeal it to the decision of the facts given in this section. Here are five scriptural facts, all prominent in soteriology, and all vitally concerning the very nature of the atonement. They are inconsistent with the doctrine of satisfaction, but in full accord with the rectoral theory. They require such an atonement, and, therefore, certify its truth.

142. Chapter 8: Sufficiency Of The Atonement.

Chapter 8 Sufficiency Of The Atonement. The substitution of Christ in suffering answers for an atonement through a revelation of such moral truths as give the highest ruling power to the divine law. It must, therefore, embody such facts as will make the necessary revelation. Only thus can the atonement have sufficiency. It is proper, therefore, that we specially note some of these facts of atoning value. Authors differ somewhat respecting them.[715] This may arise, at least in part, from a difference in the doctrine. The vital facts are clear in the light of Scripture.

[715]Jenkyn:The Extent of the Atonement, chap, ii; Bruce:The Humiliation of Christ, p. 341.

I. The Holiness Of Christ.

1. A Necessary Element.—A criminal cannot be a proper mediator. Whoever dishonors himself and the law by his own transgression is thereby disqualified for the office of mediation in behalf of a criminal. If human government does not require moral perfection for such office, still, the mediator must not be amenable to penalty on his own account. And the higher his personal righteousness and moral worth, the more valuable will be his mediation as the ground of forgiveness. As a mediation, so accepted, must inculcate respect for law and enforce obedience to its requirements, so, much depends upon the moral worth of the mediator. And Christ, in the atonement, must be without sin and clear of all its penal liabilities. He must be personally holy.[716] [716] Ullman:The Sinlessness of Jesus, pp. 259-361; Robert Hall:On Substitution, Works, vol. i, p. 269.

2. Scripture View.—The Scriptures record, and with frequent repetition, the sinlessness of Christ, and ever hold the fact in vital connection with his redeeming work. It is emphasized as fitting and necessary in the atonement, and also as an element of special value (2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 John 3:5). In all the force of its own worth it is a revelation of the truths and motives which constitute the best efficiencies of moral government. The vicarious sacrifice of the sinless Christ as the sole ground of forgiveness scepters the divine law with a ruling efficiency, with a majesty of holiness, far above all that the power of punishment can achieve. Also his holiness gives its grace to all other elements of value in the atonement.

II. His Greatness.

1. An Element of Atoning Value.—Whoever needs the service of rank attainable. The minister of the law vested with the pardoning power is officially concerned therein. For the value of the mediation is not in its personal influence with him, but from its rectoral relations. He may already be personally disposed to clemency, but lacks a proper ground for its exercise, so that law shall not suffer in its honor and authority. Such ground is furnished in the greatness and rank of the mediator. And the higher these qualities, the more complete is the ground of forgiveness, or the more effective the support of law in all its rectoral offices. There is a philosophy in these facts, as manifest in our previous discussions. Beyond this, the case may be appealed to the common judgment.

There is the same principle in the redemptive mediation of Christ. His greatness and rank go into his atonement as an element of the highest value. The Scriptures fully recognize and reveal the fact. It is with accordant reason and design that they so frequently and explicitly connect his greatness and rank with his redeeming work.

2. An Infinite Value in Christ.—In the Scriptures, to which reference was just now made as connecting the greatness of Christ with his redemptive mediation, he is revealed as the Son of God and essentially divine; as in the form of God and equal with him in glory; as the Creator and Euler of all things; as Lord of the angels (John 1:1-3; John 1:14; Php 2:6-8; Colossians 1:14-17; Hebrews 1:2-3). In him, therefore, divinity itself mediates in the redemption of man. Thus an infinite greatness and rank give rectoral support to the law of God in the ministry of forgiveness to repenting sinners. This is a fact of infinite sufficiency in the atonement of Christ.

III. His Voluntariness.

1. A Necessary Fact.—The injustice of a coerced substitution of one in place of another would deprive it of all benefit in atonement for sin. But when the sacrifice is in the free choice of the substitute, its voluntariness not only gives full place to every other element of atoning value, but is itself such an element.

2. Christ a Voluntary Substitute.—On this fact the Scriptures leave us no reason for any question. And the frequency and fullness of their utterances respecting the freedom of Christ in the work of redemption give to that freedom all the certainty and significance which its truth requires. It is true that the Father gave the Son ; that lie sent him to be the Saviour of the world ; that he spared him not, but delivered him up for us all ; that he prepared for him a body for his priestly sacrifice in atonement for sin : but it is none the less true that in all this the mind of the Son was at one with the mind of the Father ; that he freely and gladly chose the incarnation in order to our redemption ; that he loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God ; that, with full power over his own life, he freely surrendered it in our redemption. And the fact of this freedom is carried back of his incarnation and atoning suffering to the Son in his essential divinity and in his glory with the Father (Psalms 40:6-8; John 10:17-18; Php 2:6-8; Hebrews 10:5-9).

3. The Atoning Value.—The voluntariness of Christ crowns with its grace all the marvelous facts of his redeeming work. His atoning sacrifice, while in the purest free-willing, was at once in an infinite beneficence toward us, and in an infinite filial love and obedience toward his Father. And the will of the Father, in obedience to which the sacrifice is made, so far from limiting its atoning worth, provides for its highest sufficiency by opening such a sphere for the beneficence and filial obedience of the Son. Both have infinite moral worth with the Father. So he regards them, not in any commercial valuation, but as intrinsically good. Now forgiveness on such a ground is granted only on account of what is most precious with God, and therefore a vindication of his justice and holiness, of his rectoral honor and authority, in the salvation of repenting souls.[717] [717] Robert Hall:On Substitution, Works, vol. i, p. 269.

IV. His Divine Sonship.

1. Sense of Atoning Value.—The nearer a mediator stands in the relations of friendship to an offended person the more persuasive will his intercession be. But this is a matter of mere personal influence, not of rectoral service. The person offended is regarded simply in his personal

disposition, not as a minister of the law, with the obligations of his office; and, so far, the case has more affinity with the satisfaction theory than with the governmental. According to this theory God needs no vicarious sacrifice for his personal propitiation. His need is for some provision which will render the forgiveness of sin consistent with his own honor and authority as moral Ruler, and with the good of his subjects. Hence, while we find an element of atoning value in the divine Sonship of Christ, we find it not in a matter of personal influence with the Father, but on a principle of rectoral service. This value lies in the moral worth which the Sonship of Christ gives to his redeeming work in the appreciation of the Father. The nature of it will further appear under the next heading.

2. Measure of Value.—The divine filiation of the Redeemer furnishes an element of great value in the atonement. This may be illustrated in connection with two facts of his Sonship. The divine filiation of the Redeemer is original and singular. It is such as to be the ground of the Father's infinite love to his Son. On nothing are the Scriptures more explicit than on the fact of this love. Therein we have the ground of the Father's infinite appreciation of the redeeming work of the Son. And the truth returns, that forgiveness is granted only on the ground of what is most precious with the Father. By all this preciousness, as revealed in the light of the Father's love to the Son, his redemptive mediation, as the only and necessary ground of forgiveness, gives utterance to the authority of the divine law, and the obligation of its maintenance; to the sacredness of moral rights and interests, and the imperative requirement of their protection; to the evil of sin, and the urgency of its restriction. These are the very facts which give the highest and best ruling power to the divine law. And thus we have an element of sufficiency in the atonement. The redeeming love of God toward us is most clearly seen in the light of his love for his own Son. Only in this view do we read the meaning of its divine utterances (John 3:16; Romans 8:32; 1 John 4:10). Why did the Father sacrifice the Son of his love in our redemption? It could not have been from any need of personal propitiation toward us. The redeeming sacrifice, itself the fruit of his love to us, is proof to the contrary. He gave his Son to die for us that he might reach us in the grace of forgiveness and salvation. Why then did he so sacrifice the Son of his love? The only reason lies in the moral interests concerned, and which, in the case of forgiveness, required an atonement in their protection. But for his regard for these rights and interests, and, therefore, for the sacredness and authority of his law as the necessary means of their protection, he might have satisfied the yearnings of his compassion toward us in a mere administrative forgiveness. This he could not do consistently with either his goodness or his rectoral obligation. And rather than surrender the interests which his law must protect he delivers up his own Son to suffering and death. Therefore, in this great sacrifice—infinitely great because of his love for his Son, and therein so revealed—in this great sacrifice, and with all the emphasis of its greatness, God makes declaration of an infinite regard for the interests and ends of his moral government, and of an immutable purpose to maintain them. This declaration, in all the force of its divine verities, goes to the support of his government, and gives the highest honor and ruling power to his law, while forgiveness is granted to repenting sinners.

V. His Human Brotherhood.

1. Mediation must Express an Interest.—A stranger to a condemned person, and without reason for any special interest in his case, could not be accepted as a mediator in his behalf. A pardon granted on such ground would, in respect of all ends of government, be the same as one granted on mere sovereignty. The case is clearly different when, on account of intimate relations of

friendship, or other special reasons of interest, the mediation is an expression of profound sympathy. Forgiveness on such an intercession is granted, not for any thing trivial or indifferent, and so evincing an indifference to the law, but only for what is regarded as real, and a sufficient justification of the forgiveness. This gives support to law. It loses nothing of respect in the common judgment, nothing of its ruling force. And the profounder the sympathy of the mediator, the greater is the rectoral service of his mediation as the ground of forgiveness.

2. The Principle in Atonement.—Christ appropriates the principle by putting himself into the most intimate relation with us. In the incarnation he clothes himself in our nature, partakes of our flesh and blood, and enters into brotherhood with us (John 1:14; Galatians 4:4-5; Hebrews 2:11; Hebrews 2:14-16). Herein is the reality and the revelation of a profound interest in his mediation. The love and sympathy of this brotherhood he carries into the work of atonement. They are voiced in his tears and sorrows, in the soul agonies of Gethsemane, in the bitter outcryings of Calvary, and are still voiced in his intercessory prayers in heaven. Men and angels, in a spontaneous moral judgment, pronounce such a mediation a sufficient ground of forgiveness, and vindicate the divine administration therein. No shadow falls upon the divine rectitude. The divine law suffers no dishonor nor loss of ruling power. Thus the human brotherhood of Christ gives sufficiency to his atonement.[718] [718] Robert Hall:On Substitution, Works, vol. i, p. 270.

VI. His Suffering.

1. Extreme Views.—In one view the suffering of Christ contains, in respect of our guilt or forgiveness, the whole atoning value. Only substitutional punishment so atones, and this just in the measure of the penal suffering endured. “This hypothesis measures the atonement not only by the number of the elect, but by the intensity and degree of the suffering to be endured for their sin. It adjusts the dimensions of the atonement to a nice mathematical point, and poises its infinite weight of glory even to the small dust of a balance. I need not say that the hand which stretches such lines, and holds such scales, is a bold one. Such a calculation represents the Son of God as giving so much suffering for so much value received in the souls given to him; and represents the Father as dispensing so many favors and blessings for so much value received in obedience and sufferings. This is the commercial atonement—the commercial redemption, with which supralapsarian theology degrades the Gospel and fetters its ministers: which sums up the worth of a stupendous moral transaction with arithmetic, and with its little span limits what is infinite.”[719] This is the atonement by equal, as well as by identical, penalty. It is really the atonement by equivalent penalty, which varies the case by the admission of a less degree of penal suffering, but only on account of its higher value arising from the rank of the substitute, while an absolute justice receives full satisfaction in behalf of the elect. Such a doctrine has no lofty grandeur nor profound philosophy. It voids the grace of God in forgiveness. This is one extreme.

[719]Jenkyn:The Extent of the Atonement, pp. 27, 28. In another view, it is denied that the suffering of Christ, especially in the facts subsequent to the incarnation, is essential to the atonement. The author just cited purposely omits “intensity of suffering” as a necessary element of atonement, and does not hesitate to assert that the incarnation of the Son of God is in itself an act of such condescension in behalf of sinners that, as the only ground of forgiveness, it is a higher revelation of the divine justice than could be made by their eternal subjection to the merited punishment of sin. Such is the other extreme.

2. A Necessary Element.—We are not honoring the divine love by an affected exaltation of one fact, however stupendous, in the work of human redemption. Nor should we omit, as a necessary element, what the Scriptures account to the atonement as the vital fact of its sufficiency. That the sufferings of Christ are so vital is clear from many texts previously cited or given by reference. They are even essential to the atoning service of other elements of sufficiency. The holiness, greatness, voluntariness, divine Sonship, and human brotherhood of Christ arc, in themselves, but qualities of fitness for his redemptive mediation, and enter as elements of sufficiency into the atonement only as he enters into his sufferings. Without his sufferings and death there is really no atonement. This is the truth of Scripture.

3. An Infinite Sufficiency.—The sufferings of Christ, which go into the atonement as a revelation of God in his regard for the principles and ends of his moral government, and in his immutable purpose to maintain them, give to it an infinite sufficiency. We cannot fathom these sufferings. We get the deeper sounding only as we hold them in association with the greatness and rank of Christ himself. The incarnation itself is a great fact of atoning value in the redemptive mediation of Christ. This is clear in our doctrine, however difficult it may be for that of satisfaction so to appropriate it. It must go into such an atonement, if at all, either as a vicarious punishment or as a fact of vicarious righteousness. The theory finds atonement in nothing else. Now the incarnation itself could not be a fact of penal substitution, because it could not be a punishment. Could it be a fact of vicarious obedience, and imputable to the elect? We know not the Scripture exegesis nor the philosophy of the fact which can so interpret it. It is not such because a fact of obedience. The subordination of the Son puts all his acts, even those of creation and providence, into the sphere of filial obedience. And we might as well account these acts an imputable personal righteousness in atonement for the elect as so to account his obedience in the free choice of the incarnation. So difficult, if not absolutely impossible, is it for the doctrine of satisfaction to appropriate the great fact of the incarnation as an element of atonement. Our doctrine has no difficulty in the appropriation. We require it to be neither a fact of penal substitution nor one of imputable personal righteousness. It goes into the atonement as one of the great facts of condescension and sacrifice in the work of redemption. The humiliation of Christ in the incarnation thus becomes a great fact of sufficiency in the atonement. His condescension to the form of an angel would have been much. How infinitely more the actual condescension! There are two marvelous facts: the self-emptying—■βυτ■ν ■κ■ωσε—or self-divestment of a rightful glory in equality with God, and an assumption, instead, of the form of a servant in the likeness of men (Php 2:6-7). The Son of God, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person (Hebrews 1:3), and dwelling in the glory of the Father (John 17:5) condescends to the plane of humanity, and dwells here in the likeness of sinful flesh (Romans 8:3). The incarnation is not the limit of the humiliation and sacrifice of Christ: “And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Php 2:8). What scenes are disclosed in Gethsemane and on Calvary! Burdens of sorrow, depths of woe, intensities of agony! An awful mystery of suffering! At such a cost the Saviour redeems the world. Nor have we the truest, deepest sense of the sufferings of Christ, except in the fact that he endured them as the Theanthropos. With the doctrine of a union of the divine and human natures in a unity of personality in Christ, and that in the incarnation he was truly the God-man, we know not either the theology or philosophy which may limit his sufferings to a mere human consciousness. “With the impassivity of his divine nature in the incarnation and atonement, many texts of Scripture, fraught with infinite treasures of grace and love, would be little

more than meaningless words (Acts 20:28; Romans 8:32; Php 2:6-11; Colossians 1:13-17; Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 2:9; Hebrews 2:14-18; Revelation 1:5-6; Revelation 5:6-13). On such a principle their exegesis would be superficial and false to their infinitely deeper meaning. The divine Son incarnate, and so incarnate in human nature as to unite it with himself in personal unity, could suffer, and did suffer in the redemption of the world.[720] [720] Shedd:Theological Essays, p. 272; Raymond:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 275-282

Such are the facts which combine in the atonement, and, on the principles previously explained, give to it an infinite sufficiency. They are God's revelation of himself in his moral government, for the vindication of his justice and law in the ministry of forgiveness, for the restraint of sin, and for the protection of the rights and interests of his subjects. So much has he done, and so much required, that forgiveness might be consistent with these great ends. And now while on such ground, but only on such, repenting souls are forgiven and saved, he omits no judicial requirement, and surrenders no right nor interest either of himself or his subjects.

143. Chapter 9: Objections To The Atonement.

Chapter 9 Objections To The Atonement.

We must not omit all notice of the stock objections to the atonement. Yet they have little relevancy as against the doctrine which we maintain, and, therefore, require no elaborate refutation.

I. An Irrational Scheme.

Opponents of fundamental Christian truth are strong on the rational, and especially on the irrational. A glance of their marvelous philosophic acumen detects the disconformity of a doctrine to reason. This is conclusive against it. Thus the atonement is summarily dismissed as an irrational scheme.

1. A Pretentious Assumption.—Such an objection little becomes the limitation of human reason. In our own resources we but feebly grasp the principles and requirements of divine moral government, and, therefore, cannot pronounce against either a necessity for the atonement, or the wisdom of its measures, or the beneficence of its results. Human reason, all-unequal to its devising, is all-incompetent to a conclusive judgment against it. And while with us the government of a municipality is still a perplexing problem, we do but arrogantly pronounce against the wisdom of the atonement in the infinitely broader sphere of divine moral government. The more certainly is this true since the deliverances of the highest reason accord to the economy of redemption in Christ an infinite excellence and wisdom.

2. Analogies of Providence a Vindication.—If the scheme of atonement is in analogy to the general course of providence, the fact wholly voids this objection, except on the broad ground that the general course of providence is irrational. But such an assumption would bar all title to a respectful hearing on the part of any one professing faith in Christianity, or even in God. The vicarious principle is the most common law of human society in every form of its constitution.[721] And it is no arbitrary appointment, but springs inevitably from the providential relations of human life. In the family, in society, in the commonwealth one serves another, suffers for another. One takes upon himself labor and suffering on account of the sin of another, averts evil from him, and brings him good. Here is the vicarious principle. Human life is full of it.

[721]Butler:Analogy of Religion, part ii, chap. v.

Such is the mediation of Christ in vicarious suffering. Nor is the principle really changed by the fact that his sufferings meet a special exigency of moral government in order to the forgiveness and salvation of sinners. Any objection respecting the justice of the case will be met elsewhere, and really is not pertinent here, because this exigency of moral government is met in the mediation of Christ by vicarious suffering, not by substituted punishment. Only the latter element could carry the atonement out of such analogy to very many vicarious facts of human life as to deny it the vindication of that analogy. And neither revelation, nor the general course of providence, nor reason itself, pronounces the scheme of vicarious atonement irrational.

II. A Violation Of Justice. No objection has been urged either more violently or persistently against the atonement than this. A few words, however, will answer for all the defense required of us.

1. No Infringement of Rights.—Injustice comes with the refusal of dues, with the deprivation of lawful possessions or inalienable rights, with wrongful injury or unmerited punishment, not otherwise. Such facts are a violation of justice, because a violation of rights. Without this there can be no injustice. On this ground we have an easy answer to the objection of injustice in the vicarious sacrifice of Christ. Others may answer for their own doctrine.

2. Analogy of Vicarious Suffering.—Men often endure toil and suffering, and jeopard life itself in behalf of others. They do this electively, cheerfully, not of coercion. Do they suffer any violation of rights thereby? Is any injustice done them? Does their own reason or the common moral judgment so pronounce? Surely not. Indeed, both approve such vicarious sacrifice, and reprehend its refusal on proper exigency.

3. The Atonement Clear of Injustice.—That the vicarious sufferings of Christ meet a special requirement of moral government in order to our forgiveness and salvation introduces no element of injustice. Nor did Christ, in all his relations to the will of the Father respecting the deepest sufferings which he endured, ever evince any sense of injury or wrong. Nor was there any wrong to him: for, while he so suffered in obedience to the will of the Father, it was none the less his own election in the purest freedom. And it is no punishment of one for the sin of another. Therefore all injustice is excluded.

4. Vantage-ground against the Moral Theory.—This is a common objection with those who maintain the moral theory of atonement. We claim a position of the highest advantage against them. They admit the sufferings and death of Christ as consequent upon his redemptive mission, and as for men in this sense. They admit the severity of his sufferings and the shameful manner of his death. But, on their scheme, his extreme suffering is only incidental to his saving work, while on ours it is the necessary ground of forgiveness and salvation. Therefore our doctrine will vindicate such a divine economy, while theirs will not. The real problem is in such suffering of the innocent in behalf of the guilty. “State this fact as indeterminately as you please; rigidly adhere to the coldest and most undefining forms of language; allow only that the innocent suffered for the advantage of the guilty; what possible abatement of the charge of injustice do you supply? The difficulty, if any—the mystery, the awful mystery—remains in full proportion behind the flimsy cloud. That mystery is, the innocent, the virtuous, the perfect One, has borne tremendous agony. This is the point of startling wonder, whatever the result: of wonder to be diminished only by the exigency, the mighty good accruing, not otherwise to be attained”[722] The profound exigency is the vindicatory fact. Intense vicarious suffering, arising in a specially providential economy, and without a sufficient reason in attainable good, is of impossible defense. Such is the case with the moral view. But the doctrine of a real atonement in Christ, with the necessity of his redemptive sufferings as the means of salvation, and the infinite good attained, gives us the clearest and fullest theodicy.

[722]Gilbert:The Christian Atonement, p. 93.

III. A Releasement From Duty. This objection, if intelligently and honestly made, must have in view some particular doctrine of atonement. Otherwise it has neither pertinence nor force, whatever

weight logical validity would give it.

1. Fatal, if Valid.—Xo doctrine of atonement could stand against such an objection if grounded in truth. But duty has no surer ground, and no more imperative behest respecting all that constitutes the highest moral and religious worth, than in the atonement itself. Hence any doctrine really open to such an objection must be in error. Nor will the history of doctrines permit the assertion that no one has been so open. Antinomianism itself has a place in that history. And any commercial theory, or doctrine of atonement by absolute substitution in precept and penalty, is logically open to this objection, however its advocates disclaim the implication. A punishment so endured for us, and a righteousness so wrought on our account, cannot again be required of us under any claim of justice or sanction of law. But the doctrine which we maintain is not answerable in such a case.

2. Nugatory against the True Doctrine.—On a true doctrine the atonement in Christ is simply the ground of forgiveness, not the merited punishment of sin. Hence we are guilty all the same, though now with the privilege of forgiveness and salvation. And for such a result through redemptive grace there is required a true repentance for sin and a true faith in Christ ; and, as the condition of his continued favor, a true obedience to his will. A measure of forgiveness in behalf of rebels would surely be no discharge from the obligation and requirement of future loyalty, and especially when the continuance of the restored franchisements is conditioned on fidelity in future loyalty. Such are the facts respecting the atonement. And in all its truth and lesson it makes duty specially imperative and responsible, and presses its claim with a weight of obligation and a power of motive peculiar to itself. It is, therefore, wholly and forever clear of this objection.

IV. An Aspersion Of Divine Goodness.

This, also, must have in view some special doctrine of atonement. Otherwise, it is so manifestly groundless that it can hardly be a mere fallacy, and must be a sophistry; not a mere error in its logic, but an intentional error.

1. Reason of Law and Penalty.—Whence comes law? And wherefore penalty? Is their origin in the cruelty of rulers? Is revengefulness the moving impulse of legislators and ministers of law? Is vindictiveness the inspiration of punishment? Is implacableness the sole restraint of the pardoning power? No man can think so. The public good requires both law and penalty. Here is their source. This fact does not give us the highest principles of divine moral government, yet has enough analogy for illustration. Rulers in human government, if by personal qualities well fitted for their office, cherish infinitely higher sentiments than the present objection would imply in application to them. With rulers of the highest and best qualities clemency would often release the criminal when the public good constrains his punishment. And they should have the honor of a wise and beneficent administration rather than suffer the reproach of vindictiveness.

2. No Aspersion of Divine Goodness.—Now if the punitive ministries of justice imply no vindictiveness, but evince the wisdom and beneficence of government, how does the refusal of pardon so imply? Then how could the requirement of such provision as would render forgiveness consistent with the ends of government show any implacability? And then how does the atonement, as necessary to the consistency of forgiveness with the infinite interest of moral government, impeach the clemency of the divine Euler, or asperse his goodness? When this is shown other questions may be asked. Until then they are not necessary.

3. Divine Love Magnified.—The atonement has its original in the divine love. Nor has it any other possible source. The human mind is powerless for the original conception of such a scheme. Nor could it have birth in the mind of angel or archangel, but in God only. And with him its primary impulse must arise in his love. It could not arise in any perfection of knowledge, or power, or justice, or holiness. There must be a profound sympathy with human woe. An infinite compassion must yearn over the miseries of sin. Love only can answer to such requirement. “God is love” (1 John 4:16). Herein is the primary impulse of human redemption, and the ever-active force in all its infinite sacrifices. To this one source the Scriptures ever trace it. And the divine love, so moving to an atonement for sin, must meet the sacrifices which it requires. These are infinitely great. A plan of human redemption must be adjusted to the profoundest interests of the moral universe. The infinite exigency reaches into heaven for the Son of the Father’s love. He must be the atoning sacrifice; he must be delivered up to humiliation and death. The divine love answers to the infinite exigency (John 3:16; Romans 5:6-10; Romans 8:32; 1 John 4:10). And while the cross stands as the symbol of the atonement, and it is written “God so loved the world,” that atonement casts no aspersion upon his clemency, but infinitely magnifies his love.

144. Chapter 10: A Lesson For All Intelligences.

Chapter 10 A Lesson For All Intelligences.

I. Relations Of The Atonement.

1. A Salvation for Man Only.—Speculative and fanciful minds, forgetting the verities of Scripture, may reach the thought not only of the sufficiency, but also of the actuality, of an atonement for moral beings other than men.[723] The Scriptures, however, limit it to the human race. Nor would any superabundance of its grace, nor any further prevalence of sin, warrant the inference of a wider extension. There are other orders under the power and curse of sin (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6). Here is the prostration of lofty powers, the corruption of once holy natures, and an awful lapse of moral beings from the highest happiness into the profoundest woe. Nor have they any power of self-recovery. There is, therefore, in their case all the need of redemption arising out of an utter moral ruin. Nor will the divine love allow the supposition that, however just their doom, they have fallen below the reach of its pity. Yet the Scriptures give no intimation of an atonement for them, but a contrary one. Christ becomes our brother by an incarnation in our nature that through death he might redeem us (Hebrews 2:14-15). And we have this significant utterance of limitation: “For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham” (Hebrews 2:16). The passage, viewed contextually and in its own terms, clearly limits redemption in its directness and actuality to the human race.

[723]As Origen did.

2. Broader Relation to Moral Beings.—An atonement in the sacrifice of Christ, while for man only, may yet have a lesson of profound moral truth for other and for all intelligences.[724] It is such a truth, and of such moral significance, that it must deeply interest all moral beings to whom a knowledge of it may come.

[724]Gilbert:The Christian Atonement, pp. 218-220, 352, 353 And the notion of a wide extension of such information is no conjecture, nor even a mere rational idea. Rational it is; for the atonement is too great a truth, and too broad and intimate in its relations, for any narrow limitation. The long preparation for the redeeming advent was known in heaven as on earth. Angels often appear amid the scenes of that preparation. The redeeming Lord conies forth from the midst of their adoring myriads. Many are with him in the lowly scenes of his humiliation, deeply interested in him and in his great work. They form his triumphal escort in the ascension, and all their hosts, in glad acclaim, welcome his return. Here are means and evidences of a widely extended knowledge of our redemption. And the fact of such a knowledge has a sure ground in the Scriptures (Ephesians 3:10; 1 Peter 1:12; Revelation 5:11-13). The references given are sufficient for the point made, though there are many other texts and facts of like import.[725] [725] Chalmers:Astronomical Discourses, Discourse iv. Nor need we have any perplexity respecting either the possibility or the means of such universal information. Moral beings, ever steadfast m holiness and obedience, cannot be in entire isolation, however remote their dwelling-places. They have a common center of

union and intercourse in God, as the one Creator and Father of all. “What, then, can He who made them be at any loss how to instruct them? Does one sun dart his beams above, below, around, as well as upon a single spot of earth; and cannot the central light of God convey revelation to others as well as to us? Is there no angel to bear the news? no prophet among them to receive the inspiration? To them, then, as to principalities and powers in heavenly places, may be made known the manifold wisdom of God in the Church.”[726] [726] Watson:Sermons, vol. i, p. 187.

3. A Practical Lesson for All.—While, therefore, the lesson of the atonement surely opens its pages to the reading of all intelligences, the fact itself, and the great truths which it reveals, cannot fail profoundly to interest and impress all minds. A little attention will give us the facts for the full verification of this position.

Divine revelation makes known to us the existence of other orders of moral beings. With this knowledge, even reason hears, respecting each order, the one creative fiat of Godhead: “In our image, after our likeness” (Genesis 1:26). And, formed in the one image of God, they have a oneness of moral constitution. As made known in the Scriptures, they clearly have a moral nature like our own, and are, therefore, in the likeness of each other.

However numerous their orders or vast the scale of their gradations, yet, with a oneness of moral nature, they are one in moral motivity. The same divine truths which impress one may impress another, or that interest us may interest all. The soul of each is open to the practical revelation of God in his justice, holiness, and love; in his marvelous works of creation and providence; in his universal Fatherhood; in all the behests of his will. The revelation of God and truth in the atonement may give to all their profoundest religious conceptions, and move them with a pathos of love and a power of moral influence above every other truth. In the marvelous adjustments of the infinite wisdom there cannot be wanting a masterly correlation of all moral natures to the grandest truth in the universe. All holy intelligences are open to the moral power of the cross.

II. A Lesson Of Universal Interest.

1. Higher Orders Interested in Redemption.—The facts of this interest might be appropriated to a further illustration of truths previously given. The nature of the interest as made known, the facts which it regards, and the measure of it, all signify a likeness of moral cognition and motivity to our own, and, therefore, a capacity for the apprehension and practical realization of the great truths revealed in the atonement. The sympathy of higher orders with us is made known by the Redeemer himself: “I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.” “Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth” (Luke 15:7; Luke 15:10). These words are very direct and explicit, and entirely sufficient. Yet there are many other words and facts which convey a like sense. Angels often press into the scenes of human history, and not as curious spectators, but as deeply interested in human welfare. And their profounder sympathy, as evinced in their exceeding joy over our repentance, is given in an association with illustrative facts of human experience—as in the parables of the lost piece of silver, the lost sheep, and the prodigal son—which clothe it in the likeness of our own sympathies.[727] Only, the sympathies of these higher orders are broader and deeper. Ours largely conform to the laws of our more special relationships, and are much subject to what is merely conventional, while theirs are free from such limitations. With them all intelligences are a

common brotherhood. Hence their sympathies go out alike to all. So they come down to us. And, with the fullness of their love and profound apprehension of our miseries in sin, they have the deepest compassion for us. Hence their exceeding joy over our repentance. They view it as our escape from the misery and death of sin, and our entrance upon the highway of life, with its terminus amid their own thrones and glories. This is their exceeding joy.

[727]Chalmers:Astronomical Discourses, Discourse v. But their joy has other impulses than such sympathy with us. It specially has an impulse in a profound love and loyalty to Christ. They know that our salvation is dear to him. Their whole nature is profoundly enlisted with him in the work of saving us. And when they witness his success and his own satisfaction in our salvation they have exceeding joy—their joy welling up from the profoundest love and loyalty to him. In such facts respecting the sympathy of higher orders with us, especially in its relation to our salvation and to Christ as the Saviour, we are assured of their knowledge of the great redemption in his blood, and of their profound interest therein. Chosen messengers from their own mighty hosts welcomed his redeeming advent, and in gladdest strains proclaimed him a Saviour (Luke 2:9-14). In the holy of holies, skillfully wrought cherubim with intent gaze hovered over the mercy-seat, the place of atonement and symbol of the atonement in the blood of Christ; and thus they symbolized the profound interest of the angels in the study of the mysteries of redemption (Exodus 25:18; Exodus 25:22; Hebrews 9:5; 1 Peter 1:12). Nor could they fail of such a knowledge of the atonement as would bring to them the practical force of its great truths.

2. Meaning of the Lordship of Christ.—The exaltation of Christ in supreme Headship over the Church, and in universal Lordship over the angels, is a truth clearly given in the Scriptures (Ephesians 1:20-23; Ephesians 3:10; Php 2:9-11; 1 Peter 3:22). The passages noted in the reference are most explicit, and full of the loftiest utterances. Christ is Head of the Church universal, whether on earth or in heaven, and supreme Lord over all intelligences.

Such royal investiture of the exalted Christ is in reward of his humiliation and redeeming death. A recurrence to the texts just given by reference will make this clear to any mind. We may cite one in illustration: “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Such exaltation has not respect to Christ simply in his divinity. The texts which reveal it give a contrary sense. Nor is the idea of such an exaltation of divinity in itself simply at all admissible. Much less may we hold this royal investiture simply in respect of the human nature of Christ. This is forbidden by the nature of the powers and prerogatives with which he is clothed. Saints and angels, principalities and powers, all holy intelligences, are made subject to him. They must render him the fullest obedience and the profoundest worship. His divine nature, therefore, must not be considered as separate from him in this marvelous exaltation, else Christianity be justly accounted the vastest system of idolatry ever established. It would be such a system, and not only on earth, but also in heaven, and throughout the universe. It is the incarnate Son, the Christ in two natures,

and yet in unity of personality, that is so exalted. It is the redeeming God-man, the veritable Theanthropos who receives such royal investiture. As such he is worthy of it all; worthy in his divinity, and worthy because of his redeeming work. It is fitting that he who stooped so low should be exalted so high.

Such enthronement as the Saviour is the peculiar glory of the Son. There is thus claimed for him the obedience and worshipful homage of all intelligences. It is the peculiar glory of the Father that he is the Creator and Ruler of all things. When creation and providence are ascribed to the Son it is in the deepest truth and reality of both, but never excluding the idea of his subordination therein to the Father. And such facts are set forth in the Gospel, not as his peculiar glory, but specially in connection with his redeeming work, that we might be assured of its sufficiency (John 1:1-4; John 1:14; Colossians 1:14-18; Hebrews 1:3). This distinction of the peculiar glory of each is clearly given in the Scriptures (Revelation 4:10-11; Revelation 5:11-12). In the first passage noted in the reference the words of the holy worshipers are, “Thou art worthy, Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created;” and in the second, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.”

It may seem strange that Christ, as the Saviour of man exalted In our nature, should be enthroned in sovereignty over angels as over saints. It is a noteworthy fact. Nor is it without its reasons. In his divinity he is worthy of such honor and glory. And it is fitting that in his exaltation he should receive a dominion reaching far beyond the immediate subjects of his redemption. Then his redeeming work touches the heart of angels, and of all holy intelligences, as nothing else can. They will ever find their highest reason for a worshipful loyalty to his throne in that he ransomed us from the power of sin by the sacrifice of himself. In the profoundest sympathy with us in the miseries of sin and death, they have the profoundest love and loyalty to him for our salvation.

Yet this is no monopolized glory on the part of the redeeming Lord. His royal investiture, the bowing of every knee to him, the confession of every tongue that he is Lord—all is “to the glory of God the Father.” We have given two celestial scenes as opened in the Revelation: one, in which the Father receives universal homage as the Creator and Ruler of all things; the other, in which the Son receives universal homage as the Lamb slain. There is no dissonance here. Then in a third scene, as we behold the worshipers and listen to their devout strains, we catch the fullness of the divine harmony: “Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever” (Revelation 5:13).

Now, grouping the several facts under the universal Lordship of Christ, we are again assured that the knowledge of his atonement comes to all intelligences, and in a manner profoundly to interest them. Its marvelous truth and grace, its revelation of God in his justice, and holiness, and love, must occupy their minds and take the deepest hold upon all the practical forces of their moral being. And we thus find that great ends are answered by the universal Lordship of the exalted Christ. As he is enthroned over all, so is he set before all. This gives to all a knowledge of his redeeming work. And the two facts of his humiliation and exaltation combine in a universal lesson of the highest moral and religious truth. There is such a lesson in the atonement. It is fraught with a manifold divine wisdom. We may here recall to mind the words of St. Paul, previously given by reference, “wherein he speaks of the work of redemption through Christ as containing a revelation,

or exhibition, of the manifold—many-sided, or many-colored—wisdom of God—■ πολυπο■κιλος σοφ■α το■ Θεο■ (Ephesians 3:10). The precise connection of thought in which the expression occurs it is not necessary to point out : it bears the stamp of a phrase coined by the apostle to embody the feeling produced in his mind by deep and protracted reflection on the gracious purpose of God in Jesus Christ. After long, rapt meditation on the sublime theme, Paul feels that the divine idea of redemption has many aspects. The pure light of divine wisdom revealed in the Gospel is resolvable into many colored rays, which together constitute a glorious spectrum presented to the admiring view of principalities and powers in heavenly places, and of all men on earth whose eyes are open to see it."[728] But it is not simply for their admiration. The atonement has infinite treasures of most salutary truth. Such truth reaches all intelligences, specially through the universal Lordship of Christ, and rules them through the practical force of the ideas and motives which it embodies. This is the divinest moral government.

[728]Bruce:The Humiliation of Christ, p. 324.

3. Moral Grandeur of the Atonement.—We depart not from the position that the atonement is directly and actually for man only, but none the less hold that of an infinitely broader practical relation to intelligent beings.

Divine moral government is one and universal, as the law of gravitation is one and universal. This one law holds sway over the earth, and the planets, and all the stellar worlds. So moral law, in its deeper principles, is one over man, and angels, and all intelligences. The material and moral systems are widely different: in the one, a law of necessitating force; in the other, a law of obligation, with freedom of the subjects. Here the highest ruling forces are in the moral ideas associated with the law, and in the sanctions which enforce its duties. As previously stated, their governing power is conditioned on certain moral motivities in the subjects. As the moral constitution of subjects is so correlated to the moral law that there may be a profound realization of its obligation, together with all the higher motives of duty, so, and only thus, has the moral law a high ruling power. Even penalty, as a salutary force of law, must take its place on such principles and in association with such facts. The atonement in Christ takes its place in such a universal moral system. As an atonement for sin it has its application to the smallest segment of the system; but in its significance and ruling forces it has a universal application. And in the marvelous economies of his wisdom and love God has provided for its highest benedictions in all such breadth of relation. Illustrations we already have in the universal information of the atonement; in its ruling force by virtue of its own facts and the adjustment of all moral natures to its influence; in the universal Lordship of Christ as the special means of such information and influence. Thus as the highest revelation of God in his holiness, and justice, and love; in his invincible hostility to sin; in his immutable purpose to maintain his own honor and authority, and sacredly to guard the rights and interests of his subjects, the atonement takes its place in the universal moral system. With all the potencies of practical truth it addresses itself to all minds. As the highest revelation of infinite love, the atonement will bind all holy intelligences in the deeper love to the one enthroned Lord of all, and so, with all their distinctions of order and grade, bind them in love to one another. "And the principle which shall harmonize this system is at once seen, if it be assumed that when the Eternal Word was made flesh—when He who was 'before all things and in whom all things consist 'humbled himself to the level of mortality, and, 'passing by the nature of angels,' took upon him a nature 'somewhat lower'—there was a purpose involved which goes beyond the immediate results

of the propitiatory work of the Redeemer. So that when his vicarious functions shall have reached their completion, the union of the divine and human natures shall continue to bear a relation to the social economy of the great immortal family in the heavens, and shall forever subsist as the principle or the reason of communication and harmony among all ranks."[729] This view, so rational in thought and forceful in expression, is far clearer and more forceful when read in the light of such facts and principles as we have given in this chapter.

[729]Isaac Taylor:Saturday Evening, p. 370.

When, therefore, we assert a necessity for the atonement and set forth its benefits, we must, for any adequate conception, take an infinitely broader view than the present sphere of the broader humanity, or even the eternal destiny of the race. Because the one law of gravitation is universal, the disorder of one world might, if uncorrected, become a far-extended evil; while its correction might be a good extending far beyond itself, and reaching even to all worlds—except to any wandering star lost in the blackness of darkness forever. So the evil of sin in this world might, with the license of impunity, become a far-extended evil; while its treatment under the atonement may become a far-extended good, reaching even to all intelligences—except the incorrigible or finally lost, fitly compared to a wandering and forever lost star (Jude 1:13). And such treatment of sin, with forgiveness on a true faith in Christ, may be, and no doubt is, an infinitely higher moral good to other intelligences than its unconditional doom under the penalty of justice[730].

[730]Watson:Sermons, vol. i, pp. 187-189

Thus all minds receive the great lesson of the atonement, with its potency of moral truth and pathos of love. And all intelligences, faithful or fallen, must bow the knee at the name of Jesus. In the lesson of his cross all must learn the profoundest truth of the divine holiness and love ; of the evil and hopeless doom of unatoned or unrepented sin ; of the obligation and blessedness of obedience and love. All holy intelligences, bound in deeper love and loyalty to the divine throne by the moral power of the atonement, will forever stand the firmer in their obedience and bliss.[731] And the cross, once the stigma of most heinous crime and the sign of the deepest abasement of Christ, shall henceforth symbolize to all intelligences the sublimest moral truth in the universe.

[731]Bledsoe:Theodicy, pp. 204-208.

145. Chapter 11: Universality Of The Atonement.

Chapter 11 Universality Of The Atonement.

Arminianism and Calvinism, the two leading evangelical systems, inevitably join issue on the extent of the atonement. The former, by its principles of moral government, its doctrine of sin, and the cardinal facts of its soteriology, is determined to a theory of universality. The latter, by its doctrine of divine decrees, its principles of soteriology, and the nature of the atonement which it maintains, is determined to a theory of limitation. Hence the question of extent is more than a question of fact; it concerns the very doctrine of atonement. It specially concerns the doctrine of satisfaction. If in the divine destination the atonement is alike for all, and actually as well as potentially sufficient for all, then that doctrine cannot be true. Otherwise, all must be saved. Its advocates will not dissent from this.

There is a modified Calvinism which holds a general atonement; but the fact does not affect the correctness of our statement respecting Calvinism proper. And this modified view rather shifts than voids the very serious difficulties of limitation, or replaces them by others equally grave. The new theory originated early in the seventeenth century with Camero, an eminent Protestant, and professor of theology in France. Amyraut, Placaeus, and Cappellus were his associates, and active in the development and propagation of his views. Baxter was in their succession. Many Congregationalists and New School Presbyterians have held substantially the same theory.[732] [732] McClintock & Strong:Cyclopaedia, vol. i, pp. 209, 210. The doctrine, while maintaining a general atonement, holds in connection with it special election and a sovereign application of grace in the salvation of the elect. Christ died for all. The Gospel, with all its overtures of grace, may therefore be preached to all in the fullest consistency. But all reject its proffered grace. They do this from a moral inability to its acceptance; yet responsibly, because of a natural ability to the acceptance. Then God interposes and sovereignly applies the grace of atonement in the salvation of the elect. In addition to the two distinctions of supralapsarian and infralapsarian election, this doctrine really gives us a third, which might be called infraredemptarian. A universal atonement could have no universal gracious purpose when beforehand God had elected a part to the benefit of its grace and excluded the rest therefrom. Indeed, such a prior election and a universal atonement cannot stand together. An election after redemption may be consistent with this modified Calvinistic soteriology. The theory, however, is really valueless for the relief of the very serious difficulties which beset the doctrine of a limited atonement. But we here dismiss it as not directly in the line of the present question. This further may be said, without any retraction respecting Calvinism, that there is nothing in its deeper principles to limit the atonement, had it pleased God to destine it for all. Such a divine sovereignty as the system asserts was surely free to embrace all in the covenant of redemptive grace. But as the atonement of satisfaction, both by its own nature and by all the principles of soteriology scientifically united with it, must issue in the actual salvation of all for whom it is made, and as actual salvation is limited in fact, therefore such an atonement must have been limited in its divine destination. So it is held. The question of extent in the atonement has its issue and interest mainly between Arminianism and Calvinism.

Historically, its polemics is specially between them. Nor shall we turn aside in this discussion to treat its comparatively indifferent relation to other schemes. Both of these systems maintain the reality of an atonement in Christ as the only and necessary ground of forgiveness and salvation; and as the question of its nature lies specially between them, so does that of its extent.

I. Determining Law Of Extent.

1. Intrinsic Sufficiency for All.—If the son of a king should mediate in behalf of rebellious subjects, and so much should be required, in whatever form of personal sacrifice, for each individual forgiveness, then the extent of the forgiveness provided would be determined by the amount of sacrifice endured by the mediating son. The atonement in the mediation of Christ is on a different principle. So it is maintained, and has been, with the exception of such as hold the now generally discarded theory of an identical or equal penalty by substitution. Now by common consent the atonement is the same in intrinsic worth, and infinitely sufficient for all, whether really for all or for only a part. Hence, if there be a limitation to a part of mankind, it must be the result of a limiting divine destination, and not from any want of an intrinsic sufficiency for all. So far there is now no reason for any issue between Calvinism and Arminianism.

2. Divine Destination Determinative of Extent.—The notion of a redemption of humanity as a nature, and therefore of all individual partakers of the nature, is inherently erroneous and false to the true doctrine of atonement. The atonement is for sinners as such, and, therefore, must be for them as individual sinners. It is only as such that they can be either condemned or forgiven. It is only, therefore, in their distinct personalities that they can be either in need of an atonement or the recipients of its grace. This notion of the redemption of human nature as such, and therefore of all men, has never gained any formal position in Arminian theology; yet it has not been entirely absent from individual opinion and utterance. It has, probably, commended itself to some as strongly favoring the universality of the atonement. If founded in truth it would be conclusive of the question; but it is not founded in the truth, nor can it be, and for the reason previously given. Nor is such a position at all necessary to the grand truth of a universal atonement. The atonement is for individual men by virtue of a divine intention. While, therefore, sufficient for all, it is really for all or for a part only, according to that same intention. We are so writing in full knowledge of the fact that such is precisely and explicitly the Calvinistic position. We shun it not on that account. It is the truth in the case, and, therefore, we fully accept it. We shall suffer no detriment, but find an advantage, in the maintenance of a universal atonement. But Calvinistic divines, while holding a limited atonement, are most pronounced upon its intrinsic sufficiency for all. And they warmly repel all accusation of a contrary view, and all idea that a limitation of sufficiency can have any logical sequence to their doctrine. No Arminian can be more explicit or emphatic in the declaration of this sufficiency. The question of their consistency is another question, but one that does not properly arise here. But they are consistent and right in maintaining that the extent of the atonement is determined by its divine destination. While intrinsically sufficient for all, it is really for only a part, because God so intended it. Such is their ground.

We might verify these positions by numerous quotations from the highest Calvinistic authorities. Their truth, however, is so familiar to careful students of this subject, and so out of all question, as to be in little need of proof. A few quotations may be given in the way of example or illustration.

“The obedience and sufferings of Christ, considered in themselves, are, on account of the infinite dignity of his person, of that value as to have been sufficient for redeeming, not only all and every man in particular, but many myriads besides, had it so pleased God and Christ that he should have undertaken and satisfied for them.”[733] [733] Witsius:On the Covenants, vol. i, p. 225. On the question respecting the extent of the atonement: “It does not respect the value and sufficiency of the death of Christ, whether as to its intrinsic worth it might be sufficient for the redemption of all men. It is confessed by all, that since its value is infinite, it would have been sufficient for the redemption of the entire human family had it appeared good to God to extend it to the whole world. . . . The question which we discuss concerns the purpose of the Father in sending the Son, and the intention of the Son in dying.”[734] [734] Turrettin:Atonement of Christ, p. 123.

“The two sides of this question do not imply any difference of opinion with regard to the sufficiency of the death of Christ, or with regard to the number and character of those who shall eventually be saved. . . . But they differ as to the destination of the death of Christ; whether in the purpose of the Father and the will of the Son it respected all mankind, or only those persons to whom the benefit of it is at length to be applied.”[735] [735] Hill:Lectures in Divinity, pp. 505, 506.

“All Calvinists agree in maintaining earnestly that Christ’s obedience and sufferings were of infinite intrinsic value in the eye of the law, and that there was no need for him to obey or suffer an iota more nor a moment longer in order to secure, if God so willed, the salvation of every man, woman, and child that ever lived.”[736] We add a few references.[737] [736] A. A. Hodge:The Atonement, p. 356.

[737]Owen: Works (Goold’s), vol. x, p. 297; Schaff:Creeds of Christendom, vol. i, pp. 520, 521; Symington:Atonement and Intercession, p. 185; Smeaton:The Apostles’ Doctrine of Atonement, p. 538; Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol, ii, p. 544; Cunningham:Historical Theology, vol. ii, p. 332.

Whether such a view has scientific consistency is a question which concerns not us, but those who maintain it. Dr. Schaff has real ground for saying, as he artlessly does in the reference just given: “Full logical consistency would require us to measure the value of Christ’s atonement by the extent of its actual benefit or availability, and either to expand or to contract it according to the number of the elect.” If the atonement is by penal substitution, why did Christ suffer a far deeper punishment than strict justice required as a full equivalent for the penal dues of the elect? We know that the excess of merit is ascribed to the infinite rank of Christ. But, on this doctrine, his penal suffering is a necessary element of atonement: and it is still true that he suffered a deeper punishment than justice required. Was this just? Would God so punish him when a far less measure would be all that justice required? The rectoral atonement has a place for the utmost vicarious suffering of Christ: but the satisfaction atonement has no place for any excess of substitutional punishment. There is an excess without any claim or ground in justice, or any end in grace. Punishment, without an adequate ground in justice, is itself an injustice. This is as true in the case of a substitute in penalty as in that of the actual offender; and as true of all excess of punishment above the requirement of justice as of punishment without any ground in justice. And what a waste of atoning worth! All the excess of unapplied grace—enough for all the finally lost and infinitely more—goes for nothing. And those who so cry out against a universal atonement as implying that Christ suffered and died for many in vain are thoroughly estopped by the inevitable implications of their own doctrine. Yet satisfactionists will not surrender this infinite sufficiency. In maintaining a

limited atonement they have the profoundest need for it. They could not presume to vindicate the universal overture of atoning grace upon the ground of an atonement confessed to be sufficient for only a part.

It is surely clear enough, from the quotations and references given, that Calvinism holds the divine destination of the atonement to be determinative of its extent. We fully accept this position. Calvinism is right, not in the limitation of the atonement, but in the determining law of its extent.

3. The True Inquiry.—If the son of a king should interpose in atonement for rebellious subjects, any limitation must be imposed either by the will and purpose of the sovereign atoned, or by the will and purpose of the atoning son. No other has any power in the case. And if we knew the pleasure of each we could determine therefrom the extent of the reconciliation for which provision is made. The atonement is made between the Father and the Son. If limited, either the Father would not accept, or the Son would not make, an atonement for all. There is no other law of limitation. The true inquiry, therefore, respects the will of the Father and the Son, or what was the pleasure of each respecting the extent of the atonement. In this we are still in full accord with the Calvinistic position. This also is clear from the quotations and references previously given. To these many others might be added. “The pivot on which the controversy—respecting the extent of the atonement—turns is, what was the purpose of the Father in sending his Son to die, and the object which Christ had in view in dying ; not what is the value and efficacy of his death.”[738] “But the question does truly and only relate to the design of the Father and of the Son in respect to the persons for whose benefit the atonement was made ; that is, to whom, in the making of it, they intended it should be applied.[739] [738] Turrettin:The Atonement of Christ, p. 124.

[739]A. A. Hodge:The Atonement, p. 359.

II. Pleasure Of The Father. On such a question it is proper to conclude the pleasure of the Father from his own revealed character. There are intimately related facts of decisive testimony, and, also, divine utterances authoritative in the case.

1. Question of his Sovereignty.—No plea of the divine sovereignty can bar the inquiry into the divine pleasure respecting the extent of the atonement. In any case, the question is not so much what God might have done as what he was disposed to do and really has done. We raise no question respecting a true divine sovereignty, but discard a purely arbitrary one as utterly inconsistent with the character of God and the great facts of his providence. Even an absolute arbitrary sovereignty might as well conclude for a general as for a limited atonement. But God does not rule in such a sovereignty. All rewards of men according to moral character are to the contrary. So are the revealed decisions of the final judgment. And so is the atonement itself. An absolute sovereignty could need no atonement in order to forgiveness, or in determining the happy destinies of men. Such an administration would be far less inconsistent with the divine character than the unconditional reprobation, or equally dooming pretention, of the great part of mankind. And if there be a few facts or utterances which might be construed in favor of an arbitrary sovereignty, they must yield to the great facts, with the atonement itself, which prove the contrary. It is written, and often applied in this connection, “Even so. Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight” (Matthew 11:26).But can the forced application of such a text conclude this question? And did it seem good in the sight of the heavenly Father to limit an atonement sufficient for all to the benefit of only a part? Good how, or for what? Good as the expression of a sovereignty which his

providence and the atonement itself disclaim? Good as a revelation of justice or grace? Good as a salutary lesson of moral government? It could have no such reason, because an arbitrary sovereignty can have no other reason for its acts than its own arbitrariness

2. In one Relation to All.—God is the Creator and Father of all men (Numbers 16:22; Numbers 27:16; Acts 17:28; Hebrews 12:9). There is, therefore, no difference of divine relationship which could be a reason for limitation in the atonement. This point will carry us further. The atonement originated in the divine compassion, and in its provisions and purposes answers to its yearnings. One reason of this compassion was in the divine Fatherhood. God so loved us as wretched and perishing, but especially because we were his wretched and perishing children. Hence the very reason of his redeeming love was common in all. It could not, therefore, have been the pleasure of God to destine the atonement to the favor of only a part, when his love, in which it originated, equally embraced all. And this universal divine love witnesses to a universal atonement.

3. All in a Common State of Evil.—As all men appeared in the vision of the divine prescience, there was no difference in their state of evil, certainly none which could be a reason for a partial redemption. Their depravity had a common source and was a common ruin. And however they might be foreseen to differ in actual life, satisfactionists themselves vigorously deny any and every thing in them as the reason of the alleged limitation. Hence there is not any peculiar evil in a part as the reason of a partial redemption. This point, also, will carry us further. Again, the atonement originated in the divine compassion. God so loved us as to provide a ransom for our souls. This could be no other than a love of compassion, because the objects of it are sinners and enemies (Romans 5:8-10; Ephesians 2:4-5). Why this pitying love? Its subjective form in God has an objective reason in us. That reason lies in the miseries of our moral ruin. And could this pitying love impose upon itself an arbitrary limitation when the very reason of it existed alike in all? And could it be the pleasure of the Father to limit the atonement to a part when his compassion, in which it originated, equally embraced all?

4. Voice of the Divine Perfections.—The atonement has a most intimate relation to the divine perfections. Hence they have testimony to give respecting the divine pleasure as to its extent.

Divine justice has no unsatisfiable claim. And the redeeming work of Christ, if so intended, is sufficient for its full contentment in behalf of all who accept its grace. So the most rigid partialism will affirm. Forgiveness on the ground of such an atonement tarnishes no glory of Justice, nor sacrifices any right or interest of moral government. Hence all reason for limitation in divine justice is excluded. The divine holiness has no reason for limitation. If the atonement is intrinsically efficacious in the sanctification of all the objects of its favor, then the broader its extent the greater the interest of holiness secured. Indeed, such higher realization of holiness must have been a great reason for the divine preference of a universal redemption. As the atonement is a sufficient ground of forgiveness, and, in the case of every sinner saved, a higher revelation of the divine perfections than could be realized in his merited penal doom, so the broader the atonement the greater the good attained. There would also be the greater service to the ends of moral government. Hence, on either theory of atonement, the broader its destination, the broader is its helpful grace and the more salutary its moral lessons. Can it, therefore, be consistent with the divine wisdom to prefer the less good when, through the same atonement, the infinitely greater might be procured?

Beyond these favoring facts, the extent of the atonement is a question of the divine goodness. What is the answer of that goodness? It is really voiced in the sublime words, “God is love!” A God of love must prefer the happiness of all. And as in very truth—as according to all the deeper principles of Calvinism—there was no hinderance in the case, his good pleasure must have been for a universal atonement.

God has spoken to this point so directly, and in such utterances, as to put the fact of his good pleasure for a universal atonement out of all question (Ezekiel 33:11; John 3:16; 1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9). Is it true, as he affirms under most solemn self-adjuration, that he has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that he turn from his way and live? Is it true that he so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son for its redemption? Is it true that he will have all men to be saved? Is it true that he is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish? Can it be, then, that in the absence of all hinderance, and with the presence of an infinitely greater good, he preferred a limited atonement, and sovereignly destined one intriusically sufficient for all to the favor of only a part? It cannot be. And the Father placed no narrower limit to the grace of redemption than the uttermost circle of humanity.

III. Pleasure Of The Son.

1. Application of Preceding Facts.—All the facts and principles respecting the pleasure of the Father have full application in the case of the Son. They are of one mind, and the same objects of redeeming love are before them. There is equally with the Son an absence of all reason for a preference of limitation in the atonement, and the presence of the same reasons for his pleasure in its universality.

2. Atoning Work the Same.—In an atonement by identical or equal penalty, the greater sacrifice required by the greater extent might have been a reason with the Son for limitation. But the atonement is not such. And no lower step of abasement nor deeper anguish was required to embrace all within the sufficiency of its redemptive grace. The vicarious sufferings of Christ as actually endured are all-sufficient for a universal atonement.

We are here in full accord with the highest authorities on the doctrine of satisfaction. This will appear on a recurrence to citations and references previously given. We may add one here: “All that Christ did and suffered would have been necessary had only one human soul been the object of redemption; and nothing different, and nothing more, would have been required had every child of Adam been saved through his blood.”[740] While this view is utterly inconsistent with the principles of satisfactionists, it shows equally well their position on the question in hand. And they ever allege this sufficiency as the chief ground on which they attempt a defense of the divine sincerity in a universal overture of redemptive grace. If, therefore, the sufferings of Christ as actually endured are sufficient for the salvation of all men, there could have been no reason or motive from the amount of suffering necessary to give him preference for a limited atonement.

[740]Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, p. 545.

3. A Question of his Love.—The question, then, respecting the pleasure of the Son has its answer from his love. That answer must be decisive. Nor is it in any doubt. The Son of God, who in pitying love to sinners parted with his glory and humbled himself to the deepest suffering and shame, was not wanting in redeeming love to all men. And it was his good pleasure that his atonement should

be for all. His cross so affirms.

IV. Scripture Testimony.

Under this heading we might discuss at length the Scripture texts usually brought in proof respectively of limitation and universality in the atonement. This, however, is not our purpose; and a brief treatment will answer for the issue.

1. Proof-texts for Limitation.—The texts of Scripture more directly applied in proof of a limited atonement are not numerous. Nor will they require a critical or elaborate exegesis to show either their affirmative inconclusiveness or their utter impotence against the many which so explicitly assert its universality. We shall give the texts for limitation by reference and without full citation. And for the sake of a manifest fairness we will give them from a master in Calvinism, with his own italicizing and connecting and explanatory words.

“The mission and death of Christ are restricted to a limited number—to his people, his sheep, his friends, his Church, his body; and nowhere extended to all men severally and collectively. Thus Christ is ‘called Jesus, because he shall save his people from their sins’ (Matthew 1:21). He is called the Saviour of his body (Ephesians 5:23); ‘the good shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep’ (John 10:15), and ‘for his friends’ (John 15:13). He is said ‘to die that he might gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad’ (John 11:52). It is said that Christ ‘hath purchased the Church with his own blood’ (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 5:25-26). If Christ died for every one of Adam’s posterity why should the Scriptures so often restrict the object of his death to a few?”[741] [741] Turrettin:The Atonement of Christ, pp. 125, 126. This should be noted first, that in all the texts given there is not one word which limits the atonement to the subjects named. And with infinitely more reason and force may we ask. If the atonement is for only a few, why do the Scriptures so often assert that it is for all? If, as assumed, it is in its own nature necessarily saving, and the actual saving is included in it, then, of course, there is a limitation. But it is not such. Sufficient proof to the contrary has already been given. Nothing respecting the atonement is more certain than the real conditionality of its saving grace. Hence, it is a mere assumption that the atonement is necessarily saving, and, therefore, that the actual saving is the extent of it. And the elimination of this assumption invalidates the sum of the author’s argument. Christ did die for the subjects named in these texts; but as they are without a restricting word, they are without proof of a limited atonement.

Stress is laid upon the terms, his people, his sheep, his friends, his Church, his body, as though they designated a distinct and limited class for which Christ died. They are a distinct and limited class, but as actually saved, not simply as redeemed, and especially not before their redemption. There is no such a class except as the fruit of atonement. Hence, there could be no such a restricted class for which Christ died. The atonement, as the only ground of their peculiar relation to Christ, must precede that relation, and be made for them as lost sinners, ungodly, and enemies (Romans 5:6-10; Ephesians 2:11-22). They can enter into such a peculiar relation to Christ only through the grace of an atonement previously made for them. That same atonement, previously made for them as sinners, was so made for all men.

If these texts prove a limited atonement they must be inconsistent with its universality; or, if consistent with this, they do not prove a limited one. There is not the least difficulty in this

consistency. It is true, indeed, that Christ died for all the actual sharers in the saving grace of atonement. And there are special reasons for emphasizing the fact. Thus Christ impresses upon their minds the greatness of his love to them, and the greatness of the benefit received through the grace of his redemption, and so enforces his own claim upon their love. But no law of interpretation either requires or implies the assumed restriction in such a use of terms. And the scheme of universality can use them just as freely and consistently as the most rigid partialism.

2. Proof-texts for Universality.—There is one class with the universal terms all and every. “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time” (1 Timothy 2:5-6). Yes, to be testified as a truth, and not to be witnessed against. And the text gives its own testimony. We know not a formula for the better expression of a universal atonement. “For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe” (1 Timothy 4:10). If God is not in some similarity of meaning the Saviour of all men, as he is specially the Saviour of believers, there is here a comparison without any basis in analogy. If many are foreordained to eternal destruction, or merely under the preterition of a limited atonement equally dooming them to perdition, God is not in any sense the Saviour of all men. But with a universal atonement, whereby the salvation of all is possible, as that of believers is actual, there is a clear sense in which he is the Saviour of all men, and a sense consistent with the implied analogy of the text.

“But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man” (Hebrews 2:9). Every man is every man. The identity of the two terms of a proposition does not exclude their equivalence. Rather, we have the simple truth that a fact is what it is. And no skill in exegesis can reduce this text to the measure of a limited atonement.

There is another class which affirms the redemption of the world, and in the truest sense of a universal atonement (John 1:29; John 3:16-17; John 12:47; 2 Corinthians 5:18-19; 1 John 2:1-2; 1 John 4:14). The weakness of all attempts to reduce these texts to the meaning of a limited atonement really concedes their irreducible universality. The attempt requires an identification of the world with the elect. They must have one sense, in that both must mean the same persons. These texts would thus be classed with the proof-texts of limitation, previously considered. World would be one in meaning with the people, sheep, friends. Church, body of Christ. Will it bear such a sense? The exegete has not yet arisen who can answer affirmatively and make good his answer.

3. Redemption in Extent of the Evil of Sin.—More than once is the co-extension of sin and atonement set forth.

“Therefore, as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life” (Romans 5:18). The “all men” in relation to Adam are all in the fullest sense. No real Calvinist will question it. But the “all men” in relation to the redemption in Christ must be all in the same sense of universality. Indeed, the “all men” in the two relations to Adam and Christ are the very same; and only a forced interpretation could give less extension to the term in the latter case than in the former. The text clearly gives us a universal atonement.

“For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead : and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again” (2 Corinthians 5:14-15). In the full sense of Scripture, Christ died for men as in a state of sin and death, and only for such. But he died for all; therefore all were dead. Thus, in a somewhat syllogistic statement the text gives the universality of the atoning death of Christ as the major premise. It is thus placed as a truth above question. For “all dead” some give the rendering “all died”—died in and with Christ.[742] Thereon an attempt is made to limit the atonement to the elect. We will not contend about the new rendering, but must dispute the limiting interpretation. Candlish here finds the Headship of Christ and the doctrine of imputation of sin to him, and of all that he does and suffers to those whom he represents, in a sense “that whatever befalls the Head must be held to pass, and must actually pass, efficaciously, to all whom he represents.” This is the necessary salvation of all for whom Christ died. Hence, he must have died for only a part, or the apostle’s argument is implicated in Universalism: “Not only is the argument thus hopelessly perplexed, but, as in the former case, it is found to tell in favor of the notion of universal salvation rather than any thing else; making actual salvation, through the death and life of Christ, co-extensive with death through the sin of Adam.” We could not deplore such a realization. Nor could Dr. Candlish. His trouble is with the logic of the case. Actual salvation is limited in fact; therefore, an atonement necessarily saving must be limited. He is logically right; but the trouble comes from his erroneous doctrine of satisfaction. With an atonement in vicarious suffering sufficient for all, but really conditional in the saving result, its universality is in full accord with a limited actual salvation. There is, therefore, no exigency of interpretation from a necessary harmony of fact and doctrine, requiring either the exclusion of the manifest comparison of sin and atonement in co-extension, or the reduction of a universal term to the meaning of a part. And the text above cited, despite all the efforts of a limiting scheme, is clear proof of a universal atonement.

[742]Candlish:The Atonement, p. 62; Alford, in loc.

4. Testimony of the Great Commission.—“And he said unto them. Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:15-16). This great commission laid its solemn charge upon the apostles with all the obligation and authority which the Master, now risen and with all power in his hand, could impose. So it comes down the ages upon all Churches and ministers. And so all true Churches and ministers receive it. We thus have certain indisputable facts intimately related to the extent of the atonement, and decisive of its universality. The very terms of the great commission are decisive of this, that the Gospel is for all. And its universal preaching should be, and in the very nature of it must be, the free offer of saving grace in Christ to all. The most rigid limitationists fully admit this.[743] Indeed, they have no alternative. Nor need we insist upon what no one questions.

[743]Symington:Atonement and Intercession, pp. 209, 210. The Gospel is the overture of salvation. All to whom it is preached may accept it and be saved. To this end it is preached. And the same privilege would ever accompany the Gospel, were it fully preached in all the world. Nor need we here contend for what is fully conceded.[744] [744] Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, p. 558.

It is the duty of all to whom the Gospel comes to accept it in faith, and a faith unto salvation. The same would be true, were it m the fullest sense preached to all. This obligation is in the very terms of the great commission. Hence, eternal destinies are determined according as the Gospel is received or rejected: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” Only on an obligation to a true, saving faith in Christ could our action in the case have such consequence. Other texts equally express or imply the same duty of a saving faith (John 3:14-16; John 3:18; John 3:36). We shall have everlasting life or shall perish, according as we believe or believe not ; are in condemnation or free from it, according to the same action ; are heirs of life eternal or under the abiding wrath of God, as we believe on the Son or do not believe. Limitationists concede and maintain this duty of faith.[745] Hence, we need not further support what is not disputed. Indeed, special account is made of this obligation for the vindication of divine justice in the final doom of unbelievers.

[745]Princeton Essays, First Series, p. 387; Crawford:The Scripture Doctrine of the Atonement, p, 302; Candlish:The Atonement, pp, 173, 260. The duty of a saving faith in Christ implies an actual grace of salvation in him. The required faith must terminate in his redeeming death. An attainable grace of salvation absolutely conditions the obligation of such a faith. But, on a limited atonement, the Gospel comes to many for whom there really is no such grace. Nor will the assertion of an intrinsic sufficiency for all void this consequence. Then can this faith be the duty of any one for whom there is no saving grace? How can it be? It has no objective truth, and would be a trust in what does not exist. Nor could the salvation possibly accrue upon the faith. And has Christ enjoined the offer of an impossible blessing? Has he commanded faith in what is not real? Has he made the unbelief of what is not true a sin of exceeding demerit and damnableness? No, he has not done any of these things. We can most positively so deny, but only on the ground of a real atonement for all. On a limited atonement, the duty of this faith must be most difficult—too difficult, indeed, to be so responsible. The faith implies, not only an intrinsically sufficient, but an actually sufficient, atonement for every one exercising it. Faith in this fact of an actual atonement must precede, as its necessary condition, the faith of a saving trust in Christ. This is denied.[746] Both authors given in the reference properly distinguish the mental acts of one in believing that Christ died for him, and in believing in him for salvation; but, strange enough, both deny a necessary precedence to the former act of faith, and, indeed, give precedence to the latter. We know not the mental philosophy by which they place these facts in this order. It must originate in the exigency of their soteriology rather than in the careful study and scientific use of the facts of psychology. But no man ever did or can believe in Christ unto salvation without first believing that he died for him. This is the necessary order of the mental facts. And it is utterly nugatory to plead that no one is commanded first to believe that Christ died for him. This is not the point; the necessity arises, not from the immediate command of such a preceding faith, but from inevitable laws of the mind, under the obligation of a divinely enjoined saving faith in Christ. Such is the necessary order of kindred facts: “For he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6). Here faith in God, as existing and good, must precede all successful coming to him in an earnest seeking and a true faith of trust for his blessing. There is the same necessary order of facts respecting our faith in Christ: first, in believing that he died for us; then, in a sure trust of faith in him for salvation.

[746]Turrettin:Atonement of Christ, p. 178; Smeaton:The Doctrine of the Atonement as Taught by Christ Himself, p. 323.

It is here that, on a limited atonement, the exceeding difficulty of the required faith arises. If Christ died for only a part, and, as many hold, for only the far smaller part of adults, no man has, have, previous to his conversion, satisfactory evidence that there is an atonement for him. And, according to the doctrine of chance as applicable in the case, the presumption is strongly against it. How, then, can he savingly trust in Christ? It is nothing to the point to answer, that he does not know that he is left without redemption; for what he needs to be assured of, as the necessary condition of a saving faith in Christ, is, that he did redeem him.

We group the facts given us under the great commission. The Gospel is for all, and in the free overture of saving grace Christ. Salvation is the privilege of all to whom the gracious overture is made. A saving faith in the redemption of

Christ is the duty of all who have the Gospel. These are not mere inferences, but facts clearly given in the Scriptures, and fully conceded by the advocates of a limited atonement. By all the force of their logic they witness to the fact of a real atonement for all. They have no other ground. The overture of saving grace has no other; nor the privilege of salvation; nor the duty of a saving faith in Christ; nor the guilt and damnableness of unbelief. Therefore, these facts imperatively require a universal atonement, and, so requiring, affirm its truth.

V. Fallacies In Defense Of Limitation. The law of scientific accordance in vitally related truths and facts makes very serious trouble for the theory of a limited atonement. Certain very discordant but admitted facts require reconciliation with the limitation, or, rather, with the divine sincerity, as concerned therein. We shall show that the attempted reconciliation proceeds with fallacies, and, therefore, ends in fallacy.

1. Facts Admitted.—These facts were given with the great commission in the previous section, and here need only to be recalled. The Gospel is for all. Salvation is the privilege of all under the Gospel. A saving faith in Christ is the duty of all who hear the Gospel. Such are the facts. They have the authority of Scripture. Limitationists fully admit them, as manifest in references previously given. Such references might be increased to a great number. No modern Calvinistic author of any influence will question them. The common attempt to reconcile them with the divine sincerity is in their full admission.

2. Inconsistent with the Divine Sincerity.—There is here no issue either on the admitted facts or on the divine sincerity: the question respects the consistency of the facts with that sincerity, on the ground of a limited atonement. We assert their inconsistency, and accuse their attempted reconciliation of egregious fallacy. On a limited atonement, the Gospel cannot be sincerely preached to all. Nor can salvation be the privilege of all. Nor can a saving faith in Christ be the duty of all, nor of any for whom his death was not divinely destined as an atonement. Such a divine overture of grace and requirement of faith would be to the unredeemed a mockery and a cruelty. These facts go into the present issue. There are no other facts or vindicatory pleas which can void the force of their logic. They do not implicate the divine sincerity, but conclude the universality of the atonement as the only ground of their consistency with that sincerity.

3. Sufficiency of Atonement in Vindication.—The ground on which limitationists specially attempt a vindication of the divine sincerity in a universal overture of saving grace, with the other admitted facts, is an alleged sufficiency of the atonement for all.[747] The fact is so familiar that there is but slight reason for any reference. We have previously shown how fully the advocates of a limited atonement maintain its intrinsic sufficiency, in just what Christ did and suffered, for the salvation of all men. Thus they have their position of defense in the present issue. Whether, on their doctrine of atonement, there is a real and available sufficiency, such as will answer for the required vindication, we shall directly consider. For the present it may suffice to note the ground on which the vindication is attempted.

[747]Princeton Essays, First Series, p. 291; Symington:Atonement and Intercession, pp. 186, 213.

4. True Sense of Sufficiency.—We must distinguish between a mere intrinsic and an actual sufficiency. There is reason for the distinction. Satisfactionists fully recognize it, especially in application to the redemptive work of Christ. An intrinsic sufficiency is from what a thing is in its own capability. An actual sufficiency is from its appropriation. A life-boat may have ample capacity for the rescue of twenty shipwrecked mariners; but if appropriated, and limited by the appropriation, to the rescue of only ten, the actual and available sufficiency is only so much. One man has money enough for the liberation of twenty prisoners for debt; but whether it shall be available, and so actually sufficient, depends upon his use or appropriation of it. Even if he should appropriate the whole sum, but at the same time restrict it to the benefit of a fixed number—ten of the twenty—then, while intrinsically sufficient for the liberation of all, it would be actually sufficient and available for only the designated ten. The atonement of satisfaction must yield to such a consequence. The redemptive mediation of Christ, in just what he did and suffered, has intrinsic sufficiency for the salvation of all men, but there is a limiting divine destination. Such are the facts as given by satisfactionists themselves. The sufficiency for all is only potential, not actual from a universal destination. But for the divine vindication in a universal overture of saving grace in Christ, and in holding all to so responsible a duty of faith in him, a mere intrinsic sufficiency will not answer. Only an actual and available sufficiency will so answer.

5. Sufficiency only with Divine Destination.—The sufferings of Christ have no atoning value except as they were vicariously endured for sinners with the purpose of an atonement. His incarnation and death are conceivable and possible entirely apart from the purposes of redemption. In that case they could have no atoning element. All atonement is absolutely conditioned by his so suffering for sinners. The extent of the atonement is thus determined by its divine destination. This agrees with the above principle. And, as we have seen, it is a primary principle in the doctrine of satisfaction. Hence, as atonement is necessarily conditioned on the divine appointment and acceptance of the sufferings of Christ as a substitute in behalf of sinners, so the divine destination absolutely fixes the limit of its extent. There is no atonement beyond. As the sufferings of Christ are an atonement for sin only with their divine destination to that end, so they have no atoning value for any one beyond those for whom they were redemptively destined. And the plea of a sufficient atonement for all, while its limited destination is firmly maintained, is the sheerest fallacy. It is as utterly insufficient for all for whom it was not divinely destined as though no atonement had been made for any. Hence the alleged ground on which it is attempted to vindicate the divine sincerity in the universal overture of saving grace, and the imperative requirement of saving faith in Christ, is no ground at all.

6. Limited in the Scheme of Satisfaction.—If we test the assumption of a universal sufficiency in the atonement by the principles of the satisfaction theory, we shall further see how utterly groundless it is. This is an entirely fair method. For unless there be a sufficiency according to these principles, it is the sheerest assumption, and the vindicatory use of it utterly groundless. And this we maintain, that the satisfaction atonement is, from its own principles, of limited sufficiency. In this theory atonement is by substitutional punishment in satisfaction of justice. Sin must be punished according to its desert. Any omission would be an injustice in God. So the theory maintains, as we have shown. There is no salvation for any sinner except through a substitute in penalty. There is no atonement for any one except in penal substitution. But by divine covenant and destination Christ suffered the punishment of sin for only an elect part, not for all. So the theory asserts. Such an atonement is as utterly insufficient for any and all for whose sins penal satisfaction is not rendered to justice as though no atonement were made, or there were no Christ to make one. From its own principles the atonement of satisfaction is necessarily efficient just as broadly as it is sufficient. The necessary elements of its sufficiency must give it efficiency in the actual salvation of all for whom it is made. If Christ, as accepted substitute, took the place of an elect part under both precept and penalty, and rendered full satisfaction in respect of both, of course they must all be saved. Their repentance and faith are the purchase of redemptive grace, and must take their place as necessary facts in a process of salvation monergistically wrought.

While such is the logic of the principles of satisfaction, its advocates fully support the same view. The fact was given in previous citations and references. Many such might be added, though a few will suffice. “His atonement may be truly called ‘a finished work,’ securing not only a possible salvation, but an actual salvation.”[748] “If the fruits of the death of Christ be to be communicated unto us upon a condition, and that condition to be among those fruits, and be itself to be absolutely communicated upon no condition, then all the fruits of the death of Christ are as absolutely procured for them for whom he died as if no condition had been prescribed; for these things come all to one. . . . Faith, which is this condition, is itself procured by the death of Christ for them for whom he died, to be freely bestowed on them, without the prescription of any such condition as on whose fulfilling the collation of it should depend.”[749] “But God, in his infinite mercy, having determined to save a multitude whom no man could number, gave them to his Son as his inheritance, provided he would assume their nature and fulfill all righteousness in their stead. In the accomplishment of this plan Christ did come into the world, and did obey and suffer in the place of those thus given to him, and for their salvation. This was the definite object of his mission, and, therefore, his death had a reference to them which it could not possibly have to those whom God determined to leave to the just recompense of their sins.”[750] Respecting the atonement for the elect: “Is it any thing short of a real and personal substitution of Christ in their room and stead, as their representative and surety, fulfilling all their legal obligations, and undertaking and meeting all their legal liabilities? Is it any thing short of such a substitution as must insure that, in consequence of it, they are now, by a legal right—in terms of the law which he as their covenant head has magnified and made honorable in their behalf—free from the imputation of legal blame; that as one with him in his righteousness they are judicially absolved and acquitted, justified from all their transgressions, and invested with a valid legal title to eternal life and salvation?”[751] [748] Crawford:Scripture Doctrine of the Atonement, p. 200.

[749]Owen: Works (Goold’s), vol. x, p. 450.

[750]Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, p. 547.

[751]Candlish:The Atonement, pp. 247, 2348. For like views see also Smeaton:The Apostles' Doctrine of the Atonement, pp. 537-540; Hill:Lectures in Divinity, pp. 510, 511; Witsius:The Covenants, vol. i, p. 206.

Such is the atonement of satisfaction. From its own nature it must save all for whom it is made. It has ever waged war upon Arminianism for the denial of this causal efficiency as being a denial of the true nature of atonement. It is such that, were it for all, then all must be saved. Hence it is denied that it is for all. A limited actual salvation is ever given as the proof of a limited atonement. Such is the only possible atonement. The facts of substitution in Christ necessary to an atonement must be efficient in the salvation of all whom he substitutes. Is such an atonement sufficient for all? It is made, as maintained, on a covenant between the Father and the Son. By their consenting pleasure it is for a given number of elect souls, and for no others. We accept the divine destination as the determining law of its extent. We give full credit to its advocates for asserting its intrinsic sufficiency for all. But an intrinsic or potential sufficiency is one thing, while an actual and available sufficiency is another. Recurring to the citations of limitationists in the assertion of this sufficiency for all, we often find a qualified expression after this manner: The mediation of Christ, in just what he did and suffered, is sufficient for the salvation of all men, had it pleased the Father and the Son to destine it for all. But this destination is denied. It is the determining fact of a limited atonement. Hence, on this doctrine, there are many whose place Christ did not take in either precept or penalty. The fact concludes the question of sufficiency against the limitationists. They must not ignore their own absolutely limiting doctrine, nor must they, in the exigency of defense, be allowed to call a contingent sufficiency—a sufficiency that might have been but is not—a real sufficiency. They must abide by their own principles.

How can there be a sufficient atonement for the non-elect, when according to the principles and averments of this theory there is for them no atonement? Will limitationists answer? Did Christ die for the non-elect? Did he fulfill for them the righteousness which the divine law imperatively requires, and without which there is no salvation? Did he suffer the merited punishment of their sins, also held to be absolutely necessary to their discharge? A limited atonement has only a negative answer. Where, then, is the sufficiency for them? The doctrine must deny its most fundamental principles even to pretend to a sufficiency. The atonement is now, but the work of Christ in making it is in past time. Its extent was then absolutely determined. It is for those for whom it was made, and never can be for others. The principles of the doctrine so determine it. An immutable divine decree so bounds it.[752] And only with egregious fallacy can there be even a pretense of sufficiency in the atonement for the non-elect.

[752]The Westminster Confession, chap, iii, secs. iii-vii.

Then, on the doctrine of a limited atonement, it is impossible to reconcile the free and universal overture of saving grace in Christ, and the imperative duty of all who hear the Gospel savingly to believe in him, with the divine sincerity. There is for many no atonement or saving grace. The offered grace is not in the offer. The utmost faith is utterly groundless and delusive. Could one non-elect soul, held to the duty of a saving trust in Christ under the penalty of endless perdition, have a faith equal in strength to the combined faith of millions saved, it would be fruitless of forgiveness and salvation to him, as a soul without the substitution of Christ cannot be forgiven

and saved. So the doctrine of satisfaction must affirm. What is the conclusion? The real and unquestioned facts are still before us. On the one hand are the universal overture of saving grace and the responsible duty of saving faith; on the other, the divine sincerity therein. There is no issue between them. There is no question of any such issue. The question is whether the former are consistent with the latter on the ground of a limited atonement? Certainly they are not. Nor can the divine sincerity be thereon vindicated. We give this discussion of the question in proof. The attempted reconciliation proceeds with fallacies and ends in fallacy. The inevitable conclusion is the universality of the atonement.

7. Assumption of Only a Seeming Inconsistency.—With seeming doubt as to the satisfactoriness of the preceding defense, it is assumed that, after all, the admitted facts may not be inconsistent with the divine sincerity; that our inability to reconcile them is not conclusive of an absolute contrariety; that to higher intelligences, and especially to God, they may appear in full harmony. “That we are incapable of reconciling them does not prove them to be irreconcilable. God may be capable of reconciling them; creatures of a higher intellectual and moral rank may see their reconcilableness; or we ourselves, when elevated to a brighter sphere of being, may yet be fully equal to the difficult problem.”[753] But so conjectural a solution will not answer for so real a difficulty. And there are contrarieties absolutely irreconcilable. Such is the case here. Our highest reason must so pronounce. We cannot rationally go behind it, not even hypothetically. We may accept in faith what is above our reason, but we cannot by any mere conjecture solve, nor even relieve, a difficulty which is contradictory to our reason. This is the insuperable difficulty here. God cannot sincerely offer saving grace to any soul when the grace is not in the offer. Nor can he righteously impose the duty of a saving faith in Christ upon any one for whom there is no salvation in him.

[753]Symington:Atonement and Intercession, p. 210.

8. Mixed State of Elect and Non-elect.—Another vindication is attempted on the assumption of a necessity arising out of the mixed state of elect and non-elect. The only alternative to an indiscriminate offer of grace and requirement of faith would be an open discrimination of the two classes. “The warrant of faith is the testimony of God in the Gospel. And, it may be asked, could not this testimony have been made only to those to whom it was his design to give grace to receive it? We answer: Not without doing away with that mixed state of human existence which God has appointed for important purposes; not without making a premature disclosure of who are the objects of his special favor and who are not, to the entire subversion of that moral economy under which it is the good pleasure of his will that men should subsist in this world; not without even subverting the very design of salvation by faith.”[754] [754] Symington:Atonement and Intercession, p. 212. The reasons alleged for secrecy in the elective and reprobative purposes of God are without force; certainly without sufficient force for his vindication in a graceless offer of saving grace in Christ. The mixed state of elect and reprobate would continue as it is. The moral economy under which we live would remain. It is God’s own, and of his appointment. And has he so ordered it as to require of him a free overture of saving grace to many for whom there is none? Nor would the plan of salvation by faith be subverted. Many, without any question of an atonement for them, refuse all saving faith in Christ; while many, equally without doubt of an atonement for them, do savingly believe in him. With this discrimination, there would still be a proper sphere of saving faith for the elect; and, on the doctrine of satisfaction, the faith would be under the same

determining law as now. This disclosure would accord with the facts in the case, and be far better than a false show of grace. It must be made some time, and is just the same if made now. Nor would the destiny of any soul be affected thereby. Destiny is determined by the decree of God, not by the disclosure of its elective discriminations. Believers and unbelievers would be the very same—neither more nor less nor other in either class, as the immutable decree of election and preterition is immutable. There is no urgent reason for this indiscriminate overture of partial grace; while no urgency could justify it. Let the atonement be preached, with the announcement of its partialism, and that the non-elect have no interest in it and no duty respecting it, and the result, as determined by an absolute sovereignty working monergistically, will be the very same. And a limited atonement still contradicts facts divinely given. It must, therefore, be an error.

9. Distinction of Secret and Preceptive Divine Will.—As a last resort, the reconciliation of this overture of grace and requirement of faith with the divine sincerity is attempted on a distinction between the secret or decretive and the preceptive will of God. “The purposes of God are not the rule of our duty, and, whatever God may design to do, we are to act in accordance with his preceptive will.”[755] “The Gospel call may be regarded as expressive of man’s duty rather than of the divine intention.”[756] Is this reasoning? The character of Dr. Hodge and Dr. Symington will not allow us to question its sincerity. But can the precepts and purposes of God run counter to each other? Can he openly offer a grace, and with the forms of gracious invitation and promise, which he secretly intends not to give, and by an eternal purpose withholds? Can he openly command the duty of a saving faith upon any one for whom there is no saving grace, and whom his eternal decree absolutely dooms to the perdition of sin? How could these things be without duplicity? And it is a marvelous supposition that the Gospel, as the invitation and command of God, may represent our privilege and duty, conveying the one and imposing the other, but not his secret will and decree respecting us. Yet it is only on such a supposition that this attempted vindication can have any pertinence whatever. Indeed, the attempt proceeds upon the assumption of this contrariety. A doctrine with such exigency of defense cannot be true.

[755]Princeton Essays, First Series, p. 285.

[756]Symington:Atonement and Intercession, p. 211. The atonement, as a provision of infinite love for a common race in a common ruin of sin, with its unrestricted overture of grace and requirement of saving faith in Christ, is, and must be, an atonement for all.

Anselm: Cur Dens Homo (translated in Bibliotheca Sacra, 1844, 1845); Grotius: Defensio Fidei Catholicce de Satisfactione Christi (translated in Bibliotheca Sacra, 1879); Turrettin: The Atonement of Christ; Candlish: The Atonement; Magee: Atonement and Sacrifice; Smith, John Pye: Sacrifice and Priesthood; Smeaton: Doctrine of the Atonement as Taught by Christ; Doctrine of the Atonement as Taught by the Apostles; Crawford: The Scripture Doctrine of Atonement; Cave: The Scriptural Doctrine of Sacrifice; Bruce; The Humiliation of Christ, lect. vii; Hodge, A, A.: The Atonement; Jenkyn: The Extent of the Atonement; Oxenham: Catholic Doctrine of the Atonement; Symington: Atonement and Intercession; Maurice: The Doctrine of Sacrifice; Bushnell: The Vicarious Sacrifice; Forgiveness and Law; Randles: Substitution: Atonement; Gilbert: The Christian Atonement; Dale: The Atonement; Barnes: The Atonement; Wardlaw: Nature and Extent of the Atonement; Campbell: Nature of the Atonement; Young: The Life and Light of Men; Du Bose: Soteriology of the New Testament; Thompson:The Atoning Work of Christ, Bampton

Lectures, 1853; Edwards, L.: Doctrine of the Atonement; Lias: The Atonement Viewed in the Light of Modern Difficulties, Hulsean Lectures, 1884; The Atonement: Discourses and Treatises by Edwards, Smalley, Maxcy, Emmons, Griffin, Burge, and Weeks, with an Introductory Essay by Edwards A. Park.

147. Chapter 1: Benefits Of The Atonement.

Chapter 1 Benefits Of The Atonement. The second division of soteriology has for its subject the salvation in Christ. The supreme aim of his mission was to save us (Luke 2:10-11; John 3:16-17; 1 Timothy 1:15; 1 John 4:14). This fact gives propriety to our representative formula, the salvation in Christ.

However, the subject is much broader than the mere idea of salvation. There are great facts of the salvation which embody fundamental truths of Christian theology, and which must be separately treated. We may instance justification and regeneration. Besides, there are other benefits of the atonement than an actual salvation. There must be prior unconditional benefits, else the actual salvation could not be possible. “We are not saved in a mere mechanical way, or by the operation of an absolute grace, but as free agents, and on a compliance with divinely instituted terms. Therefore we must possess the moral ability for such a compliance. But we have not such ability simply on the footing of nature. Our moral state is in itself, or simply as consequent to the Adamic fall, without power unto the repentance and faith necessary to salvation. Therefore we must be the recipients of certain unconditional benefits of the atonement, certain gracious helps whereby we may be able to meet the terms of the salvation provided in Christ.

Thus arises the question of unconditional benefits of the atonement, benefits prior to the actual salvation, and preparatory to its attainment. There is specially the question of a gracious free agency. There are other initial benefits which are purely unconditional in their mode. We thus assume a division of the benefits of the atonement into two classes: a class of immediate benefits, and a class of conditional benefits. This distinction will help us to clearer views of the economy of salvation.

I. Immediate Benefits. By immediate benefits of the atonement we mean such as are without any condition in our own agency. So far as the present point is concerned, this is their distinction from the benefits which are so conditioned.

1. The Present Life.—Death was the penalty of disobedience in the Edenic probation. “But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Genesis 2:17). This must have meant a physical death, as well as a moral or spiritual death. Indeed, if we make any distinction, the former must be accepted as the primary sense. Such is clearly the meaning of other texts which relate to the more direct consequences of Adam’s sin (Romans 5:12; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22). The penalty of disobedience in the Edenic probation must have meant the physical death of our progenitors. The execution of the penalty according to the terms of the law would have precluded the existence of the race. Our progenitors would have died in the day of their transgression. There is no apparent reason for any delay of judgment except the intervention of an economy of redemption. Without such an economy there are weighty reasons why they should not have been spared. The propagation of the race in a helpless moral ruin, as naturally consequent to the Adamic fall, could not be reconciled with the goodness of God. It follows that the redemptive mediation of Christ is the ground of the existence

of the race. An economy of grace anticipated the judicial treatment of the first sin. Eve thus received the promise of a seed which should bruise the head of the serpent (Genesis 3:15). There is deep meaning in this promise. It unfolds into the annunciation to Mary and the birth of a son who should be called Jesus, the Son of God (Luke 1:30-35). No special question of theodicy arises at this point; none which did not arise in the treatment of the primitive probation and fall of man. While existence may become an evil, in itself it may still be a good. Many a blessing of the present life may become an evil; many a blessing does become an evil. It is not therefore an evil in itself; it is still a good. The evil arises from a wrong use of it. Such use is avoidable. We cannot call that an evil which has in it the possibility of much good, and which can become an evil only by a wrong use. Probation underlies our secular as well as our moral life. If the economy is right in the former it cannot be wrong in the latter. A probationary economy in our secular life arises necessarily from our personal constitution. We cannot separate the two. If we would exclude the probation we must deny the personality of man and subject him to the dominance of mechanical forces. This would despoil him of all the better powers of his nature which are active in his secular life, and which may render that life happy and noble. Moral probation is, indeed, a far deeper reality; but by so much moral is man the loftier in his nature. Nor can we any more separate a moral responsibility from the moral constitution of man than we can separate a secular responsibility from his personal constitution. The vindication of providence in our moral probation lies in its possibilities of good—the good of moral worth, and the good of holy blessedness forever. Such are the possibilities of that existence which we receive as an immediate benefit of the atonement in Christ.

2. Gracious Help for All.—There are two profound relationships of mankind: one, to the Adamic fall; the other, to the atonement in Christ. As through the one there is a universal corruption of human nature, so through the other there is gracious help for all. It is only on the ground of such a universal grace that the actual moral state of the race can be placed in harmony with the accepted doctrine of native depravity.

What would be the moral state of the race if left in subjection to the unrestrained or unrelieved consequences of the Adamic fall? The answer is given in the doctrine of total depravity, a doctrine so uniformly accepted and maintained by orthodox Churches that it may properly be called catholic. The doctrine is, that man is utterly evil; that all the tendencies and impulses of his nature are toward the evil; that he is powerless for any good, without any disposition to the good, and under a moral necessity of sinning. Such is the moral state of mankind as maintained in the doctrinal anthropology which may properly be called Augustinian. On this question Arminianism differs little from Augustinianism, so long as man is viewed simply in his Adamic relation.

If the moral nature is utterly corrupt, and there is no relieving or helping grace of the atonement, there can be no tendencies to the good, no response of our nature to the motives of the good. It is difficult to see how in such a state there could be any sense of moral duty, or any conscious incentives to morality and religion, or any law of moral integrity in our commercial or civil life, or any of the amenities and charities which bless and beautify our social life. From a nature totally corrupt, and wholly without relief or restraint, only evil could proceed. Such a nature would be demonian, and the life of the race proceeding from it utterly evil. The life of the race is not such in fact. In saying this we do not forget the enormities of moral evil in the world. Much of this evil, however, is consciously committed against a light clearly visible to the moral eye, and against the remonstrances of conscience; so that even here there are manifestations of a moral restraint

which could not spring from a nature totally corrupt. Further, these enormities of evil are not the instant product of our nature, but the outcome of a habit of evil-doing; a habit strengthened by long practice, and through which the restraints of conscience have been stifled and the native tendencies to evil intensified. And, despite all these enormities, the history of the race is replete with the evidences of a moral and religious nature in man. That he is morally and religiously constituted is affirmed by the most scientific anthropology. There could be no proof of such a constitution without the activities of this nature; but these activities are manifest in all human history. There is a conscience in man, a sense of God and duty, a moral reason which approves the good and reprobates the evil. Only thus can man be a law unto himself (Romans 2:14-15). These facts of our moral and religious nature are practical forces in favor of the good and against the evil. They are such in the absence of spiritual regeneration. Our social life is not wholly conventional and heartless; our commercial life, not wholly secular or selfish; our civil life, not without many examples of moral integrity. This has ever been true, even of heathen countries.

What is the conclusion? We must either replace the doctrine of total depravity by a Semi-Pelagianism or admit a gracious help for all men as an immediate benefit of the atonement in Christ. Arminianism readily accepts the latter alternative, and leaves to any who reject the theory of such gracious help the difficult, indeed the impossible, task of adjusting the doctrine of total depravity to the moral and religious facts of human history. The Wesleyan Arminianism has not left in any doubt its position on this question. The question itself is so cardinal in our system of theology that we here cite a few leading authorities in order to set our position in the clearest light.

We begin with Mr. Wesley himself. “For allowing that all the souls of men are dead in sin by nature, this excuses none, seeing there is no man that is in a state of mere nature; there is no man, unless he has quenched the Spirit, that is wholly void of the grace of God. No man living is entirely destitute of what is vulgarly called natural conscience. But this is not natural; it is more properly termed preventing grace. Every man has a greater or less measure of this, which waiteth not for the call of man. . . . Every one has some measure of that light, some faint glimmering ray, which sooner or later, more or less, enlightens every man that cometh into the world. And every one, unless he be one of the small number whose conscience is seared as with a hot iron, feels more or less uneasy when he acts contrary to the light of his own conscience. So that no man sins because he has not grace, but because he does not use the grace which he hath.”[757] Elsewhere Mr. Wesley declares that through the atonement every soul receives a capacity for spiritual life, and an actual spark or seed thereof.[758] [757] Sermons, vol. ii, pp. 237, 238.

[758]Works, vol. v, p. 196. On this question Mr. Fletcher is thoroughly at one with Mr. Wesley. He says: “We readily grant that Adam, and we in him, lost all by the fall; but Christ, ‘ the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, Christ, the repairer of the breach,’ mightier to save than Adam to destroy, solemnly gave himself to Adam, and to us in him, by the free everlasting Gospel which he preached in paradise. And when he preached it he undoubtedly gave Adam, and us in him, a capacity to receive it, that is, a power to believe and repent. If he had not, he might as well have preached to stocks and stones, to beasts and devils. It is offering an insult to ‘ the only wise God ‘ to suppose that he gave mankind the light, without giving them eyes to behold it ; or which is the same, to suppose that he gave them the Gospel without giving them power to believe it.” “Out of Christ’s fullness all have received grace.” “We maintain, that although ‘without Christ we can do nothing,’ yet so long as the ‘day of salvation’ lasts, all men, the chief of sinners not excepted, can,

through his free preventing grace, ‘cease to do evil and learn to do well,’ and use those means which will infallibly end in the repentance and faith peculiar to the dispensation which they are under, whether it be that of the heathens, Jews, or Christians.”[759] [759] Works, vol. i, pp. 141, 142, 145. The position of Mr. Watson is the same: “But virtues grounded on principle, though an imperfect one, and therefore neither negative nor simulated, may also be found among the unregenerate, and have existed, doubtless, in all ages. These, however, are not from man, but from God, whose Holy Spirit has been vouchsafed to ‘the world’ through the atonement. This great truth has often been lost sight of in this controversy. Some Calvinists seem to acknowledge it substantially, under the name of ‘common grace;’ others choose rather to refer all appearances of virtue to nature, and thus, by attempting to avoid the doctrine of the gift of the Spirit to all mankind, attribute to nature what is inconsistent with their opinion of its entire corruption. But there is, doubtless, to be sometimes found in men not yet regenerate in the Scripture sense, not even decided in their choice, something of moral excellence, which cannot be referred to any of the causes above adduced; and of a much higher character than is to be attributed to a nature which, when left to itself, is wholly destitute of spiritual life. Compunction for sin, strong desires to be freed from its tyranny, such a fear of God as preserved them from many evils, charity, kindness, good neighborhood, general respect for goodness and good men, a lofty sense of honor and Justice, and, indeed, as the very command issued to them to repent and believe the Gospel in order to their salvation implies, a power of consideration, prayer, and turning to God, so as to commence that course which, persevered in, would lead on to forgiveness and regeneration. To say that all these are to be attributed to mere nature is to surrender the argument to the Semi-Pelagian, who contends that these are proofs that man is not wholly degenerate. They are to be attributed to the controlling influence of the Holy Spirit; to his incipient workings in the hearts of men; to the warfare which he there maintains, and which has sometimes a partial victory, before the final triumph comes, or when, through the fault of man, through ‘resisting,’ ‘grieving,’ ‘vexing,’ ‘quenching’ that Holy Spirit, that final triumph may never come. It is thus that one part of Scripture is reconciled to another, and both to fact ; the declaration of man’s total corruption, with the presumption of his power to return to God, to repent, to break off his sins, which all the commands and invitations to him from the Gospel imply.”[760]

[760] Theological Institutes, vol. ii, pp. 85, 86. We add a few references: Clarke:Commentary,John 1:9; Pope:Christian Theology, vol. ii, pp. 78-82; Raymond:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 316-319; Rosser;Initial Life; Mercein:Natural Goodness.

3. Capacity for Probation.—While the doctrine of a universal helping grace of the atonement fully adjusts the moral and religious facts of human history to the doctrine of native depravity, and thus saves the doctrine from an inevitable replacement by a Semi-Pelagianism, it also provides for the probationary state of the race. Man is fallen and corrupt in his nature, and therein morally helpless; but man is also redeemed and the recipient of a helping grace in Christ whereby he is invested with capabilities for a moral probation. He has the power of meeting the terms of an actual salvation. All men have this power. It is none the less real or sufficient because of its gracious source. Salvation is thus the privilege of every man, whatever his religious dispensation.

We hold fully the helplessness of man for any religious duty simply on the footing of nature. Such is the doctrine of our article of religion on this question.[761] But, with this doctrine of native powerlessness for any spiritual duty, we hold the doctrine of a universal helping grace. This we

have pointed out, and also verified by our best authorities. The necessary grace for the present probation is an immediate benefit of the atonement, and the possession or the privilege of every man. This is the Arminian position.

[761]Article viii. Of Free Will. The subjects of a probationary economy must have the power necessary to the fulfillment of its requirements. There can be no probation without such power. The possibility is excluded by the very nature of the economy. Probation is a testing economy in which certain blessings are conditioned on specified duties. “Where there is no power to fulfill such duties there can be no probation. It follows that, if our present life is a probation in which salvation is attainable on specified terms, we must possess or have in reach the power necessary to a compliance with such terms. Therefore, if we hold the doctrine of native depravity, we must either admit a universal helping grace of the atonement or deny that the present life is probationary with respect to our salvation. Such denial must imply two things: a limited atonement, with a sovereignty of grace in the salvation of an elect part, which for them precludes a probation; and a reprobation of the rest which denies them all probational opportunity for salvation. Arminianism readily accepts the issue at this point; but the present section is not the place for the treatment of the questions involved.

4. Infant Salvation.—The actual salvation of all who die in infancy is an immediate benefit of the atonement in Christ. The fact of such an infant salvation is no longer a question in any truly evangelical Church. There may be instances of individual dissent, but the predominant faith of such Churches holds firmly the actual salvation of all who die in infancy. There is no need to make an issue where there is nothing in dispute. Happily, on this question there is no longer any dispute among evangelical Churches.

It is true that the Scriptures are not explicit on what is thus accepted in a common evangelical faith. They neither affirm the fact of such a salvation nor explain its nature. Yet when we view the question of fact in the light of the divine love, the universal grace of the atonement, and the clear intimations of Scripture, we are not left with any reason to doubt the actual salvation of all who die in infancy. There is profound meaning for this truth in the words of our Lord: “Verily I say unto you. Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 18:3). There is like meaning in his other words: “Sufferer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 19:14). When St. Paul sets in comparison or contrast the consequences of the relations of the race respectively to Adam and Christ, and proclaims the superabounding grace of the atonement in Christ, his words must mean the actual salvation of all who die in infancy (Romans 5:12-21). If it be not so, then there is an infinite depth of evil consequent to the sin of Adam which is never reached by the redeeming grace of Christ, and its superabounding fullness, which forms the climax of this great text, can no longer be true.

While infants are neither guilty of Adam’s sin nor guilty on account of an inherited nature, yet are they born in a state of depravity, which is in itself a moral ruin and a disqualification for future blessedness. In these facts lies the necessity for their spiritual regeneration. This regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit; and it is a work provided for by the atonement in Christ, as are all the offices of the Spirit in the economy of salvation. Thus it pleases God that dying infants shall be saved through the redemptive mediation of Christ; and thus shall the song of salvation through the

blood of the Lamb be forever theirs in all the fullness of its gladness and love. Here is an immediate benefit of the atonement through which very many of the race shall come to the blessedness of heaven.[762]

[762] Hibbard:The Religion of Childhood; Gregg:Infant Church Membership; Mercein:Childhood and the Church; Cook:Christianity and Childhood.

II. Conditional Benefits.

1. Meaning of Conditional Benefits.—That is a conditional benefit which is attainable only on some specified or appropriate personal action. The meaning will be the clearer if we observe the distinction between immediate and conditional benefits. For the possession of the former no personal action is required, while for the attainment of the latter such action is required. We are born with mental faculties, and may have providentially the best educational opportunities; but the attainment of scholarship is possible only through a proper use of our faculties and opportunities. So there are benefits of the atonement which come to us without any action on our part; but there are other great benefits, such as constitute an actual salvation, which are attainable only on an observance of the divinely specified terms.

2. The Conditionality of Salvation.—Our position is this: The actual salvation of the soul is not an immediate benefit of the atonement, nor through an irresistible operation of divine grace, but is attainable only on a compliance with its appropriate terms. We possess or may possess the requisite gracious ability for such compliance, with power to the contrary. Otherwise, the present life could not be probationary with respect to our salvation. If it is thus probationary, then is our actual salvation a conditional benefit of the atonement. Our secular life is clearly probationary. Mostly, our condition is determined by the character of our personal conduct. To say that we have nothing to do with our secular estate would be to contradict the common experience and judgment of mankind. That some are born to wealth and others to poverty, some to opportunities for success and others in adverse conditions, means really nothing against our position. These matters are merely incidental; and, after their fullest recognition, it is still manifestly true that our secular estate is determined by our personal conduct. We see the verification in the fact that many with the best natural opportunities make for themselves a mean and miserable life, while many without such opportunities, and even against strongly opposing conditions, make for themselves a prosperous and happy life.[763] [763] Butler:Analogy, part i, chap. ii.

It hardly need be observed that the view here presented is thoroughly scriptural. “He also that is slothful in his the view of work is brother to him that is a great waster” (Proverbs 18:9). As such wasting surely brings poverty and misery, so does a slothful or idle life; “and an idle soul shall suffer hunger” (Proverbs 19:15. See Proverbs 20:4; Proverbs 24:30-34). The doctrine of St. Paul is the same: “He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully” (2 Corinthians 9:6). The illustration is here taken from the field of agriculture, but the principle is the same in every sphere of human labor. As our secular life is thus probationary, so may our moral and religious life be probationary with respect to our future destiny. This is a proposition which Bishop Butler has maintained with great force of logic[764] On this question nothing remains to be added to his argument. We, however, are more directly concerned with the question of the conditionality of the salvation in Christ; a salvation which includes our future blessedness. This is a question which must be decided in the light of the Scriptures. On the

face of the Scriptures nothing seems plainer than this conditionality. It will suffice that the question be tested by a few pertinent texts. We shall adduce such as couple our forgiveness and salvation with certain divinely specified acts or forms of action required of us. Texts which exclude from the salvation all such as refuse or omit the required action are equally in point.

[764]Analogy, part i, chaps, iii-v. The great commission in which our Lord charged his disciples to preach the Gospel to all men seems in itself entirely sufficient for the proof of our position (Mark 16:15-16). Very naturally, in this commission the condition necessary to the attainment of the salvation which the Gospel should proclaim is definitely named: ‘‘He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” The faith is conditionally necessary to the salvation. This truth is emphasized by the assertion of the consequences of unbelief: “But he that believeth not shall be damned.” Such, indeed, is the teaching of Christ and his disciples from the beginning of his ministry until the conclusion of theirs. Thus Christ went forth and preached the Gospel of the kingdom of God: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the Gospel” (Mark 1:15). So, when the disciples were first sent forth with the message of the Gospel, “they went out, and preached that men should repent” (Mark 6:12). Such was the doctrine of St. Peter in his memorable sermon on the day of Pentecost: “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38. See also3:19; 26: 20). Thus the attainment of the salvation in Christ is continuously coupled with our observance of divinely specified terms.

Let us turn again to the decisive words of our Lord: “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). Here faith in Christ is conditionally necessary to the attainment of the salvation which he provided. This same truth is directly emphasized by other words of our Lord. “He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (John 3:18). There is still further emphasis: “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John 3:36). We may here add the testimony of St. Paul, as given in his doctrine of justification or the remission of sin. In his doctrine justification is intrinsic to the salvation in Christ, but is attainable only on the condition of faith. That such is the doctrine of St. Paul is so well known that a mere reference to a single passage will here suffice (Romans 3:19-26).

We may group a few other testimonies. “And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him” (Hebrews 5:9). No proper interpretation of these words can omit the truth of a conditional relation of obedience to Christ to the final salvation of which he is the author. We give by reference another passage in which the same truth is clearly set forth, that our present conduct, especially in its relation to Christ, is conditionally determinative of our future destiny (2 Thessalonians 1:3-10). Thus as we obey or obey not the Gospel of bur Lord Jesus Christ, so shall our destiny be one of blessedness or one of misery. The decisions of the final judgment come to the same point. These decisions turn upon the character of our conduct in the present life (Matthew 25:31-46; John 5:28-29; Romans 2:6-16; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Galatians 6:7-8; Revelation 22:12).

If it be true that our personal compliance with certain specified terms is required in order to the attainment of salvation, that we have a gracious ability for such compliance, and also power to the contrary, these facts are in the closest accordance with the texts which we have presented. So much must be conceded, even by such as hold the doctrine of moral necessity and the absolute sovereignty of grace in the work of salvation. If it had been the definite purpose of our Lord and his apostles to teach the doctrine of a real conditionality of salvation they could not have expressed their meaning more certainly than in such words as we have cited. On the other hand, such words are entirely inconsistent with the contrary position. If no free personal action of our own has any conditional relation to our salvation why should such action be imperatively required, just as though it had such relation? If we are utterly powerless for any act of repentance or faith, or even for any act toward repentance or faith, why should we be required to repent and believe, just as though we possessed the necessary power? What is the ground of the severe condemnation and doom of all who refuse or neglect the required repentance and faith? If the first fact in the work of an actual salvation be a sovereign act of God in the regeneration of the soul, from which repentance and faith immediately spring, and which are else impossible, why should they be commanded just as though they were possible, and were actually conditional to our salvation? It certainly means much for our position respecting the conditionality of salvation—indeed, is conclusive of its truth—that it is in the completest accordance with so many practical texts which directly concern this question; while the contrary position is in their open contradiction.

3. The Great Facts of Salvation Severally Conditional.—We here require only a brief statement respecting each fact, since the conditionality of each is really included in our general treatment of the question.

Justification is declared to be by faith in a manner that clearly makes the latter conditional to the former. This relation can be denied only on the assumption that the faith is wrought in us by an immediate and absolute operation of God. But this is contrary to both the nature of faith and the meaning of the Scriptures respecting it. The faith by which we are justified is a personal act, and is so required under the sanction of moral obligation and responsibility. It is contradictory to all true ideas of such an act of faith that it should be the product of an absolute divine agency. No text of Scripture supports such a view. The prayer, “Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief” (Mark 9:24), can be answered without any such a divine operation. Unbelief is often helped by a clear presentation of the grounds of faith. So by a spiritual illumination or inner quickening God can help the soul to a stronger faith, while the faith itself shall still be a free personal act. There is nothing against this view in the words of St. Paul: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God” (Ephesians 2:8). The preponderance of exegetical authority is against the view that faith itself is the gift of God; but even if such a meaning were conceded, still the interpretation must accord with the nature of faith as a free personal act. We have just seen that, consistently with this fact, God may still give us a higher capacity for faith; but it is only as faith is a free personal act that we can be saved by faith. Take away this character of faith, and it becomes merely a part of a salvation which is wrought by an absolute divine operation, and the whole idea of salvation by faith disappears. Yet this is the central idea of the many texts which relate directly to this subject (Mark 16:15-16; John 3:16; John 3:18; John 3:36; Acts 13:38-39; Acts 16:31 : Romans 3:25-26).

Less is said in the Scriptures respecting the conditionality of regeneration, yet enough is said to leave us in no reasonable doubt of the fact. Regeneration is thoroughly distinct from justification in its nature, but is not distinct in its condition. “We are regenerated on the same act of faith on which we are justified. There are texts in which the former must be included with the latter, while only the latter is named. “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1). There could be no such peace were not regeneration an accompanying blessing of justification. Further, there is for us no regeneration without justification; therefore the former must be conditional as well as the latter. The words of St. John are in point: “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born . . . of God” (John 1:12-13). Here the faith in Christ is clearly conditional to the regeneration whereby we become the sons of God. “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:26). But if this gracious affiliation is so conditioned on faith, the regeneration whereby it is constituted must be conditioned in like manner.

Final perseverance and future blessedness, as related to the present question, are inseparably connected. The former, however, will be considered elsewhere. It seems clearly the sense of Scripture that future blessedness is a conditional attainment. He that endureth to the end shall be saved (Matthew 10:22). Unto them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, shall be rendered eternal life (Romans 2:6-7). Unto him who is faithful unto death will Christ give a crown of life (Revelation 2:10). Such is the pervasive sense of Scripture on this question. But there can be no such enduring, nor continuance in well-doing, nor faithfulness unto death, without free personal action. Therefore such action must be conditional to the attainment of future blessedness.

148. Chapter 2: Doctrinal Issues.

Chapter 2 Doctrinal Issues. The question of the conditionality of salvation involves the leading doctrinal issues between Arminianism and Calvinism. The conditionality is central to the former, and carries with it the universality of the atonement, moral freedom, the resistibility of grace, and the possibility of final apostasy. The counter doctrines of the latter are: predestination, limited atonement, moral necessity, irresistibility of saving grace, and the absolute final perseverance of believers.

These are the notable “Five Points,” long in issue between the two systems. On the Calvinistic side, their more exact formulation was the work of the Synod of Dort, year 1619.[765] In substance they are common to Calvinistic creeds, and must be, since they are intrinsic to the system. They are also common to works of Calvinistic authorship on systematic theology. The opposing tenets of Arminianism were formulated by the Remonstrants, a body of leading Arminian divines, year 1610.[766] In these articles there is some lack of decision on the question of free agency, and notable reservation respecting final perseverance. Indeed, Arminius himself never reached a dogmatic position on this question. There is, however, no such indecision or reservation in the Wesleyan Arminianism. Nor should there be any, since free agency and the possibility of final apostasy are intrinsic to the system.

[765]Schaff:Creeds of Christendom, vol. iii, pp. 581-595 [766]Ibid., pp. 545-549 The issues respecting the extent of the atonement and free agency are of chief importance. If on these two the truth is with Arminianism, so must it be on all the others. The former of the two was sufficiently discussed in our treatment of the atonement. The latter will receive a like treatment in the proper place. With such attention to these leading issues a brief treatment of the others will suffice.

I. Doctrine Of Predestination.

1. Divine Decrees.—Predestination is a specific part of the broader doctrine of decrees. While the former relates particularly to the destiny of angels and men, the latter embraces all events in the history of the universe. The doctrine is thus formulated: “God from all eternity did by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass.”[767] [767] Westminster Confession, chap. iii. In the interpretation of the decrees various attributes are definitely affirmed of them. They are eternal and immutable. Their immutability means that events in time must answer to them exactly and absolutely. They are unconditional and absolute. One thing may be a means to another, and so be necessarily prior in the process of divine effectuation, but must be without any contingency. The event decreed must come to pass. “The decrees of God are certainly efficacious.” Dr. Hodge maintains this proposition, yet in a manner which seeks to avoid its inevitable implications. “All events embraced in the purpose of God are equally certain, whether he has determined to bring them to pass by his own power or simply to permit their occurrence through the agency of his creatures. “ An efficacious decree must be causal to the event decreed. A permissive decree cannot be thus efficacious. The two ideas of causation and permission cannot stand together respecting the same event. The mere permission of events

through human agency lets in the contingency of free agency, which yet can have no place in the system. If the decrees of God are efficacious in any proper sense of the term, they must be causal to the things or events decreed, and to the sins of men as really as to anything else. They embrace all events, every thing that comes to pass in the entire history of the universe. Here there is no distinction between the physical and moral realms; between divine acts and human acts; between righteous acts and sinful acts.[768]

[768] Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. i, pp. 540-545; Shedd:Dogmatic Theology, vol. i, pp. 399-405; Henry B. Smith:System of Christian Theology, pp. 117-119. The alleged proofs of the doctrine of decrees are certainly inconclusive. There is an analogical argument, that, as there is a fixed order of things in the physical realm, so should there be a fixed order in the moral realm. “There is the same God working in natural and moral government.” Doubtless: but does he work in the same mode in the two? If he does, the moral must be subject to an absolute necessitation. The repudiation of this consequence is the abandonment of the analogical argument. There is a rational argument, that it is best that all events should be embraced in the divine plan. But the divine omniscience can embrace all things, even the free volitions of men. If this be impossible, then the only alternative is their absolute necessitation. This consequence refutes the argument.

Arguments are drawn from the divine attributes. Omniscience requires the certainty of all futurities. Certainty can arise only from an interior necessity or from a divine decree. Therefore, as human volitions have no interior necessitation, they must be made certain by such a decree. But how can the decree give the necessary certainty? In itself it can have no influence upon any future event. The certainty can be attained only by an absolute purpose of God to give effect to the decree. But there could be no freedom in any human volition so caused. Either this argument from the divine omniscience is groundless or absolute necessity is the consequence. An argument is drawn from the immutability of God. It must assume that the contingency of human freedom is inconsistent with his immutability. If there be truth in this assumption there is no place for a moral system, which is possible only with freedom. But there is no such inconsistency; and the immutability of God, which lies in his own absolute perfections, is just as complete with a moral government over free subjects as it could be with one over subjects under moral necessity. Another argument is drawn from the holiness of God. As a holy being, he must purpose the triumph of holiness. But with the contingency of human freedom the future could not be foreknown, and the divine purpose might be thwarted; therefore God must subject all volitions to his decree. Now it is certain that he does foreknow all evil volitions just as he foreknows the good ; hence, if his foreknowledge is conditioned on his decree, he must decree the evil just as he does the good. But, as we said before, such a decree is powerless in itself, and can be made efficacious only by the divine agency. A doctrine which means, not only that God decrees evil volitions, but causally determines them, cannot be true. The divine decrees are held to be of two kinds: one kind efficacious; the other, permissive. The former are rendered efficacious by the divine agency m physical nature, and in the sphere of the ethically good, particularly in the salvation of the elect. The latter have relation only to sin. All sin is permissively decreed; all else is efficaciously decreed. Much is made of this distinction in the Calvinistic treatment of the doctrine. It is assumed that our free agency is thus secured, and that God is thoroughly cleared of the authorship of sin. These assumptions constitute a part of the formulated doctrine of God’s eternal decree: “Yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin; nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the liberty or

contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established."[769] Calvinists must have full credit for these positions, but the positions themselves are fairly open to criticism.

[769]Westminster Confession, chap. iii.

If the permissive decree, as distinguished from the efficacious, provides for a responsible freedom in sinning, and is necessary to such freedom, it follows that the efficacious decree in respect to the salvation of the elect must preclude their free agency. Indeed, it must preclude all such agency within the sphere of the ethically good. Yet the formulated doctrine broadly asserts the liberty or contingency of second causes, without any distinction between the evil and the good. Further, in the Calvinistic exposition of the doctrine, free agency in the good is as fully maintained as in the evil. Now, if free agency in the good is consistent with the efficacious decrees, free agency in evil must be consistent with the same kind of decrees. This means that God might decree sin and efficaciously determine its commission, while yet it should be committed in responsible freedom, and himself be clear of its authorship. Here are serious perplexities for the doctrine.

Other points are yet more perplexing. The decrees are held to be the ground of the foreknowledge of God, the necessary and only ground of his certainty of any futurity, For instance, he could not have foreknown the sin and fall of Adam, nor the sin of Judas in the betrayal of our Lord, nor the manner of his crucifixion, with all the sin therein, if he had not decreed it. My first point of criticism is, that the doctrine is inconsistent with the divine omniscience. The knowledge of God is conditioned on his decree. A conditioned knowledge is an acquired knowledge; and an acquired knowledge never can possess the plenitude of omniscience. It may be said that both the decree and the knowledge are eternal, and therefore the latter cannot be acquired. It is true that we cannot go back of eternity in any order of time; but there is a logical priority among things declared to be eternal. In the order of nature the decree must be prior to the knowledge which it is held to condition. Moreover, the decree is a personal act of God, and there must have been an eternity back of it wherein he could know nothing of any futurity. However, the ground of the present criticism was sufficiently considered in our treatment of omniscience.

Further, permissive decrees cannot furnish the ground assumed to be necessary to the divine certainty of the future. A permissive decree is simply a decree not to prevent this or that sin. It respects simply the divine agency, and is powerless over the human, which is thus left to the contingency of freedom. How can such a decree furnish the necessary ground of the divine foreknowledge? If God decreed the deep repentance of David and the decree included its divine effectuation, then there was the requisite ground of certainty; but could a decree simply to permit the heinous sin of David be such a ground?

Some puzzling questions arise just here. How could God permissively decree the sin of David while as yet, according to this doctrine, he could know nothing of its commission? and how could he efficaciously decree the repentance of David while as yet he could know nothing of the sin for which he should repent? The first question is equally pertinent respecting all other sins. A leading argument for the divine decrees is that future volitions, if left to the contingency of free agency, are pure nothings, and therefore are not foreknowable, not even to God. Hence it is that they must be decreed in order to be foreknown. Such are the declared facts respecting all sins. Then, again, the question is. How could God permissively decree all those sins, when he could know nothing of them until they were decreed?

We here emphasize a point previously stated, that a decree made in eternity cannot in itself be determinative of any event in time. Only the divine agency as operative in time can make it efficacious: but such agency has no place in a permissive decree. How, then, shall such a decree make certain to the divine mind the volitional futurities of free agency? “In the instance of sin, the certainty of the self-determination is inexplicable, because we cannot say in this case that God works in man ‘to will and to do.’” So says Dr. Shedd. But it is more than inexplicable; it is impossible, according to the doctrine of decrees. The sinful volition or deed has back of it simply a permissive decree which, as we have seen, is utterly powerless for its determination. Nor can the divine agency go forth to its determination; for this would make God the author of sin, which the doctrine repudiates. Yet it is only by the purpose of such a mode of effectuation that the divine decree can make certain the futurities of sin. An argument is put in this manner: It is a truth of the Scriptures that in many instances the sins of men were foreknown to God; therefore they must have been decreed. The fact of such foreknowledge is not questioned. Its truth is manifest in the fulfillment of prophecies of sinful deeds. But the inference respecting decrees is denied. The argument assumes their necessity to the divine prescience; but we have shown, not only that this assumption is groundless, but that it is contradictory to the plenitude of the divine omniscience. The argument often proceeds with special reference to the sins committed against Christ in the execution of the divine plan of redemption. There was such a plan; and there were sinful deeds in its execution. These facts are clearly scriptural. “Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.” “For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done” (Acts 2:23; Acts 4:27-28). These are the favorite texts. It is plain that such sinful deeds were to enter into the execution of the divine plan of redemption. The sin of Judas in the betrayal of our Lord must be included. We have stated the case in its greatest strength. The interpretation of the facts is now the question. My first point is this: While it was necessary that Christ should suffer and die in order to the redemption of the world, the precise manner in which he did suffer and die was not so necessary. Who shall say that the part of Judas in its precise form, and the parts of Herod, and Pilate, and the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, as severally acted, were essential to an atonement for sin by the incarnate Son of God? If so necessary there is no accounting for the fulfillment of the part of each except by a divine determination thereto. But there is no such determination in a permissive decree; and this is the only kind here allowed. The efficacious decree is excluded because it would make God the author of sin. My next point is, that the facts are open to an easy explanation without any resort to a determining decree. In the absolute prescience of God he foreknew the parts certain men would freely act under given conditions, and in his infinite wisdom he was pleased to appropriate such parts in the execution of the plan of redemption. Thus it was that, according to his determinate counsel and foreknowledge, God delivered his Son to be betrayed and crucified and slain, just in the manner that he was, by the free acts of men. This interpretation means all that a permissive decree of God can mean in this case. And predestinarians must accept this interpretation or replace their permissive decree by an efficacious decree. But this they cannot do, for by their own concession it would make God the author of sin.[770] [770] The sending of Joseph into Egypt—Genesis 14:4-5—is easily explained in like manner.

2. Predestination.—As before stated, predestination respects the destinies of men and angels. It includes both election and reprobation: the unconditional election of a part to final blessedness, and an absolute reprobation of the rest to final misery. “By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death.”[771] In each case the number is unchangeably fixed, so “that it cannot be either increased or diminished.”

[771]Westminster Confession, chap. iii.

3. Election.—Election, in its human application, means that all who are predestinated unto final blessedness God “hath chosen in Christ, unto everlasting glory,” without foresight of any thing in them as the reason of their election. There are in the Scriptures many instances of divine election; but the question is, whether they support this Calvinistic doctrine of an absolute election to final blessedness.

There are instances of personal election to special privileges and duties: of Abraham to be the progenitor of Christ, and the founder of a nation which should fulfill important offices in the accomplishment of the purposes of God; of Isaac and Jacob, instead of Ishmael and Esau, to the heritage of promises made to Abraham; of Cyrus to the work of restoring the Jews and rebuilding the temple; of the apostles to the preaching of the Gospel and the planting of Christianity; but in neither instance did the election include an unconditional predestination to final blessedness. And any assumption that these elections were wholly irrespective of any fitness in the persons chosen for their several offices is purely gratuitous. The Jews were elected as a nation to special religious privileges and blessings. Thus it “was that they came into the possession of a divine revelation and divinely instituted forms of worship, together with many other blessings and privileges (Romans 9:4-5). But final blessedness was not an unconditional benefit of this election. If it had been, then, according to the Calvinistic doctrine, all must have been brought into a gracious state in the present life. That many of them were not so brought is manifest in the Scriptures. Further, by the rejection of the Jews on account of their unbelief, their election was transformed into a reprobation (Romans 11:17-21). But an unconditional election to final blessedness could not be so transformed. Hence no such blessing could have been included among the benefits to which the Jews were originally elected.

There are some texts which, on a superficial view, seem to favor the doctrine of predestination; but a deeper insight finds them entirely consistent with Arminian doctrine. We shall consider two of these texts—the two of chief reliance on the Calvinistic side.

One is as follows: “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified” (Romans 8:29-30). What is the meaning of did foreknow—προγνω)? The literal sense is to know beforehand. Some of the best authorities maintain that it never means any thing else. If the word is to favor the Calvinistic doctrine it must have the sense of choosing or electing. But it would thus have much the same meaning as predestinate; while the two terms, προνω and προισε, as here used, are plainly different. The element of knowledge cannot be eliminated from the former. It may include definite facts respecting the persons foreknown; as, for instance, that, on the divine call through the Gospel,

they would freely accept the offered salvation in Christ, and that they would abide in the Christian faith and life. We thus preserve the sense of divine prescience, which cannot be eliminated from the meaning of προ■γνω, and avoid the unwarranted meaning of election or choice which the Calvinistic doctrine must give to the term. With the sense of divine prescience which we now have, all parts of the texts fall into harmony. All who are foreknown of God as obedient to the divine call are predestinated to an ultimate blessedness. “Them he also called”—through the preaching of the Gospel. The purpose of God is the salvation of all who are so called; so that all such are called according to his purpose. In a yet deeper sense the calling is according to his purpose only when the offered salvation is freely accepted. Hence it is that those who freely accept the call and enter into a state of salvation are designated as the called—το■σ κλητυο■ς (1 Corinthians 1:24). “Whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.” But neither the justification nor the glorification is without respect to a free compliance with its divinely required terms. The preponderance of exegetical authority is in favor of such an interpretation as we have here given: “The best commentators, ancient and modern, are mostly agreed that προ■γνω is to be understood ofprescience of character; and προ■γω of determination founded on such prescience.”[772] [772] Bloomfield:Greek Testament, in loc. The second text that we had in view is in these words: “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will” (Ephesians 1:4-5). Here, then, is an election in Christ, before the foundation of the world, unto holiness; and a predestination unto a gracious sonship, according to the good will or pleasure of God. Do these facts, as here presented, prove the Calvinistic doctrine of election? A long and familiar use of terms in a given sense tends to the conviction that such must be their meaning. No doubt this is the case respecting the terms election and predestination. For many minds they mean, and must mean, absolute divine determinations. However, there is nothing decisive in such a conviction, and the question whether such is the meaning of these terms, as here used, is still fairly in issue. In the opening of this chapter St. Paul addresses the saints in Ephesus, and thanks God for the fullness of their spiritual blessings. Though mostly Gentiles, yet they suffered no restriction of Christian privilege on that account. They came into possession of all these blessings according to their divine election and predestination. So much is clearly in the meaning of St. Paul’s words. What is the subject of his ruling thought? Clearly this: The elective purpose of God, even from before the foundation of the world, to admit the Gentiles, equally with the Jews, to all the blessings of the Gospel of Christ. Great prominence is given to this thought in the progress of this epistle. Time and again it comes to the chief place. It is a most grateful subject to the mind of Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles. The accomplishment of this divine purpose in the evangelization of these Ephesians furnished the immediate occasion for the prominence here given it. The Gospel was preached to them in fulfillment of the elective purpose of God, and all who truly received it came into possession of its blessings according to that same purpose. But there is nothing in all this which either expresses or implies an absolute personal election to salvation. If we should even concede the personal election of these Ephesians to an actual salvation, it is still open for us to maintain that it was on the divine foresight of their free compliance with its required terms. There is nothing in the text at all contradictory to this view; and it is in such full accord with the Scriptures respecting the actual conditionality of salvation, that it may be successfully maintained against all the alleged proofs of an absolute personal election. Without such an election, these Ephesians

could still be saved according to the elective purpose of God. His supreme purpose in the election of the Gentiles to the full privileges of the Gospel was their salvation. Indeed, this election is a part of his great plan in sending his Son to be the Saviour of the world (John 3:17; 1 Timothy 2:4; 1 John 4:14). Who, in the face of the texts here given by reference, can hold it to be the good pleasure of God to save only an elect part of mankind? With the gracious preference of a universal salvation, every soul might be saved according to his eternal purpose in the mission of his Son. So these Ephesians were saved according to their divine election, in the fulfillment of which the Gospel was preached unto them, and, being freely and truly accepted, was efficacious in their salvation. Indeed, the purpose of God in their election to the privileges of the Gospel was fully accomplished only in their actual salvation; so true it is that they were saved according to the purpose of their divine election. But there is nothing in all this contrary to the truest conditionality of salvation; nothing in proof of an absolute predestination of a definite part of mankind to final blessedness, with the consequent reprobation of the rest to an inevitable penal doom. On the other hand, there are the very many texts which clearly mean the conditionality of final blessedness, which are not else open to any satisfactory interpretation, and which therefore disprove the doctrine of an unconditional predestination. Arminianism is entirely satisfied with this position of the issue.

4. Reprobation.—Reprobation is a part of the doctrine of predestination, and means the decree of God respecting the final destiny of the non-elect. As the decree of election absolutely determines the future blessedness of a definite part of mankind, so the decree of reprobation absolutely determines the future misery of the rest.[773] [773] Westminster Confession, chap, iii, secs, iii, vi, vii. The word preterition is in favor with some Calvinists. It is preferred as a softer term than reprobation, and as affording some relief from the severer aspects of the doctrine. It is true that in a formula of the doctrine we have the words “to pass by;” but these words do not express the whole of the doctrine: “The rest of mankind, God was pleased . . . to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin.” They were passed by simply in the sense that no atonement was made for them; but this was only a part of the decree of reprobation. The strong word fore-ordained is used. All others than the elect are “foreordained to everlasting death.” No stronger word is used respecting the elect. The election of a part means the reprobation of the rest; otherwise, God must have been blankly indifferent to their destiny. Nothing, however, could be more unreasonable than such a notion. Hence the true position is with the Calvinistic theologians who adhere to the term reprobation, and to all that it here means. This was the position of Calvin himself: “Many, indeed, as if they wished to avert odium from God, admit election in such a way as to deny that any one is reprobated. But this is puerile and absurd, because election itself could not exist without being opposed to reprobation. God is said to separate those whom he adopts to salvation. To say that others obtain by chance, or acquire by their own efforts, that which election alone confers on a few, will be worse than absurd. Whom God passes by, therefore, he reprobates, and from no other cause than his determination to exclude them from the inheritance which he predestines for his children.”[774]

[774] Institutes, vol. ii, p. 163. Such is the view of Dr. Dick:Theology, vol. i, pp. 367, 368; also of Dr. Shedd:Dogmatic Theology, vol. i, pp. 429-431. Many authorities could easily be added.

Reprobation is contrary to the divine justice. Of course the reply is, that it means simply the ordaining of sinful men to the dishonor and wrath which they deserve, and hence that it cannot be

opposed to the justice of God; that it is in fact “to the praise of his glorious justice.” It is readily conceded that there can be no injustice in the infliction of deserved penalty. This, however, does not close the question. It is still open to inquire whether the subjects of reprobation really deserve the penal doom to which they are fore-ordained. The desert of an eternal penal doom is not in the subjects of the reprobation. What is the nature of the sin which is assumed to have such desert? The answer is obvious: That with which they are born. Whether it is an inherited guilt of Adam’s sin or the sin of an inherited depravity of nature, it concerns us not here to inquire. It suffices, that native sin is held to be a sufficient ground of reprobation. That it is so held cannot be disputed. The very familiar position is, that, as original or birth sin constitutes in all men the desert of damnation, God might graciously elect a part to final blessedness and justly reprobate the rest to eternal misery, since the reprobation would simply determine for them the penal doom which they deserve. This, then, is the form of sin on which it is attempted to justify the doctrine of reprobation. But the justification cannot be thus attained. The alleged sin lies wholly apart from the personal agency of the reprobate, and therefore cannot constitute in them any desert of punishment. Hence their reprobation would be an injustice.

If it should be said that reprobation has respect to foreseen actual sin, the charge of injustice would still remain in all its force. It would so remain because the actual sin of the reprobate would be as thoroughly necessitated as their inherited sin. It is here that the “passing by” means so much. In the work of redemption it pleased God “to pass by” the reprobates. This is a part of the doctrine. No atonement was made for them; no helping grace sufficient for a good life, or even for the avoidance of sin, was provided’ for them. Sin is to them a necessity. Such it is according to the doctrines which underlie the decrees of election and reprobation. But a reprobation for unavoidable sin must be contrary to the divine justice. The doctrine of reprobation is disproved by the universality of the atonement; by the divine sincerity in the universal overture of salvation in Christ; by the universal love of God. It suffices that we here merely state these great facts, as they were sufficiently discussed in our treatment of the extent of the atonement. The decree of election and reprobation, even in its most vital facts, must have been without any reason in the thought of God. An absolute sovereignty can have no reason for its action except its own absoluteness. But that can be no reason for any one act rather than another. If God had any reason for the exact numbers respectively elected and reprobated, then his decree, which unchangeably fixed these numbers, could not have been an act of absolute sovereignty. If in that decree he had reprobated those whom he elected, and elected those whom he reprobated, his sovereignty would have been just as complete as it was with his actual fore-ordinations. To deny this is to deny that his decree of predestination was an act of absolute sovereignty; for the denial must assume a reason for the act apart from that sovereignty. The doctrine can admit no such a reason.

It is in the doctrine of predestination that God did sovereignly elect A, B, C, a part of mankind, to everlasting life, and that he did reject and ordain D, E, F, the rest, to everlasting misery. It is also in the doctrine that there was no reason in his thought why he should so elect A, B, C, instead of D, E, F, or why he should reprobate D, E, F, instead of A, B, C. The fact is definitely expressed in the formulation of the doctrine, that the election of A, B, C, was without foresight of any thing in them as the reason why they were chosen instead of D, E, F. Here, then, is a decree of predestination so arbitrary in itself, so vast in the sweep of its absolute determination of eternal destinies, that it well might daze even celestial intelligences, and yet a decree for which, in its most vital facts, there

was no reason in the thought of God. The very nature of election and reprobation, as thus disclosed, suffices for their utter refutation.

II. Other Points In Issue.

1. Limitation of the Atonement.—It is true that not a few who hold the Calvinistic system hold also the universality of the atonement. Whether they so modify the system as to bring it into harmony with this universality we are not here concerned to inquire. A limitation of the atonement is a requirement of the system in its regular form, and mostly has a place in Calvinistic creeds. With a decree of predestination which absolutely determines the salvation of the elect, and an atonement which, in the very nature of it, must save all for whom it is made, its limitation to a part of mankind must be intrinsic to the system. However, we have here only to state the issue, having sufficiently considered the question of the extent of the atonement in our discussion of that subject.

2. Moral Necessity.—The doctrine is really the same whether we use the word necessity or the word inability, though the latter seems now more in favor with Calvinistic authors. If we are in a state of moral necessity, then there is for us no free moral agency. Our volitions must be determined by influences over which we have no control. The choice of the good is not within our power, not even within the power of the elect. Only an absolute sovereignty of grace can turn them unto the good. In such a state sinning is a necessity, and to the elect just as to the reprobate. A state of moral inability involves precisely the same consequences. The inability alleged is definitely a moral inability to the choice of the good. The further consequence is that of an unavoidable sinning.

It is easily seen that such a doctrine, whether expressed as moral necessity or moral inability, is openly contrary to all conditionality of salvation. But the question of free agency is so cardinal in a system of theology that it requires a fuller and more formal treatment than can properly be given it under the present heading.

3. Irresistibility of Saving Grace.—When it is the pleasure of God to bring any one of the elect into a state of salvation he is effectually called. The call is made efficacious through a sovereign power of grace. The initial work is that of regeneration. No act of repentance or faith is conditional thereto; no manner of resistance can prevent it when the hour of God’s pleasure has come for its accomplishment. Such is the doctrine as it is formulated in Calvinistic creeds;[775] and such it is as maintained in the ablest theological works of Calvinistic authorship.

[775]Canons of the Synod of Dort, Of the Corruption of Man, etc., articles x-xii;Westminster Confession, chap, x, secs, i, ii. This doctrine, just as the whole system, is grounded in an absolute divine sovereignty. It follows that the delays in the salvation of the elect, however long, are purely from God’s own pleasure: that is absolutely determining. No faithfulness nor unfaithfulness of the minister, nor any act of the elect, can either hasten or hinder their salvation for even a single hour. The all-pervasive sense of Scripture is in open contradiction to this doctrine.

Here again there is serious perplexity for the doctrine respecting the non-elect. The Gospel is preached to all alike, It is so preached in obedience to the divine behest. The preaching is a divine proffer of salvation to all, and a call to repentance and faith, with the promise of salvation to all who comply. But it cannot be the pleasure of God to save the non-elect, since in his own good pleasure he has unconditionally fore-ordained them to an eternal penal doom and excluded them from the

covenant of redemption. They were not given to the Son to be redeemed, because it was not the pleasure of the Father that they should be saved. How then can the offer of salvation be made to them? And how can they be required to repent and believe unto salvation, under penalty of damnation for disobedience, when for them there is no salvation in Christ? The futile attempts of the doctrine to extricate itself from such perplexity really concedes the impossibility. But these attempts were considered and their fallacies exposed in our treatment of the extent of the atonement.

If this doctrine of effectual calling be true it cannot be the pleasure of God that the non-elect should accept the proffer of salvation made to them. The decree of predestination which excluded them from the covenant of redemption and unconditionally fore-ordained them to a penal doom is conclusive of this fact. Further, if in this case God's only law of action is his own absolute sovereignty, the non-elect would certainly be efficaciously called, just as the elect are, if their compliance were his pleasure. Hence we are shut up to the fact that, however God may call the non-elect, or with whatever intensity of words or pathos of compassion entreat their acceptance of his proffered salvation, such acceptance is still not his pleasure. This result is openly contradictory to the divine sincerity.

It is the pleasure of God that all who are called to repentance and faith should obey and be saved. It is, indeed, his good pleasure that all should be saved. The proof is in the Scriptures: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (John 3:16; 1 Timothy 2:4). Here is God's gracious asseveration and appeal: "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked ; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways ; for why will ye die" (Ezekiel 33:11)? Here are words of yearning compassion: "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together" (Hosea 11:8). Yet, if the doctrine of an absolute sovereignty of grace be true, God cannot wish the salvation of any who are not efficaciously called. How, then, could he sincerely utter such words? "We listen to the pathetic words of our Lord: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matthew 23:37). Yet, if the doctrine of an absolute grace be true, these words mean no pleasure of the Son to save them; for with such a pleasure they must have been saved. Nothing could have prevented it. There could be no hinderance to an absolute power of grace in that "ye would not." A doctrine which is so openly contradictory to such texts as we have here adduced cannot be a truth of the Scriptures.

4. Absolute Final Perseverance.—The doctrine is that, however believers may fall into sin, sovereign grace must finally recover and save them. It is a part of the system constructed upon the ground of an absolute divine sovereignty. If the other parts are true this must be true. If the decree of election is true; if the atonement is for the elect only, and of such a nature that it must save all for whom it is made; and if grace is irresistible in its saving work, then the doctrine of final perseverance must be true. Nothing, however, is thus gained for its truth, but, rather, much is lost. The disproof of the other parts is really the disproof of this; for, as an intrinsic part of the system, it falls with the other parts.

Alleged proofs of the doctrine, while plausible, are inconclusive. Some texts of Scripture seem, on the face of them, to favor it, but a deeper insight finds them entirely consistent with the conditionality of final perseverance. “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand” (John 10:27-28). Such is the assurance from the divine side; but it is entirely consistent with a conditioning fidelity on the human side. The case of Judas is an illustration. From the divine side these words pledged to him all that they pledged to the others given to the Son by the Father; yet there was in him, and therefore in them, the possibility of apostasy. “For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance” (Romans 11:29). This is utterly without proof of an absolute final perseverance, except on the assumption of an absolute sovereignty of grace in every instance of a personal salvation. But we have shown that this assumption is groundless. “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Php 1:6). This text is dependent upon the same false assumption as the preceding one for any proof of an absolute final perseverance, and therefore furnishes none. An Arminian can freely use these words of assurance to the doubting, and without any thought of this Calvinistic sense. “Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation” (1 Peter 1:5). Yes, every trusting soul is so kept. But the faith is conditional to the keeping; and as it involves a free personal agency there is here no doctrine of an absolute perseverance. Indeed, so far as this question is concerned, the text is really Arminian, not Calvinistic. The grouping of a few texts will suffice for the proof of a possibility of final apostasy. A righteous man may turn away to sin, and die therein (Ezekiel 18:24-26). The branch may perish from the living vine (John 15:4-6). Judas, one of those given to the Son, was lost (John 17:12). St. Paul, even with his full assurance of a state of salvation, apprehended the possibility of his own apostasy, and strenuously wrought against it (1 Corinthians 9:26-27). Christians are exhorted to diligence in order to make their calling and election sure; for in so doing they should never fall (2 Peter 1:10). Such texts as we have here adduced must mean the possibility of a final apostasy.

Arminius: Writings, vol. iii; Wesley: Predestination, Works, vol. vi, pp. 24-63; Fletcher: Checks, Works, vols, i, ii; Whitby: On the Five Points; Tomline: A Refutation of Calvinism; Watson: Theological Institutes, part ii, chaps, xxv-xxviii; Copleston: Doctrines of Necessity and Predestination; Fisk: The Calvinistic Controversy; Foster: Objections to Calvinism; Lacroix: “Wesleyan Synergism,” Methodist Quarterly Review, January, 1880; Whedon: Freedom of the Will, part ii, § 3; Calvin: Institutes, book iii, chaps, xxi-xxiv; Witsius: The Covenants, book ii; Toplady: Doctrine of Absolute Predestination; Scott: Remarks on Tomline’s Refutation of Calvinism; Edwards: Works, vol. ii, pp. 513-597; Copinger:Predestination, Election, and Grace; Howe: Oracles of God, part ii, “Decrees;” King: A Discourse on Predestination, with Notes by Whately; Mozley: Augustinian Doctrine of Predestination; Graves:Predestination, Works, vol. iii; Forbes: Predestination and Free Will.

149. Chapter 3: Free Agency.

Chapter 3

Free Agency.

I. The Freedom In Question. In this discussion it is important to determine, first of all, the freedom in question. If we begin in a negative manner it may help us in that determination.

1. Not the Freedom of Things.—There is no freedom in things, and the term has no proper application to them except in a relative sense. A piece of timber which is desired for use may be held fast by the pressure of other pieces. When relieved of this pressure we may call it free, but only in relation to the agency of those who would remove it from its place. The true idea may be more clearly given with the application of the term to things used as instruments. The freedom of instruments is purely in their relation to our purpose or use. A wheel which we would set in motion may be free to turn under applied force, or it may “be effectually obstructed. In the one case we may call it free, and in the other deny its freedom, but only in relation to our own agency. My hand is free in this writing, but simply as free from all hinderance to my so using it. Both wheel and hand are mere instruments, without any freedom in themselves, and can be called free only in relation to our personal agency. Hence there is no freedom of things which can mean any thing directly for the freedom here in question.

2. Not the Freedom of External Action.—We act externally through our physical organism. There may be the freedom of such action or the contrary. Where there is no exterior restraint, and the bodily organism is in a healthy state, so that every member can fulfill its office, there is the freedom of such action. But if there be an insuperable exterior restraint, or a paralysis of the bodily members which disables them, there is no such freedom. What, then, is the nature of this freedom? Our bodily organism is purely instrumental to our external action, and cannot be free in itself because of its instrumental character. It can be free only as freely usable. Its freedom is simply that of a thing. Such freedom can mean nothing directly for the freedom of choice, and simply concerns our power of giving effect to our choices through external action. With the total absence of such power there may still be the truest, deepest freedom of choice, even as it respects the profoundest realities of morality and religion.

It follows that any definition of freedom which limits it wholly or even mainly to the freedom of external action mistakes the question, and defines a form of freedom never in issue in this great debate of the centuries. Yet such is really the definition of Edwards: “The plain and obvious meaning of the words freedom and liberty, in common speech, is power, opportunity, or advantage, that any one has to do as he pleases : or, in other words, his being free from hinderance or impediment in the way of doing, or conducting in any respect, as he wills. And the contrary to liberty, whatever name we call that by, is a person’s being hindered or unable to conduct as he will, or being necessitated to do otherwise.”[776] It is true that, in addition to external forms of action, this definition may include forms more strictly mental, and therefore more

properly internal; but the freedom defined still lies in a power of doing as we please. For instance, if we would profoundly study some great problem of philosophy or religion, and have power and opportunity for so doing, we are free ; but if either is wanting we are not free. But while the application of this law of freedom is thus broadened, the real question in issue is still omitted. The freedom defined has respect solely to our executive volitions, or the power of giving effect to our choices, while the freedom of choice itself is wholly omitted. Yet this is the real question of freedom.

[776]Works, vol. ii, p. 17.

3. Not the Freedom of the Will.—The will is a mental faculty, and one of the constituent faculties of our personality. By a mental faculty we mean a power of mental action. If the mind acts it must have a power of acting. If it acts in different modes there must be a distinction of faculties answering to these different modes. The mind perceives, remembers, reasons, immediately cognizes primary truths, enters into states of feeling, and we find for each form of action a corresponding mental faculty. We thus classify the multiform facts of psychology and generalize them in the faculties which they represent. The method is purely scientific.

We thus determine the fact of a faculty of will. Volition is a specific form of mental action. We cannot resolve it into any other mode. Consciousness fully recognizes the distinctions of perception, memory, reasoning, intuition, and feeling. Between them there can be no interchange of modes. Therefore they unerringly determine for the mind a corresponding distinction of faculties. There is the very same authority for a faculty of will. Any proper analysis and classification of mental facts must find such a faculty. There are facts which cannot be attributed to any other, and must remain groundless without such a faculty. But there is no agency in the will itself; certainly not in any strict meaning of the term. “We often attribute agency to material things. In this view there is agency in whatever is operative in the mode of force, as in gravitation, chemical affinity, electricity, light, heat. Strictly, however, there is no agency in such things, because they possess no power of self-energizing, and all their action is conditioned on the proper collocations. Only in a figurative or qualified sense can agency be attributed to them. We find the higher, truer meaning of the term only in personality. There we reach the power of rational self-energizing with respect to ends. There is no such power in the will itself. It is simply a faculty of the personal agent. In itself it is without intelligence, motivity, or causal efficience. The will may be individuated in thought, but we cannot think of it as so acting. The will is an instrumental faculty for the use of the personal mind. The mind is a personal agent because it has the faculties of such an agency, with the power of so using them. The will is one of these faculties. All, as so usable, have an instrumental quality, and no one more truly so than the will itself. The hand is organically adjusted to many services, but is a mere instrument for the use of our personal agency. In itself it grasps no instrument of work, wields no pencil or chisel of high art. For any such work the power of the will must be put into the hand. But the will is equally an instrument of our personal agency. It never becomes a power in the hand for any mechanical or artistic work except through the energizing of the personal agent. The same is true of it in all forms of its action. It follows that it is not free except as freely usable. The freedom of the will, therefore, cannot be the true question of freedom. This fact means nothing against the reality of freedom, but points to its true location in our own personal agency, and in the result will make it clearer and surer.

4. The True Question of Freedom.—We reach the true question of freedom only in personal agency. For freedom there must be a power of rational self-action. The mere power of self-action will not suffice; for an animal has such power, and yet it is incapable of free agency. For such agency there must be the rational conception of the ends of our action; a power of reflection and judgment upon ends and motives, and of rationally determining our action in respect to them. Such agency is possible only in personality. It is equally true that the power of such agency is a reality in personality. Freedom lies, not in the constituent faculties of our personality, but in our power of freely using them in personal action. Such power is central to personality itself. Here is the true question of freedom.

5. Importance of the Question.—It will suffice that we present this question in a few of its special relations. The importance of questions of psychology arises from the excellence and value of mind. As a spiritual essence, with high, intellectual and moral endowments, it is infinitely superior to matter. Much of our knowledge has its chief value from its relation to mind. The things known may possess little value for our merely secular life, while the knowledge of them may be of great value in furnishing and broadening the mind. The sciences and philosophies have their special interest for us as the creations of mind, and their chief value in the service which they render to our intellectual life. In all the forms of finite existence, as directly known to us, mind is infinitely superior to every other. It is equally true that in the study and classification of the facts of mind, in their generalization in the faculties which they represent, and the determination of the laws under which they work, nothing so deeply concerns us as the question of our free agency. Are we rationally and morally free, with power over our lives? or are we the passive subjects of some dominating force, just as an animal is subject to a law of instinct? Such questions rise above all others in the study of the mind. The question of free agency is for us the profoundest question of psychology. The supreme importance of this question in ethics is manifest. As than the results of all other forms of action, so for us the question of freedom must have supreme concern. Are the virtues which have such a fruitage of good practicable? Are the sins which have such a consequence of evil avoidable? Questions of weightier concern we could not ask. Freedom of external action, political freedom, intellectual freedom have no such interest. Indeed, there is no place for a moral system under a law of necessity. If God is a moral ruler over responsible subjects, they must be morally free. The logic of this principle now commands a wide assent. Even where the accepted philosophy or theology really denies the freedom it is yet admitted as the necessary ground of moral obligation and responsibility. Thus in any and every view it is manifest that the question of freedom has profound interest from its relation to ethics.

Theology gives importance to the question of freedom. Our position on so cardinal a question must influence our interpretation of the Scriptures as the source of theology, and chiefly determine the cast of our doctrinal system. Under the law of a necessary accordance of the doctrines which compose the system such must be the case. Calvinism is logically determined to a position of necessity by its doctrines of the divine sovereignty, predestination, and monergism. The acceptance of a true moral freedom in man would greatly modify the system, just as the synergism of Melanchthon modified the Lutheran theology, which had been strongly Augustinian. Freedom is fundamental in Arminianism. The system holds accordingly the universality and provisional nature of the atonement, and the conditionality of salvation. In this matter it is thoroughly synergistic. If its doctrine of native depravity involves a moral helplessness it must set over against this the helping

grace of a universal atonement. Thus the fundamental truth of freedom requires the system in the definite cast of its doctrines. These brief statements may suffice for the importance of the question of freedom in theology.

6. Theoretical Forms of Necessity.—A very brief statement of some of the leading forms of necessity is all that we here require. The deepest and most thorough of all is fate or fatalism. Of course, there is fatalism in all forms of necessity; yet the term has a meaning of its own. Fate has long been in use for the expression of the absolutest necessity. Otherwise the term is indefinite; so that it expresses the necessitation itself rather than any definite notion of the necessitating force or law. But under the sway of fate all things are absolutely determined; so that they could not but be, nor be other than they are. Fate binds in equal chains of necessity all things and events, all intelligences, thoughts, feelings, volitions, and even God himself—if there be a God.[777] [777] Krauth-Fleming:Vocabulary of the Philosophical Sciences, in verbo; Gillett:The Moral System, pp. 21-26.

Materialism must be necessitarian. The forces of matter operate, and must ever operate, under a law of necessity. Even the concession of their evolution of the Cosmos, with mind itself, could not mean any change in their own nature or laws which could lift them into free self-determining forces. If the assumption of their correlation and convertibility, even with the inclusion of mental facts, be true, they must still remain subject to their own necessitating nature and laws.

Pantheism is a doctrine of necessity. In pantheism God is the totality of being, and works from an inner necessity of his nature, without consciousness, intelligence, or aim. Finite existences, including man, are mere modes of himself, and the product of his aimless activity. Hence, man, as the mode of a being subject to a law of absolute necessity, could not have freedom of action in himself.[778] [778] Jouffroy:Introduction to Ethics, vol. i, p. 193.

Divine predestination involves necessity. Many predestinarians deny this; others, however, avow it, and are logically the more consistent. Much, however, depends upon the nature of the predestination or the interpretation of the terms in which it is expressed. Absolute decrees must have their effectuation in the divine agency. If human deeds are so decreed, they must be so effectuated. It is not here assumed that the Calvinistic doctrine means such a decreeing of all human deeds, whether good or evil. We simply state the implication of an absolute predestination with respect to all events or deeds so decreed. If there is a predestination which does not require the divine agency for its effectuation it cannot be in accord with the determining principles of the Calvinistic system, and may be consistent with freedom and the principles of Arminianism. This brief statement will here suffice, as we have elsewhere considered the question of predestination. We have here presented it simply as a prominent form of necessity. That motives determine our volitions or choices, and that choice must go with the stronger or strongest motive, is the doctrine of many. It is the doctrine of philosophical or moral necessity, or of moral inability to the good. Some have held it as a doctrine of real necessity. However, it is now mostly held as a doctrine of the truest, highest freedom. We regard it as one of very real necessity. The question must be more formally treated.

II. On The Domination Of Motive.

We have named the domination of motive as one of the theoretical forms of necessity. That our motives determine our choice is a doctrine much in favor with the Calvinistic system. There are obvious reasons for this fact. One is, that it frees our choices from all contingency and gives them the fixed order which is in such complete harmony with that system. Another is, that it may be so interpreted as seemingly to be in accord with freedom, or at least to avoid the more serious objections that must beset an open avowal of necessity. It is maintained that the motive state which determines the choice is our own, and for which we are responsible. We choose from our own motive impulse, and for the satisfaction of our own appetence or disposition. Much that is plausible may thus be said, but not enough to conceal the necessity that lies in the determining power which the theory assigns to motive.

1. Choice as the Stronger Motive.—This is the doctrine as usually expressed. The deeper principle is, that motive determines the choice. It is no longer simply the occasion or reason the deeper of the choice, but its cause. It follows that the choice principle. is as the stronger or strongest motive. In the case of two opposing motives of exactly equal force the mental state would be practically the same as a state of indifference, though psychologically different; that is, there would be no free motive force for the determination of any choice. In the case of a stronger or strongest motive all the excess of strength would be so much free, active force, and the only force which could be causal to any volition. Accordingly, the whole doctrine is this: Motive causally determines the choice: hence, in the case of a single motive, it determines the choice; and in the case of two or more opposing motives the stronger or strongest determines the choice.

There is little need of verifying this statement of the doctrine by the citation of authors. To the question, What determines the will? Edwards answers: “It is purpose to say, it is that motive which, as it stands in the view of the mind, is the strongest that determines the will.”[779] We cite a few more words to the same point. “It is also evident, from what has been before proved, that the will is always, and in every individual act, necessarily determined by the strongest motive; and so is always unable to go against the motive which, all things considered, has now the greatest strength and advantage to move the will.”[780] These positions are elaborately maintained, while opposing views are elaborately controverted. “If objects of desire have no tendency to move the will in a particular direction, they are not, properly speaking, motives. If they have such a tendency, they must actually move the will, provided there is nothing which has a tendency to move it in a different direction. When on one side there is no influence,any influence on the opposite side must turn the scale. Whatever does not do this has no influence in the case.”[781] Here is a repetition of the doctrine of Edwards. Two principles are specially obvious in the citation: one, that motive determines the choice; the other, that the choice mast be as the stronger or strongest motive.

[779]Works, vol. ii, p. 4.

[780]Ibid., p. 101.

[781]Day:The Will, p. 64.

2. Ascertainment of the Stronger Motive.—If proof be demanded For the position so positively asserted, that the choice must always be according to the comparative strength of the motive, all that can be given is that, as motive determines the choice, so the determination must be according to the law of comparative strength. The motive acts as a causal force and immediately produces

the elective volition as an effect. Under such a law the stronger or strongest motive at any given instant must inevitably determine the choice, just as the heavier weight determines the action of the balance. But the theory cannot return with the strongest motive so found to prove that motive determines the choice, because, in the inevitable logic of the case, it must make good this position before it can find the strongest motive in the determined result. Further, it must prove that the domination of motive is absolute, just as the domination of the weight is absolute over the turning of the balance, before it can find the strongest motive in the determined result. With such a domination of motive there is no possible escape from the absolutest necessitation of choice.

3. Necessity in Motive Domination.—The domination of motive used to be held as a law of necessity, at least of moral necessity, while now it is not only held to be consistent with freedom, but is even proclaimed as the highest law of freedom. The truth is in the former view. To deny necessity is to concede the contingency of choice, or a power of alternative election; for such a contingency or alternative power is the only contrary to necessity; yet it is against this very contrary that the domination of motive is maintained.

Most that concerns us just here is, to point out the fact of necessity in this theory. Hereafter the freedom of choice will be formally treated, and in that treatment the proper relation of motive to choice will be shown.

It is claimed in support of the theory, that if the choice does not go with the stronger motive, then it must not only be without motive, but against motive, as it must go against all the excess of the stronger above the weaker. This claim must assume that motive causally determines the choice, and that choice is an immediate effect of the motive force. But if choice is so determined there can be no escape from necessity. The theory cannot admit any power over motives, or any intervention of personal agency whereby the elective decision may be delayed, while the motive state may be changed. Any motive state at all consistent with the theory must be purely spontaneous, and must immediately determine the volitional result. But such a result must be necessitated.

Necessity lies in the very notion of the causal relation of motive to choice which the theory maintains. Choice must have a cause; but motive is the only possible cause ; therefore motive must determine the choice. Choice takes one direction rather than another because the motive so determines: this is the only possible account of the particular direction; therefore motive must causally determine the choice. Some, while holding substantially these views, deny that motive is the efficient cause of choice. “Motives are not the efficient cause of volitions. They furnish the material, the occasion, and the end or object of the action; and are absolutely necessary for this. The will furnishes the efficiency, and the form of choice. But the form is to be filled with contents ere volition can be consummated.”[782] All, however, that is thus excepted from the causal force of the motive is the will in the act of choosing. But no theory of the domination of motive could mean that the motive force acts directly upon the will to cause the choice. The motive determines the personal agent to such use of the will. Hence the exception of the will from the immediate causal action of the motive brings in no freedom of choice. If the motive causes the agent to choose just according to its strength or bent, the necessitation is just as absolute as though motive causally acted directly upon the will.

[782]Henry B. Smith:Faith and Philosophy, p. 377.

4. A Law of Universal Necessity.—If motives dominate our choices, there is for us no freedom of choice. The theory can admit no power of our personal agency over our motive states. If we would attempt to control or modify these states we must choose so to do; but we cannot so choose, except as we are determined thereto by a motive. The motive must arise spontaneously. We have no power to cast about for reasons against a present impulse unless we are so determined by the power of a motive which must be on hand, if on hand at all, without any agency of our own. Necessity lies in such subjection to motive. It is the same, whatever the motive, or however it may be designated. A law of necessity has determined all human volitions. Not a single choice could have been avoided or in the least varied; not one could have been added to the actual number. We are the passive subjects of spontaneous impulses, and without any true personal agency, rational or moral.

There must be the same determining law for all finite intelligences, and even for God himself. In all the realm of mind a law of necessity reigns, has reigned, and must forever reign. Of all actual volitions, good and evil, none could have been avoided; nor could one have been added. It must be in the future as it has been in the past. Necessity is the universal and eternal law.

III. On Choosing As We Please.

1. As a Formula of Freedom.—In the use of such a formula we express a doctrine of freedom in much favor with many who hold the domination of motive over choice. To choose as we please is to choose freely and responsibly, no matter what the moral necessitation. The aim of the doctrine so formulated is to bring into harmony certain principles which, at least seemingly, are in contrary opposition. For instance, a moral inability to the choice of the good underlies a responsible freedom to such choice. How can such freedom accord with such inability? Clearly, there is here a perplexing contrariety of principles. Inability is a reality, not a mere word. If we qualify it as moral, it is still a reality, just as any mental or physical inability is a reality. If it be with respect to some doing, any form of inability is a real impotence to such doing. A moral inability to the choice of the good is a real inability which renders the good impossible. This is necessity. It is very real necessity according to the philosophy which makes so much account of our choosing as we please, for the inability lies in an incapacity for any actual motive to the choice of the good, which yet this philosophy holds to be an absolute necessity to such choice. Further, the choice of the evil is the only alternative to such inability. The reconciliation of moral necessity with a responsible freedom is attempted on the ground of our choosing as we please. If we choose the evil it is because we are pleased to choose it. The only bar to the choice of the good is that we are not pleased to choose it. Thus our choices are our own; and it is enough for our responsible freedom that they are made according to our own pleasure. In so choosing, no matter what or why, we choose freely and responsibly. But what if the good be impossible, and the evil a necessity? It matters not, since it is only a moral inability or necessity, and lies in our own disposition. It is still true that we choose as we please, and that we could choose otherwise if we so pleased. Even if we cannot so please, the facts remain the same: we choose as we please, and therefore freely and responsibly.

If really consistent principles seem discordant, it is proper, and may even be laudable, to set them forth in the light of their harmony; but it is not laudable, nor even proper, to attempt the reconciliation of really contradictory principles. Such we think the attempt to reconcile a moral

inability to the good with freedom to the good, on the ground of our choosing as we please. There can be no freedom to any doing without the requisite ability. So there can be no freedom to the choice of the good in a state of moral inability to that choice.

2. A Nullity for Freedom.—This formula is a nullity for freedom, because it simply means an immediate choosing according to the motive state. It cannot mean any thing more, because the philosophy which so expresses its doctrine of freedom admits no other mental fact which can hare any direct part in choice. It allows no place for a proper personal agency which may act above any given motive state and rationally determine the choice. If in any instance it may seem to admit such an agency, yet it cannot do so in fact because it really denies such agency. Any seeming delay for reflection and judgment must arise from the presence and action of some spontaneous motive impulse over which we have no control. Choosing as we please means an immediate choosing in accord with our inclination: simply this; nothing other or more.

Such a choosing means nothing for freedom. Nor can it mean any tiling, since it gives us no other fact of choice than a motive state and an immediate elective decision in accord with it. As these facts mean nothing of themselves for the freedom of choice, neither can this formula mean any thing, since it gives us no new fact of choice, nor any new office of facts previously known, but leaves us in the old position of choosing immediately from the motive impulse, and without any power to prevent or modify the result. Such a choosing as we please is indeed a nullity for freedom.

3. Consistent with Determining Inclination.—All the freedom claimed or claimable under this formula must lie in the fact that the choice goes with the inclination. Any restraint to such choosing or constraint to a contrary choosing would be necessitation, but so long as the inclination determines the choice there is true freedom. Such is the doctrine. But such a freedom must be consistent with the most necessitating inclination. It is easily conceivable that an inclination might be so strong as absolutely to dominate the mind. There is no power to resist its force. By its own strength it instantly and irresistibly determines the mind to the choice of its end. Is this a choosing as we please? According to this philosophy no choosing could be more so. Indeed, the stronger the inclination, the more thoroughly it draws into itself all thought and feeling; and the more resistless its force, the more completely is it a choosing as we please. Is such a choice in freedom? Yes, according to this philosophy, and in the very highest freedom. “He that in acting proceeds with the fullest inclination does what he does with the greatest freedom.”[783] If this be true of any other form of action it must be true of choice. It follows that such freedom is consistent with the most absolute necessity. But freedom and necessity are intrinsically contrary to each other, and never can be coincident in the same volition. Hence there is no freedom in such a choosing as we please.

[783]Edwards: Works, vol. ii, p. 132.

4. Indifferent whence or what the Inclination.—If we are free in our volitions, and responsible for the same, because they are determined by our own disposition, and none the less so even when they are necessarily determined, it matters not what the origin or character of our disposition. The freedom and responsibility rest purely upon the ground that the disposition or inclination is our own, and determinative of our choice. “The truth is that there is no inconsistence between the most efficacious influence in moral necessity and accountableness. Let the influence be ever so great,

still the man acts voluntarily, and . . . he is accountable for his voluntary actions."[784] "The moment that the disposition is seen the moral sense is correspondingly affected, and rests its whole estimation, whether of merit or of demerit, not on the anterior cause which gave origin to the disposition, but on the character which it now bears. . . . How the disposition got there is not the question. . . . It is enough for the moral sense that the disposition is there."[785] [784] The younger Edwards: Works, vol. i, p. 307.

[785]Chalmers:Lectures on Romans, p. 125.

Such is the philosophy of our freedom and responsibility, on the ground of our choosing as we please. If our own disposition determines our choice, whatever its origin or however necessitating its determining power, we are thoroughly free and responsible. The disposition which absolutely determines our choice might be wrought in us by some exterior agency against which we are utterly powerless, or might be some native idiosyncrasy without in the least affecting our responsibility; for in the deepest sense of this philosophy any choosing in such a state would be a choosing as we please. Here, then, is a choice which no intelligent and upright judicatory would pronounce free and responsible, nor could without execration in the common moral judgment, which yet this philosophy must pronounce free and responsible in the deepest sense of the terms.

IV. Mental Facts Of Choice.

1. Freedom of Choice a Question of Psychology.—In saying that freedom of choice is a question of psychology we do not mean that it is exclusively such. Many other facts have weight in the proof of freedom, a few of which may be stated. Such is the fact of a common sentiment or consciousness of freedom. We feel that we are free in our choices and executive volitions. There is no sense of either an interior or exterior constraint, while there is the sense of an alternative power. If there be not the reality of freedom this common consciousness is deceptive. If it may be so in this case, so may it be in others. Consciousness would thus be discredited, and no ground of assured knowledge could remain. But consciousness is trustworthy, and its testimony to the truth of freedom remains sure against all opposing subtleties. The sense of moral responsibility is a sure witness to the truth of freedom. We attribute ethical quality to our personal acts, and have a sense of merit or demerit for the same, as they may be good or evil. Underlying this sense of merit or demerit is the consciousness of freedom in our personal deeds. The notion of justice must include the notion of freedom. In its strictly distributive offices justice rewards men according to their desert. If sin deserves its penal infliction there must be freedom in the sinning. This is the common moral judgment. Hence it is that the notion of justice cannot be complete without the idea of freedom.

These facts, which witness so strongly to the truth of freedom, are mental facts, and, therefore, belong to the facts of psychology; but they have no direct part in choice as a personal act. Therefore they do not belong to the class of facts which, as concerned in the very act of choice, directly witness to the truth of freedom. As choice is purely a mental act, or an act of personal mind, it must be open to psychological study. In mental science we study the operations of the mind, what it does, and the different forms of its action. Many of these forms are complex. Few personal acts are solely from one power; and it is only by study and analysis that we find the elements of any complex form of mental action. This method is legitimate in the study of choice. We may treat choice as a single, isolated volition, but such a treatment can never shed any light

upon the question of freedom. Nor can it give us the true sense of choice. The specific elective volition is but the completing fact of choosing, while choice itself is a complex act and includes other mental facts. A psychological study of the question of freedom requires a knowledge of all the mental facts which have any part in choice itself.

2. Need of All the Mental Facts.—Whether choice is an immediate effect of the spontaneous motive state, or whether it is an act of our personal agency through reflection and judgment, must be decisive of the question of freedom. If the former be the true and whole account of the nature of choice, necessity must be the result; bat if the latter be the true account, freedom must be the result. As the mental facts of choice are intrinsic to its very nature, they are all necessary to a right conclusion respecting its freedom. With a part of the facts the elective decision must be an immediate effect of the spontaneous motive state, and, therefore, without freedom; while with all the facts that decision must be from our personal agency in the rational use of our personal faculties, and, therefore, in freedom.

3. Deficiency of the Usual Analysis.—In a simple and seemingly complete statement of the mental facts of choice three are given: an end, a motive state, the elective decision. This analysis, however, is utterly deficient. By the omission of a vital mental fact choice itself is placed in immediate sequence to the motive state. In this case there cannot be a. proper choice. There might be a higher intelligence in the voluntary action of a man than, in that of an animal; that is, the man might apprehend in thought both the end and the motive impulse, which the animal cannot do; but this would make no vital distinction between the two in the case of choice. The three facts of an end, a motive impulse, and a volition toward the end may all be affirmed of an animal. What is distinctive of personal choice arises from the rational use of our intelligence. This is a vital fact of choice additional to the three previously named. Its omission is the fatal error of this deficient analysis. The error might still be corrected by the interpretation of choice, but only as the interpretation supplied the omitted mental fact. But with those who omit this fact in their analysis there is no reason to supply it through an interpretation. It is not required by the philosophy which can so give the mental facts of choice.

If the elective volition is in immediate sequence to the motive impulse, it must be a necessary effect of that impulse. There can be no intervention of our personal agency whereby the result can be prevented or modified. A motive can act only in one of two modes: either as a solicitation or inducement to the mind as a personal agent, the end of which he may either accept or refuse; or as a causal efficience immediately determining the mind to the end. In the latter case there can be no personal agency in the resulting volition. The causal force of the motive determines the action of the mind, just as the weight determines the action of the balance.

If the choice is in immediate sequence to the motive, then it must be in instant sequence—instant either to the single motive or to the stronger or strongest at any given time. If the motive be a sufficient cause to the choice, then, from the nature of the mental powers concerned, the choice must be an instant effect. Remove the support of a weight and it will instantly begin to fall; but it has space through which to fall, and this requires time. It cannot be so with the action of mind in choice if motive be the cause of its action. Here there can be no appreciable time, and at most only its logical conception. What in the case of the weight is only an instant beginning, in such mental action must be an instant completion. If motive be a cause to the choice it must have entire

sufficiency for the effect. Hence, in such a case, if it be not an instant cause to a complete effect it never can cause the choice. The immediate and instant sequence of the elective decision must involve its necessitation. There can be no place for any counter-force which can in the least measure control the causal force of the motive or modify the volitional result. There is no time for the intervention of reflection and judgment. Our personal agency cannot assert itself and act in the case. All is precluded by the instant sequence of the choice to the motive impulse. Hence the resulting volition is the necessary effect of the spontaneous motive state. There can be no freedom under such a law of choice. Such is the inevitable result of placing choice in immediate sequence to the motive state. There is no place for personal agency under such an order of the mental facts of choice.

4. The Facts in a Complete Analysis.—For a complete analysis of the mental facts of choice we require the addition of only one to those previously named, but it is well here to present all in their proper order and with a fuller treatment. For any choice we require the conception of an end. We use the term end in a sense comprehensive of all objects of choice. Choosing is choosing something: it may be a deed of charity or a deed of fraud, some new pleasure or new form of business, a good life or an evil life. Whatever it is it must be mentally apprehended in order to be chosen. Mere instinct may lead to its end without any mental prevision, as when a bird builds its nest or a beaver its dam, but rational mind cannot so move. It must take into thought the end to be chosen. This preconception of the end belongs to the mental facts of choice, and the logical order of these facts must assign it the first place. The mind must be in a motive state respecting the end to be chosen. We use the words motive state in a sense comprehensive of all forms of inducement to the choice. There must be some form of elicited interest in the end to be chosen. This interest may arise from our appetites or affections, or from our rational or moral nature. Only in some form of conscious interest in an end can there be any reason for its choice. But choice is a rational act, and therefore impossible without a reason. Hence the motive state which embodies this reason must be included among the mental facts of choice, and the logical order places it second.

If personal agency is a reality, the elective decision must immediately follow, not the motive state, but the judgment respecting the eligibility of the end. This judgment is reached through proper reflection. Such reflection and judgment are necessary to a proper personal agency in choice, and therefore necessary to choice itself. In the logical order of the mental facts of choice the rational judgment is the third. The rational judgment does not include the elective decision. In the light of consciousness the mental action is not the same in the two cases. In the judgment we estimate the character and value of the end, while in the elective decision we determine our action respecting its attainment. The act of judgment is complete before the elective decision is made. The judgment, however, is necessary to the rational character of the choice, and therefore to choice itself, which in the very nature of it must have a reason for itself. Thus in a scientific order of the mental facts choice immediately follows the judgment.

5. The Facts Conclusive of Freedom.—In respect to the question of freedom, the difference between the two sets of mental facts, as previously given, is as wide and deep as personal agency itself. In the former analysis there is no place for this agency, while in the latter it has full place. In the former the elective decision is immediately from the motive state, and therefore under a law of necessity; in the latter it is directly from the personal agency. In this agency there is the power of rational self-action. In the exercise of this power ends and motives are taken up into reflection and

weighed in the judgment. The choice is made in the light of prudence or duty. It is a personal act. As personally constituted, we have the power of such action. There is freedom in such action. Thus the mental facts of choice, as given in a complete analysis, conclude for freedom.

150. Chapter 4: Freedom Of Choice.

Chapter 4 Freedom Of Choice.

I. Rationality Of Choice.

1. Motive and Choice.—Choice is a rational election respecting some end or ends. It is rational in the sense that it is for a reason mentally apprehended and approved. The reason so apprehended and approved is the true motive of the choice. There can be no choice without such a motive. Hence there can be no true freedom in a power of choosing without motive. There is no such power, whatever may be possible in the form of arbitrary volitions. Such volitions cannot be choices, because the necessary motives are wanting. The supposition that without actual motives to the good, or with our stronger motives persistently holding for the evil, a good life is yet practicable through choice, is utterly groundless. There could be no choice of the good in such a state. The assumption of an available and responsible natural ability for the choice of the good in such a state is equally groundless. With this natural ability is placed a moral inability; so that the two co-exist. The latter lies definitely in an incapacity for the proper motive to the choice of the good. If the alleged natural ability, whatever it may be, can command the necessary motives, then the moral inability does not exist; if it cannot, then, respecting the good, it can be nothing more than a power of mere arbitrary volition, and therefore must be utterly insufficient for the choice of the good. No such power, however great, can be adequate to a good life ; for such a life must be chosen from its own proper motives.

Thus motives stand between us and our choices, not, indeed, as determining forces, because in our personal agency we have power over them, but as conditioning facts of choice. This is surely the case within the moral sphere, the sphere in which centers the chief interest of the question of freedom. We allege the necessity of rational or moral motive, not to mere volition, but to volition as choice. Many of our motive states arise in purely spontaneous appetence or impulse. Strong incentives to evil thus arise. This is clearly the case with many. These passionate impulses and appetences are urgent for speedy satisfaction, and therefore for the volitions necessary to its attainment. Such volitions are inevitable unless we can restrain the evil tendencies through the weightier motives of reason and religion. Have we such power? This is a vital question of freedom.

2. Rational Character of Choice.—As choice itself is rational, so there must be a rational element in its motive. A mere appetence or incitement in the sensibilities possesses no such quality; therefore it cannot be the proper motive of choice. Any volition which it may directly induce is merely executive, not elective. Hunger and thirst are immediate impulses toward eating and drinking; but their mere satisfaction is not the true motive of self-government in the case. Otherwise we might always eat and drink just according to our appetence—whenever it craves, whatever it craves, all that it craves. This might do for the life of an animal, but could not answer for the rational life of a man. Were these appetites always in adjustment to our good, then might we always follow them, but only for that reason, and therefore for a rational motive. Only with such a motive can there be self-government through choice. The same rule applies in the entire circle of

our spontaneous affections. Sympathy is usually an impulse toward some voluntary action, but not in itself a motive from which we may act with choice. Before the action can be chosen the end of it must be approved as wise or good. This requires reflection and judgment prior to the choice. Parental affection, followed simply as a motive impulse, often leads astray from both prudence and duty. The proper action can be determined only through reflection and judgment. Only for the reason thus apprehended can the action be chosen. The quick resentment against willful injury is an instant impulse toward the infliction of injury in return, but is not such a motive in itself that the retaliation can be chosen. Such a motive could arise only with such reason or reasons as the moral judgment could approve. Thus, in every view of the case, choice is rational in itself, and therefore requires a rational element in its motive. Hence the volitions which spring immediately from spontaneous impulses in the sensibilities are not choices, but purely executive volitions, put forth for the attainment of the ends of such impulses. It is thus manifest that reflection and judgment must come between our motive impulses and our choices. Only thus can they possess the necessary rational quality.

3. Rational Conduct of Life.—Our life is conducted through choice only in the use of our rational powers. An animal has motive impulses and volitional power; but it does not choose the ends of its volitions, nor can it, because it is without the faculties for their rational apprehension. Its volitions are immediately from its spontaneous impulses. The operation is without reason. Such are our own volitions when there is no exercise of reason between them and our motive impulses, whatever their end. The intervention of reason, either as intuitively active or as exercised in reflection and Judgment upon end and motive, is the one fact which can really differentiate rational agency in volition from the operation of mere animal impulse. As between the two, there are widely different powers, different ends, different motive impulses in operation; but, on the omission of a proper use of our rational faculties, mere impulse is equally the determining law of volition in the two cases. Mind thus moves in the sphere of the animal life. Its only possible movement in the higher sphere of a true personal agency is by making reason the law of its choices.

It does not hence follow that on every instance of a new motive impulse, even where morality is concerned, a season of reflection is necessary. Life does not thus fall into separate deeds, but is conducted according to some principle or law. A good life must be conducted on moral principles or in obedience to a recognized law of duty. A good man may have a sudden impulse toward some wrong volition or deed, but reflection and judgment have gone before and settled the principle to which his present action must conform. With these facts, the instant application of this principle answers for all the requirements of reason in choice.

Personal agency itself is a nullity if without power over our motives and volitions. We have no such power unless we can subject them to reflection and judgment. In no other way can life be conducted through choice. There can be no other rational self-government. The only alternative must be a succession of volitions and deeds in immediate and necessary sequence to our stronger spontaneous impulses. In any motive state other impulses may arise to influence a pending volition or deed; but, unless responsive to the call of our personal agency and subject to its control, they must be powerless to release us from the absolute domination of our spontaneous impulses. If there is no place for reflection and judgment between the motive impulse and the volition which it determines, no life can be rationally conducted through choice.

II. Rational Suspension Of Choice.

1. Meaning of Rational Suspension.—Choice, with all volition toward the attainment of the motive end, may be suspended when we are under motive influence. The suspension is rational when for the purpose of reflection and judgment upon end and motive, that the election may be prudent, or wise, or responsive to duty.

What is rational agency, or what can it avail for the higher ends of life, if, under the laws of mental action, there be no place for the proper use of its powers? Where can this use be so important as in the control of mental states which vitally concern the power of self-government? Life is worthy of man only as it proceeds from his personal agency. As such, it must be rationally chosen. Our choices are our most important volitions. Through them we determine the ends of our life and the deeds for their attainment. But if there be no power of suspending choice when under motive influence there can be no place for the reflection and judgment necessary to rational self-government. Our spontaneous impulses must be the immediate causes of our volitions. Hence, the power of rationally suspending choice, with all volition toward the attainment of the motive end, is necessary to choice itself, and the proper use of it a necessary mode of conducting life rationally.

2. Omissions of the Suspension.—In the habits of human life many omit this suspension, and mostly act immediately from spontaneous impulse. They do this when the conduct is profoundly important, morally responsible even, and the call loud and urgent for the most deliberate action. Their conduct is simply executed, not chosen. This is possible, though not consistent with the proper use of our rational powers. These powers are not self-acting, but simply an investment which as personal agents we may and should use. If self-acting they could not be the powers of a proper rational and moral agency. Without their use our life is not from our own agency. Without their possession we are incapable of choosing our life or of conducting it rationally and morally. The fact that many live with little reflection or rational self-control, and act merely from the impulses of spontaneous appetence or desire, is often alleged in their reprehension. They should not be reprehended if without the power of postponing all volition toward the end of their appetences when under such influences; for if without this power they are utterly incapable of conducting life rationally.

3. Power of Suspension Manifest.—It is a fact that often under motive influence all volition toward the end is deferred and held under deliberation. How shall the fact be explained? On a denial of rational deferment there are only two modes in which an explanation can even be attempted. One is to account the delay to a mental state of indifference. But this is inadmissible, because the motive state is manifest in the deliberation. No one deliberates on questions of indifference in order to a judicious election. The other is to account the delay to an exact balance of opposing motive influences. Such a state would be practically the same as a state of indifference, though psychologically different. The view is hypothetically admissible on the theory that volition or choice is absolutely determined by motive force. On the denial of rational deferment motive influences are the only forces practically operative in the mind. There is an impulse toward a given volition or choice; and the only force which can prevent this result is a counter impulse. Hence, the continuance of the delay requires for all that time an exact balance of opposing motive forces. The slightest preponderance of either would at once determine the volitional result, just as the heavier

weight immediately preponderates the scale. Is this, then, a rational account of the case? The mental state of interested deferment runs through hours and days, sometimes through months and even years. Can the fact be explained simply as the result of an exact balance of opposing motive forces? Such is the only possible account, if we deny the power of rational deferment. Its utter insufficiency concludes the reality of this power.

4. Only Account of Noble Lives.—The denial of this power involves the assumption that all great and worthy lives in the various spheres of human activity and achievement, in science and philosophy, in statesmanship and patriotism, in philanthropy and piety, are the formation of volitions in immediate sequence to motive impulses or tendencies, and without any power of personal agency in the proper choice of ends ; that all the truer and nobler lives wrought in patience and self-denial, in an ever-enduring fortitude and the loftiest moral heroism, are thus formed. But no true philosophy of such lives is possible with the notion that they are the creation of purely spontaneous motive forces, no one of which, as it may be the stronger, will submit to any restraint or delay under the immediate power of personal agency, but must of its own force go at once to the volitional result of its own impulsion. In truth, reflection must be the habit, and the highest practical reason the guide, of every such life. Its formation is possible only as the spontaneous impulses may be subject to the personal agency. Over all the exigences of weakness and trial and wrong tendency this agency must be sovereign, and have in command the weightier motives of reason and conscience, which may ever re-enforce the high purposes of a great and good life. Hence, the power of rationally suspending all volition toward a motive end, when under the motive influence, must be a power of personal agency. The philosophy of every great and good life is a conclusive witness to its reality.

III. Immediate Power Of Suspension.

1. Denial of the Power.—We here face the chief objection to this vital law of freedom in choice. It is very easy to affirm that the position maintained gives no release either from an absolute dependence upon motive or from its determining influence upon our volitions. But most that may be thus said must be mere assertion, without possible verification in the facts of psychology or the laws of mind. Such assertion may be met with counter assertion equally broad and plausible. So far, if nothing is gained, neither is any thing lost. However, we shall not thus rest the question, but maintain our position on the ground of both psychology and a true personal agency. The result will give us the rational suspension of choice, not as choice, but as immediately from our personal agency. The contrary assumption is that the suspension of all volition toward the end of any motive impulse for the purpose of reflection and judgment must itself be a choice. Some reason operative as a motive to the suspension is necessary to its rationality. If a sufficient motive be present to the mind it must pause and reflect. Such are the plausible assertions in the case. Their meaning is that any rational deferment of elective or executive volition, with all the intervening rational action, is absolutely dependent upon motive and necessarily determined according to its stronger impulse. On the truth of this assumption the mind, when under motive impulse, cannot pause and reflect, nor take account of any relative fact or principle which might influence the pending volition, except another motive intervene to determine the rational action. But such motive must be assumed to arise spontaneously, if at all. There can be no delay and no casting about for any reason counter to the present inclination, simply as the rational action of the personal agent. If so conditioned by spontaneous motive influence, why should he, or how can he, pause and reflect whether there be

any reason against following a present inclination, except some spontaneous impulse so determine his mental action?

2. A Denial of Personal Agency.—If such be the law of mental action in this case, our volitions are not in any true sense from our own agency, but are immediately determined by our purely spontaneous motive states. Indeed, the mind is no longer a rational agent, because without the power of rational action. The fact is not other because some spontaneous impulse, opportunely arising, may determine the mind to pause, or even turn it away to reflection and the apprehension of reasons counter to the present inclination. There is still wanting the essential power of rational self-movement. The mind cannot act from itself as a rational agent, but is absolutely conditioned by its spontaneous impulses. The irrational soul of an animal is not more dependent upon the impulse of instinct, or passive under its dominance. That the mental movement determined by the spontaneous motive is to reflection and the apprehension of reasons counter to the present inclination brings no relief, because even in such facts the mind is none the less dependent upon the spontaneous motive or passive under its power. This is the fact of necessitation in the case, and the fact exclusive of a true rational agency, whatever the mental action induced.

Thus a proper rational agency is excluded. There is something far higher and other in such agency than is possible under a law of absolute dependence upon purely spontaneous motives. It consists in an intrinsic power of immediate self-movement, a power to pause and reflect when under e impulse of motive, a power whereby the mind may turn itself to such facts or principles as may concern the present inclination, or call them up and hold them under deliberation. For all this there is required no other power or reason than what is ever at the command of a rational agent, so long as his proper agency remains. But an absolute dependence upon spontaneous motive impulse for any reflection or judgment, while under such impulse, utterly precludes this power, and leaves us to be driven helplessly onward in an endless succession of motive states, while our volitions are as determinately swayed by these states as are the orbital movements of the planets by the forces of gravitation. We have no power over such states; no power against them, or to modify them; and, therefore, no power to avoid or in the least modify any volition which they may induce; but if we have not such power we have no true rational agency; it is really and utterly excluded. Now any position which denies to personal mind such an agency, or any power necessary to it, must be a false position. Hence rational agency is, and must be, independent of spontaneous impulses for its rational action when under motive influence. The rational deferment of all volition toward the motive end when under motive impulse is, as previously stated, for the purpose of reflection and judgment upon impulse and end, that the action in the case may be judicious or wise. It is the proper course for an agent rationally constituted and responsible for his volitions. Often the instant application of a principle previously settled may answer for the law of rational conduct. In many cases the proper action may be intuitively or instantly clear. But when it is not clear, as often it is not, our conduct is rational only as we take time and give the question such reflection as may be requisite to a proper judgment.

3. Suspension of Choice not Choice.—This deferment is not choice. The mental action is not the same in the two cases. The question may be appealed to consciousness or tested by the most searching analysis of all the mental facts concerned, and the result will verify our position. Choice has its own mental form, well known in consciousness, but really known only there. Simply as an elective volition it is the act of an instant. The pre-elective rational action is of the choice simply as

the prerequisite of its rational quality. Yet the relation is vital to choice itself. But in no sense do our views identify the one with the other as mental acts. They are not the same. In the light of consciousness they are distinct and different.

4. The Immediate Power Manifest.—Consciousness is witness to the fact that this pre-elective rational action is immediately from the rational agency itself. The power so to act is intrinsic and necessary to such agency. It is an ever-usable power so long as the agency remains. We assert only the same truth when we affirm that a rational agent can act rationally. With this true and simple statement, our position scarcely requires illustration or proof; for to admit the reality of such an agency, and then deny its necessary power, is a contradiction. Who would attempt a philosophy of choice or pretend to build up a doctrine of responsible freedom on the denial of a true rational agency to the mind? But with the admission of this agency it must be admitted that the mind can act rationally. Hence it must have the power of so acting immediately from itself.

Objections may be urged against the reality of this power in view of the blindness of ignorance, the perversion of error, the enervation of vice, the thralldom of evil habit ; but these are incidental questions or side issues which in no sense antagonize our position. There are such instances, as many facts witness. Hence it is clear that rational agency may be greatly enfeebled, or, possibly, entirely overborne, by the force of evil habit and vicious tendency; but this does not affect our position, for it is affirmed of a true rational agency, and not of a mind in such a state of thralldom from a wrong use of its powers that its proper agency no longer remains. There are results of benefit to freedom from proper rational and moral conduct, as well as results of evil from wrong conduct. By a right use of the powers of our personal agency—a use just according to its constitution and our own obligation—we may reach the highest measure of self-command and moral freedom.

We are not constantly in some special motive state, or under some strong impulse, urgent for the volition which will carry us to its end. In the hours of mental quietude and self-command, duty in all its relations and requirements may be calmly considered and rules of right conduct settled. We may thus give to the purpose of a reflective and upright life the strength and persistence of habit. We may so make it a law of life always to pause and reflect under any doubtful solicitation, that this law shall become an immanent state of our mind. It will thus be easy for us, even when suddenly brought under strong impulse or temptation, to pause and reflect and so take to ourselves strength from the weightiest reason against the wrong action to which we may be solicited. For so doing we need only the power which is intrinsic to rational agency.

Thus the proper rational action when under motive impulse, the reflection and judgment upon end and impulse which should precede any volition toward the end, and must precede it if life is to be conducted rationally, is from an immediate power of rational self-action. The denial of this power is the denial of rational agency itself. Logically, the consequence must be a helpless passivity of life under an absolute law of purely spontaneous motive impulse.

IV. Power Over Motives. With an immediate power to postpone all volition toward any motive end, and to take end and motive into reflection and judgment, we have power over our motives. Power over motives is power over choices. Power over choices is true freedom in choice. An analytic presentation of the laws and facts of mind with which this power is vitally concerned will evince its reality, and also conclude its sufficiency as a law of freedom in choice. It is proper, therefore, to

treat, severally and in order, motive states of mind, laws of motive states, power over laws of motive states, power over motive states and motives.

1. Motive States of Mind.—Any form of conscious interest operative as an incentive toward any volition in order to the attainment of an end is a motive state. The fact is the same whether the interest arises in any one of our manifold sensibilities or in the rational or moral part of our nature. There is no motive state without some form of conscious interest in some object or end.

2. Laws of Motive States.—There are certain laws of motive states. The same laws are common to all such states. Their place and value in the question of freedom will appear as we proceed with the discussion.

Motive states of mind are under a law of objective relation. They can possess no motive quality except on the cognitive view of their object or end. There are purely spontaneous appetences, which spring from our constitution, and would spring all the same were we without any notion of objects which might satisfy them. But in such case they could not, in any proper flense, be motive states, because without tendency toward any volition or deed in order to their satisfaction. Such a tendency is impossible without the notion of something satisfying. The same law applies to truths or conceptions of the reason, whether philosophic, moral, or religious. Such truths, however ideal or impersonal as conceived, are often truths of the profoundest conscious interest and the most forceful .practical tendency, but only with the notion of some end to be achieved. All objective motivity is powerless over the subjective in any practical sense, except as in mental conception and with the notion of an end. Such is one law of motive states of mind.

Motive states are spontaneous on their proper objective relation. With a subjective and objective motivity in correlation, then on the perception or conception of the motive object there arises an impulse or tendency toward some volition or deed answering to the motive state. Thus the sense of hunger and thirst, with the notion of food and water, immediately tends toward eating and drinking. The sense of moral obligation and responsibility, with the notion of some deed required as a duty, becomes an impulse toward its performance. The principle is the same in all forms of conscious interest in motive ends, whether of the sensibilities or the reason. Thus motive states spontaneously arise and remain with the proper conception of their objects or ends. We have no immediate will-power either to prevent or repress them. They are necessary facts under their own law. This is no concession to the theory of the domination of motive over volition or choice. Our position is not broadly that we have no volitional power over these motive states, either to prevent or repress or change them, but qualifiedly that we have no such immediate power. This is because they are spontaneous and necessary states under their own law. That they are such will be found wholly to the advantage of a true freedom in choice. The third law of motive states is not so much a distinct law as a special fact of such states consequent on the first law. If motive states are under a law of objective relation and possible only on the mental conception of their proper object or end, then by consequence they must terminate with this conditioning relation. So soon as the motive object or end of these states is dismissed from thought they must cease to have any motive quality or tendency.

3. Power over the Laws of Motive States.—Power over the laws of motive states is simply power over the practical relation of the mind to motive objects. If a present object must, of its own nature and force, so occupy the mind and fix the attention that we can neither dismiss it nor call into

thought and reflection any other, we have no power to determine the relation of our mind to such objects; but if we can dismiss a present object, or replace it in the mind with another, or call another into thought and reflection, then the power is real and sufficient. Have we such a power? This is really the question, whether, as rational agents, we can use our mental faculties according to their own nature and office. But, as correctly so stated, the question determines for itself an affirmative answer.

Rational agency requires a certain complex of usable faculties. There must be a synthesis of rational intelligence, sensibility, and will. Of course there can be no such agency without intelligence. Sensibility is necessary to a conscious interest in the ends of action. Without such interest there could be no personal action; all possible action would be purely spontaneous or automatic. Neither angel nor archangel, however removed from the lower forms of human sensibility, nor even God himself, could be a rational agent without a capacity for conscious interest in the ends of volition or choice. There must be such an interest if only in the purest philosophic or moral reason. Of course there must be a will, without which there is no proper agency, much less rational agency.

Man is a rational agent with these three forms of attribute. But the intelligence is not the agent; the sensibility or emotional nature is not the agent; the will is not the agent. Man himself, as so constituted, is the agent. He is a rational agent because with such faculties he can act rationally. While a rational agent only by virtue of these faculties, yet is he above them with power to use them. They have in relation to him an instrumental quality and function, and he can use them for their appropriate ends, just as he may use any bodily organ or any implement or tool. Mental faculties, in the very nature of them, are usable faculties. Without the power of using them the proper notion of rational agency is utterly excluded. The will, as a usable faculty, is most proximate to the agent, and is immediately at his command. This does not imply an absolute power of volition any more than my voluntary use of a pen in this writing implies an absolute will power over it. Volition, in the lowest sense, is conditioned by some spontaneous mental state; as merely for the attainment of the end of some appetence or impulse, by the notion of the end; as elective, by the apprehension of a reason for the choice. But nothing so conditioning volition is inconsistent with an immediate power of the agent over the will. On the proper occasion he may so use it, and through volition control or use whatever is subject to him as an agent.

Thus he may use his intellectual faculties. Thinking is often spontaneous, or, at least, not consciously voluntary. It is none the less true that through the will we have the voluntary control of our mental faculties and may freely use them according to their own nature and office. Thus we may select the subject of thought and give it conscious attention and profound study. We may dismiss one subject and take up another. Every rational agent can do this; every one who .conducts life rationally must do it. The question of this power may be appealed to the facts of consciousness, and they will verify its reality. The achievements of rational thought conclude the case. There are only two modes of mental activity: one spontaneous, the other by intentional origination and direction. Will the former answer for a philosophy of thought, as manifest in human history? Is not the latter a necessity to that philosophy? Whence the civilizations of the race? Whence the facts of the higher civilizations, the arts and inventions, the sciences and philosophies, the literature, the high achievements in the sphere of aesthetic art, the masterly statesmanship? Not from spontaneous mental reverie, but from the voluntary use of mental

faculties. These marvelous achievements were possible only as men could freely determine their mental activities. This is conclusive of the power which we maintain. With such a power in the use of our mental faculties we can direct attention and thought to one object or another, or dismiss one and call up another. Thus we can determine the relations of our mind to motive objects; whether a present object shall hold its place and engage the entire attention, or what other shall come into attention with it or entirely replace it; whether one object or another shall be in the mental apprehension, with its immediate power over the subjective motivity. But in these very relations are the laws of our motive states. Hence, power over these relations is power over the laws of motive states, and, therefore, over these states. With a motive object in conception there is a spontaneous motive state in correlation with it ; with a dismission of the object from thought, a termination of the motive state; with its replacement by a different object, a change in the motive state. Thus, with power over the relations of our mind to motive objects, we can determine our own motive states. The result is just according to the laws of these states. Such a power we have, however metaphysical speculation and subtlety may seek or even seem to obscure it. The power itself is intrinsic to personal agency, original and simple, indefinable and inexplicable, yet none the less real and manifest.

Any one may readily test and verify the reality of this power. Some motive object comes into your perception or mental conception. It matters not how it comes, but only that is there. Being there, it moves upon the correlate appetence or affection, and draws you into a motive state. This state, spontaneously arising under its own law, is itself an impulse toward some volition or deed for the attainment of the motive object, or the satisfaction of the appetence or affection which it has awakened; but no law of your mind binds you to this state or to any volition or deed toward which it may tend. You can separate yourself from the motive object or dismiss it from thought, and thus put it out of the relation to your mind which is necessary to its motive influence; or you can take into thought and reflection some fact or truth of counter motive influence, and the former will yield to the latter. You may suddenly become the subject of a spontaneous impulse or tendency which you would not follow. Your state of mind against it may be simply a cool judgment, while the motive state is full of fiery impulse; but, however intense the impulse or cool the judgment, you can take time to reflect. This you can do as a rational and responsible agent. Then you can summon into thought and conscience the weighty reasons of prudence and piety against the indulgence of the present impulse. These reasons, so apprehended and meditated, will give you a counter motive state. This state may have far less intensity than the former, and yet be infinitely weightier in the view of reason and conscience. You are called to some duty. Your mental apprehension of it may be lacking in clearness and vigor, while there is but slight response of moral feeling. Other feelings may be strongly adverse. In this state you can take time and call into meditation the weighty reasons of obligation and spiritual well-being which urge the duty. These reasons, so meditated, will bring the responsive disposition.

4. Power over Motives.—We thus have power over motives. As motive is something more than a mere spontaneous appetence or impulse, and includes a rational element, power over motives is more than power over mere motive states. Yet the laws are the same in the two cases. Both classes are spontaneous under the same law of objective relation. This relation is determined for both simply by taking the motive object into proper mental apprehension. As we thus apprehend a rational or moral motive object we realize in experience a rational or moral motive. Through such

higher and more imperative motives we have power over the lower appetites and desires. We are free, or have the power of freedom, from a dominating law of spontaneous appetence or impulsive passion. A far higher and better life must be within our power as rational and moral agents.

If without power over motive states, and over motives as requisite to the choice of the rational and the good, our life must be spontaneous and flow with the current of our lower tendencies; while with this power we may subject it to rational and moral control. Over the impulsions of appetite and passion we may enthrone the rational and the moral. How this may be done has already been explained. We are not helplessly passive under any one spontaneous impulse or any stronger or strongest impulse in the coincidence of two or more of opposite tendency. We have no immediate power of volition to prevent or repress such a motive state; but we have immediate power to defer any volition or deed toward its end. Then through reflection and judgment we may realize the motives of reason and conscience, and direct our life from them. Is this power ever used? So it may be asked in objection. We have previously recognized the fact of a widely prevalent omission of its use. The question, however, or the objection which it clothes, is irrelevant. For the present we are simply maintaining the reality of this power, not its use. But, as a question of fact, it has been used, and in instances innumerable. If once used it is a common usable power of personal agency. If never used, then never in all the history of the ages has any man in a single instance rationally determined his own conduct. Such is the implication of that irrelevant objection to our doctrine of rational agency. There is no need of further refutation or reply; else we might again array the great facts of civilization, as practicable only through a rational use of the faculties of our personal agency, and the many instances of rational and moral self-direction in the formation of great and good lives, as forever concluding the reality of this power, and also its very frequent use.

V. Sufficient Motives For Required Choices. For required choices there must be sufficient motives. We cannot otherwise have true freedom. This is consequent to the rational nature of choice. We choose for a motive rationally apprehended. When the requisite motive is not present to the mind, or within its power to command, there is no proper sphere of choice. With alternative ends of equal interest simply to the sensibilities, we may decide for either or against both, but by an arbitrary volition, not a choice. If we may combine with either a rational element, or a higher rational element with the one than with the other, then may we choose it. If against the impulses of the sensibilities or the motives of secular interest we may command a motive of duty, then we may choose the end of this motive.

Hence the law of freedom is this: for the required choices of prudence and duty we may command the proper motives. The principles of this law have already come into the discussion; most of them sufficiently so. Therefore we further require little more than the proper application. Yet a present analytic statement of the cardinal facts of the question will be helpful to clearness of view. The law of freedom, as given, requires: 1. Sufficient objective motives for the choices of prudence and duty; 2. A capacity for the actual motives of such choices; 3. Power to place the mind in such relation to the objective motives that we may realize in experience the actual motives.

1. Objective Motives.—The reality of the requisite objective motives none will question. A life conducted with prudence or reason is, with all who think, far higher and better than a life determined by spontaneous appetence or passion. Duty asserts its own superiority of excellence and authority. These facts clearly mean the requisite objective motives.

2. Rational Motives.—A capacity for the rational motives of life will scarcely be questioned. It cannot be without questioning the fact of rational agency itself. Agency, in whatever grade, must have every capacity or faculty necessary to it. We are rational agents only as we have the ability to conduct life rationally. But, as previously shown, life can be so conducted only as it may be chosen. It can be chosen only from its own rational motives. These motives are such, not simply as objective, but only as realized in experience. This requires something more than a mere intellective conception of the rational ends of life. It is still true that there can be no actual motive without some form of conscious interest in the end of choice. Hence the rational ends of life, as mentally conceived, must be realized in a conscious interest therein. Only with such interest can they be rationally eligible. As a question of fact such ends of life have with many minds a consciously realized eligibility. One instance of a life rationally conducted must conclude the subjective capacity for these rational motives. There are innumerable instances of the kind.

3. Moral and Religious Motives.—We here reach the profoundest issues of this question. It is here, too, that objections will be most strenuously urged against our position. We firmly and confidently maintain it. There must be a capacity for the motives of morality and religion, else there can be no actual motive to the choice of either. Without the proper motive neither can be chosen. Without the choice neither is possible. In this case certain rational ends of life, as below the moral and spiritual, would be the limit of our agency. It could not rise into the moral and religious sphere. No agency can rise a grade above its capabilities. As the agency of rational mind is impossible to mere animal instinct, so would moral and religious agency be impossible to man if without a capacity for the necessary moral and religious motives. There must be this capacity, either as native or gracious, else we cannot be under obligation to the choice of either. As mere animal instinct cannot be answerable to the laws of a rational life, no more could we be answerable to the laws of a good life if without a capacity for the necessary motives to its choice.

We are not unmindful of the relations of this question to Christian theology. It is easy to array the doctrine of a native depravity against this capacity for the motives of morality and religion. There is truth in both; and neither is less a truth for the reason of the other. The capacity for moral and religious motives is none the less sufficient for a proper moral and religious agency because of its gracious original. It is a gracious endowment of fallen humanity through a redemptive economy.

We appeal the question of this capacity to the moral facts of human history, and none the less confidently because of the prevalent facts of moral darkness, stolidity, and vice. The moral life of humanity is double—a life within a life. With all the facts of evil there are the more widely prevalent facts which evince the common sense of moral obligation and responsibility, and the common appreciation of obedience to the duties of morality and religion as the supreme excellence and wisdom of human life. These facts require, as their necessary source, a subjective state which constitutes a capacity for the motives of morality and religion, and hence conclude its reality. As for the question of moral freedom, it is indifferent whether this capacity be native or gracious. For the consistency of Scripture truth it must have a gracious original. The motives of morality and religion are the paramount motives of human life. They are such, not only in intrinsic quality, which few question and the moral consciousness of humanity affirms, but also as realizable in experience, The possibility of this realization lies in our actual capacity for these motives as previously shown. Hence, in the realizations of experience the good may have for us the highest eligibility and be chosen against the enticements of evil.

4. Power of Commanding the Requisite Motives. —Then the power of rational and moral agency, as previously explained, gives us the command of these paramount motives of life. It is simply the power of placing the mind in practical relation to the great truths which embody these motives. We can determine our profound attention to these truths and study them just as we do in the case of secular questions. Our moral motivities will answer to these truths when so apprehended and meditated. Conscience and moral reason are realities with every one yet under a law of moral probation. They only wait for the proper reflection to rise into activities of a profound conscious interest in the ends which they concern. In these activities shall thus be realized in experience the actual motives to the choice of the good. Thus, the thoughtless can pause and reflect, while moral duty and the interests which hinge upon it shall rise into view as of all things the most imperative and important. The worldly mind can deeply concern itself with heavenly things. The sensual can apprehend the higher and diviner law of temperance and purity. The covetous and selfish can ponder the duty of charity and realize its imperative claim. The hard and cruel can yield to the pathos of kindness and sympathy. This is no doctrine of instantaneous self-regeneration, nor of self-regeneration in any sense. It is simply the law under which we can realize the paramount eligibility of the good. The power is a gracious endowment. Also the divine Spirit is ever present for our aid, and often active as a light in the moral reason and a quickening force in the conscience. Here is the deeper source and the sufficient source of a true moral agency, with a capacity for the motives of duty. The prevalent habits of evil are no necessary result of an impotence of the moral nature. Nor are they consequent simply to a non-use of its powers, but mostly from a persistent resistance to the spontaneous apprehensions of the moral reason and the impulsions of conscience, especially as enlightened and quickened by the divine Spirit. These facts render it the more manifest that through the proper and obligatory use of the powers of our moral agency we can realize the paramount eligibility of the good and choose it against the evil. This primary choice of the good is not the realization of a new spiritual life in regeneration, but is only, and can only be, the election of its attainment. The choice of such an end and its attainment are clearly separable facts. A new spiritual life in regeneration, if chosen as an end, still has its own mode of effectuation, and in itself must be entirely from the divine Spirit. The sphere of synergism lies back of this, where, through the help of grace and a proper use of the powers of our spiritual agency, we may choose the good; while that of the divine monergism is specially in the work of moral regeneration. Here the doctrine of the most rigid monergist is the reality of truth; while synergism within its own sphere is equally a truth.

Whoever, by private entreaty or public address, seeks to persuade others from an evil to a good life, must assume the very law of freedom which we here maintain. In such an endeavor he can allow no plea of indifference or moral insensibility, or the dominance of propensities to the evil, or the want of actual motives to the choice of the good, to close the case, but must urge any and all such to pause and think, to take into thought and reflection the profound obligations and interests of morality and religion, on the apprehension of which, with the divine help, the paramount motives to the good shall be realized in experience, when the good can be chosen against the evil. Every earnest moral and religious worker does this. The true evangelists of the Christian centuries, and without respect to theological creed, have so entreated and persuaded the thoughtless and vicious. Thus prophets and apostles and the Master himself entreated evil men. So shall we continue to do. But it is all groundless and without possible result, except as the evil have a capacity for moral and religious motives, and a power of personal agency whereby they may place

their minds in such relation to the good that it shall be apprehended in the moral reason and in a profound conscious interest as supremely eligible.

5. True Freedom of Choice.—This is the doctrine of a rational and a real freedom. It rests upon no false ground, and is constructed with no irrelevant or irreconcilable principles. Every vitally related fact of psychology and personal agency has its proper place and office.

It is not the freedom of arbitrary volition, nor the liberty of indifference. A life without interest in its chosen ends must be utterly forceless and useless. Indeed, it could have no chosen ends. It is the sheerest assumption that either the primary choice of the good or the maintenance of a good life is possible, with indifference to goodness and its blessedness as ends. The theory of a valid and responsible freedom under a law of moral inability is of all theories the most irrational. It requires that the good be chosen, not only without actual motive, but also against the dominance of inevitable counter motive. By so much does it sink below the liberty of indifference or the freedom of mere arbitrary volition. The doctrine here maintained is clear of all these errors. Personal agency is the ground truth. This agency must be a reality, else there can be no place for the question of freedom. If a reality, it must have all requisite faculties. Then freedom should no longer be a question in issue. Its denial involves a denial of personal agency in man. Personal agency and free agency are the same. For required choices sufficient motives are within our command. This is a rational freedom.

It is not the freedom of moral impotence, impotence in the very seat of the necessary potency. It is the freedom of personal agency, with power for required choices. It is sufficient for the sphere of our responsible life. Spontaneous impulses often tend toward the irrational and the evil, and the more strongly in many instances from previous vicious indulgence; but as rational and moral agents we have a gracious power against them. We can summon into thought and reflection, and into the apprehension of conscience and the moral reason, all the counter motives of obligation and spiritual well-being as they may arise in the view of God and redemption and the eternal destinies. With these resources of paramount motive, and the light and blessing of the Holy Spirit, ever gracious and helpful, we may freely choose the good against the evil. This is the reality of freedom in choice.

151. Chapter 5: Justification.

Chapter 5

Justification.

Justification by faith is a vital part of Christian soteriology. This is the meaning of its prominence in the Scriptures, particularly in some of the epistles of St. Paul. As he maintains a universal sinfulness, and an atonement in Christ as the necessary ground of salvation, so does he set forth and maintain a justification by faith as the only mode of an actual salvation. This doctrine has always had prominence in the effectual preaching of the Gospel. It was the central truth in the Lutheran reformation. Luther himself, even with the clearest conviction of the many errors of Romanism, still groped in the dark until his mind grasped this great truth. As he found therein his own salvation, so through the power of the same truth the reformation which he led became effectual in the salvation of many. So was it in the great Wesleyan evangelism. Again the doctrine of justification by faith was the central truth in a preaching marvelously effective in salvation. As it has been, so must it be. If in the future the preaching of the Gospel shall be effectual in the salvation of men, so must it be the preaching of justification by faith in Christ. On the truth of the facts just stated a clear and truthful view of the doctrine of justification must be profoundly important. Only in an evangelical system can there be a true doctrine. As systems depart from an evangelical basis, so must this doctrine be obscured or perverted, while in the extreme departures it must be entirely lost. Evangelical systems may differ respecting some facts, while each holds the vital truth of the doctrine. Between the Arminian and Calvinistic systems there are differences on this question, which arise mainly from a difference of views respecting the nature of the atonement; but both systems hold the atonement as the true and only ground of justification, and faith in Christ as the one condition of its attainment; and in these facts both hold the vital truth of the doctrine. In the discussion of justification it will be proper to consider its nature, ground, and condition. The treatment of these three questions is necessary to the clearer view of the doctrine.

I. The Nature Of Justification.

While it is proper to treat the nature of justification separately from its ground, yet the two are so closely related that the former can receive its lull exposition only in connection with the latter. Particularly is it true that the points of difference between the Arminian and Calvinistic views cannot otherwise he clearly set forth. The impossibility arises from the fact that in each system the view of justification is determined by the view of the atonement as its ground.

1. Terminology of the Subject.—The nature of justification must be studied in view of the terms wherein it is expressed, or which are used in such relation to it as to concern its proper interpretation. There are terms which relate to God as justifier, and to his act of justification; and terms which relate to the subjects justified, to the condition of the justification, and to the righteousness which is the result of the divine act of justification. However, the fuller exposition of these terms belongs properly to the more direct treatment of the nature of justification; so that we

here need no formal statement of their meaning. It is mainly their use in relation to justification that we think it needful here to point out.

One term is δ■καιος, which, in application to God, means his justice or righteousness, particularly in the justification of sinners on the ground of atonement (Romans 3:26). Another term is δικαι■ω, which means the divine act in the justification of sinners who believe in Christ (Romans 3:30; Romans 4:5; Galatians 3:8). Another term, and one in very frequent use, is δικαιοσ■νη, which, as applied to this subject, specially means the righteousness which God confers by the act of justification (Romans 3:21-22; Romans 4:3; Romans 4:5-6; Php 3:9). Another term is λογ■ζομαι, which is used in the sense of counting, reckoning, or imputing faith for righteousness, and righteousness without works (Romans 4:3-6). If other terms are needed they will appear in the discussion.

2. Forensic View of Justification.—Justification is a court term, and in its purely forensic sense means a judgment of innocence or righteousness. If so applied to God's act of justification it must mean simply his judgment of the legal status of the justified, and not his act which determines that status; that is, that God's act of justification is rather his judicial utterance that the person justified is right with the law than a gracious act of forgiveness which sets him right with the law. Underlying this view is the principle, which is often asserted, that those whom the divine judgment declares righteous must be righteous in fact. The principle is valid in itself, and would be necessary to the place here assigned it if justification were of the nature here maintained. But as it is not such, the necessity for that principle is only theoretical, not real. Such a view of justification must assume a prior divine act of forgiveness, which constitutes no part of the justification itself. Further, it must assume a prior imputation of the righteousness of Christ, for only thus could sinners be viewed as even theoretically qualified for a strictly forensic justification. It is in this manner that Calvinism provides for such a justification.

Justification, particularly in that form of it with which we are now concerned, cannot be strictly forensic. The possibility is excluded by the very nature of such a justification. A person is arraigned and tried for some offense or crime against the law, but in the process of the trial proves his innocence. The court so decides, and formally pronounces him right with the law: this is a forensic justification. But the subjects of the divine justification are sinners. This fact is so explicitly scriptural that it cannot be questioned. Such they are in the divine judgment and condemnation; and as such they cannot be the subjects of a forensic justification. The theory really requires a twofold justification: one in the literal sense of making righteous; the other in the judicial sense of declaring righteous. An imputation of the righteousness of Christ which makes righteous must be a distinct fact from the forensic justification, and must precede it as its necessary ground. The true doctrine of justification is not to be found in this complex view.

3. The Vital Fact of Forgiveness.—Forgiveness really has no place in a strictly forensic justification. It cannot have any, since such a justification is simply an authoritative judgment of actual righteousness. Hence forgiveness and forensic justification can neither be the same thing nor constituent parts of the same thing. There must be error in any theory which omits forgiveness as the vital fact of justification. That justification means forgiveness is manifest in the fact that sinners or the ungodly are justified. This is clearly the doctrine of St. Paul: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that

is in Christ Jesus." "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Romans 3:23-24; Romans 4:5). The words of David (Psalms 32:1-2), as St. Paul fits them into his own doctrine, can have no proper interpretation without the fact of forgiveness in justification (Romans 4:6-8). The interchanging use of justification and forgiveness gives to the former the meaning of the latter. Such use is too clear and sure to admit of any doubt. "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13:38-39). In this text the word Justified is in meaning the very same as that of forgiveness, which it follows in the same sentence.

"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Romans 3:25-26). First of all, the propitiation in the blood of Christ has respect to both the reality and the remission of sins. Next, it is related to God as the ground of his righteousness in such remission. The declaration of his righteousness thereon is twice made in the same sentence. But when, in the second instance, it is followed by the terms of justification instead of the term remission, as in the first, the Justification must be the same as the remission. There is the same propitiation, the same declaration of the divine righteousness, the same condition of faith in Christ, in connection with the one term as with the other. There is no new form of thought in the transition from the one to the other.

4. The Use of Forensic Terms.—We have already given the meaning of a strictly forensic Justification, and shown that such could not be the divine Justification of a sinner. There can be no strictly forensic Justification of a sinner except by a mistaken or a corrupt Judgment, neither of which is possible with God. Yet this forensic term is appropriated for the expression of his act in the forgiveness of sin. Of course it is so used in a qualified sense, and yet not in a sense which is alien to its primary meaning.

There is one fact of the divine forgiveness which is closely kindred to a forensic justification: the result of forgiveness is a justified state. With respect to the guilt of all past sins, the forgiveness sets the sinner right with the law and with God. That is, by the divine act of forgiveness he is made as completely free from guilt and condemnation, or from amenability to punishment for past sins, as he could be by the most formal judgment of innocence. With this result of forgiveness it may properly be called a justification. The justification of a sinner is an act of God in the exercise of his rightful sovereignty. It is not, however, the act of an arbitrary sovereignty, as we shall directly point out, but an act of God as supreme moral ruler. Calvinism must insist that justification is definitely and only a judicial act of God. This accords with the view of justification as strictly forensic. But as that view is not the correct one, as we have shown, there is no reason for the position that the act of God in justification or the forgiveness of sin is purely a judicial one. It suffices that it is the act of God as moral ruler. As such it is complete in its authority, and from it there is no appeal: "It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth" (Romans 8:33-34)? It is as moral ruler, and in possession of the supreme powers of moral government, that he condemns us for our sins; and so in the exercise of the same powers he forgives our sins. In the result we are, as before pointed out, as completely right with the law as we could be from a purely forensic justification. So far the idea of such a justification is present in the divine remission of sins.

Finally, God forgives sin, not in the exercise of an absolute sovereignty, but only on the ground of the atonement, which renders the forgiveness consistent with his justice and the interests of his moral government. Thus through the propitiation in the blood of Christ, God is righteous in the remission of sin; at once just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus (Romans 3:24-26). These facts warrant the use of justification for the expression of the divine forgiveness.

5. A Change of Legal Status.—Justification effects no change in the interior moral state. All change therein is definitely the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration or sanctification. It is not in the nature of justification that it should effect any such change. It has respect to man simply as a sinner and amenable to punishment, and its whole work is to free him from such amenability. It is in this case just as in that of the pardon of a criminal by the governor of a State, which effects no purification of his inner nature. If in some texts justification seems to mean more than we here ascribe to it, in such texts it must be used in a sense broader than its own proper meaning. The justification is complete in its own proper work. It cannot annihilate the deeds of sin out of which guilt arises. They are eternal and unchangeable realities, and must forever be the deeds of their authors. Forgiveness abates nothing of their intrinsic demerit, but is a complete discharge from their guilt as an amenability to punishment. In such a sense of guilt, and with respect to all past sins, the forgiveness is complete. So far justification sets the sinner right with God; as completely right as if he had never sinned. It is not a small blessing. With all the limitations that we pointed out it is still a great blessing, great in itself and great in the privileges to which it opens the way.

II. The Ground Of Justification.

We previously stated the very close connection between the nature and the ground of justification, and that it was only in the treatment of the latter that we could attain the clearer view of the former. We are not here concerned with minor differences respecting this ground, but may properly consider it as held in some of the leading systems of theology.

1. In Socinianism.—We here use the term Socinianism as representative of all schools which are Pelagian in anthropology and Socinian in Christology and soteriology. However, in these schools there are all shades of opinion, even down to the line of an open infidelity.

Socinus himself held to a form of justification, and made large account of faith in Christ as concerned therein; not, however, as the condition of forgiveness, but as an act of the highest form of obedience, and therefore as a fact of personal righteousness. It means a justification simply by works. It hardly need be observed that the view is in the widest dissent from the Pauline doctrine. In such a view Christ is not in any proper sense the ground of forgiveness, nor faith its condition. There is no justification in forgiveness; but a sinner is justified as he comes to render a righteous obedience to the will of God. In affiliated schools, such as the Unitarian and Universalist, some admit a proper forgiveness of sin, but hold that repentance is its true and sufficient ground. Neither Christ nor faith in Christ has any necessary relation to either the repentance or the forgiveness. Others deny the possibility of forgiveness. All sin must suffer its deserved penalty, either in this life or in the next. Still others deny all proper demerit of sin, and hence deny all forgiveness. Sin and suffering are related purely as cause and effect, and the suffering as naturally consequent to sin is inevitable. These views utterly exclude every element of a true doctrine of justification.

2. In Romanism.—Romanism holds strongly the doctrine of vicarious atonement. The sacrifice of Christ is the satisfaction of justice for human sin. This satisfaction is the ground of forgiveness. Yet there is a limitation with respect to both the satisfaction and the forgiveness which perverts the doctrine of justification and departs from its only true and sufficient ground. The sacrifice of Christ made satisfaction for sin as it respects the desert of eternal punishment, and forgiveness entirely frees us from amenability thereto; but there are certain deserts of temporal punishment for which satisfaction is not made, and which therefore are not canceled in forgiveness. Such punishments must be suffered either in this life or in purgatory. The only possible release is through voluntary penance or the surplus merits of the saints. Here is serious error as it respects both the ground and condition of justification.[786] [786] Council of Trent, 14th session, Canons 12-15; Elliott:Romanism, vol. i, book ii, chap. xi.

There are other serious errors. Sanctification is included in justification: or, rather, we are justified only as we are sanctified. The sanctification is by a divine infusion of grace. The specific office of faith as the one condition of justification is really denied. We are justified by faith only as faith itself becomes the source of a new spiritual life.[787] [787] Moehler:Symbolism, pp. 201-207.

3. In Calvinism.—In this system the atonement in Christ is in the deepest sense the ground of justification, but in a mode peculiar to itself. Justification is held to be strictly forensic, as previously shown. It thus means simply a divine judgment or declaration of righteousness. But those whom God declares righteous must be righteous in fact. Therefore, as all are sinners, there must be a justification in the sense of making righteous prior to such forensic justification. Hence, to provide for the prior justification, Christ must so take the place of sinners as to suffer the punishment due to their sins and fulfill the righteousness required of them, and the substitution in both instances must be accounted to them by imputation. It is in this sense and in this mode that the atonement is held to be the ground of justification.[788]

[788] Westminster Confession, chap, xi;Larger Catechism, Q. 70; Buchanan:Doctrine of Justification, pp. 116-118; A. A. Hodge:The Atonement, pp. 224-227.

There is here an exact accordance between the nature of the justification maintained and the alleged ground of it; but there is error respecting both. The atonement is not of the nature here assumed, as we have shown in the treatment of that subject. Therefore there must be error in the justification here maintained—must be, because it requires that mistaken view of the substitution of Christ. The doctrine is right in finding in the atonement the only ground of justification, but mistakes its nature, and therefore mistakes the true nature of justification itself. The question of imputed righteousness in justification requires further treatment. Christ is assumed to be the substitute of elect sinners in two respects: in the one as suffering the punishment which they deserve; in the other fulfilling the personal righteousness due from them. The former question was sufficiently discussed in our treatment of the atonement, but the latter is still on hand.

If Christ was really the substitute of elect sinners in personal righteousness, then the same might be imputed to them as the ground of their justification; but such a substitution is an assumption of theology, not a truth of the Scriptures. Or, if justification were strictly forensic, it might be assumed to imply the substitution of Christ and the imputation of his righteousness as its necessary ground; but as it is not such, but is in fact the forgiveness of sin, as we have clearly shown, it neither requires nor implies such a substitution, but is conclusive against it. The Scriptures deeply

emphasize the personal righteousness or sinlessness of Christ, but specially and definitely as the requirement of his priestly offices.[789] The texts here given by reference most fully justify our position; and they are the leading texts which directly concern this question. Their explicit sense is that the personal righteousness of Christ goes into his saving work, not as a vicarious and imputable righteousness, but as an element of value in his atoning death and intercession.

[789]2 Corinthians 5:1;Hebrews 4:14-16;Hebrews 7:26-27;Hebrews 9:14;1 Peter 3:18. The texts usually adduced in proof of an imputation of the personal righteousness of Christ are inconclusive, and may be satisfactorily interpreted without it. “In the Lord have I righteousness and strength” (Isaiah 45:24). But as this strength is not an imputation of the divine strength, there is no need to interpret the righteousness as such an imputation. Besides, both the marginal reading and the New Version exclude the possibility of such an interpretation. “And this is his name whereby he shall be called, TheLord our Righteousness” (Jeremiah 23:6). That our Lord should be so called means that he is our righteousness. But how? Surely not literally such.

How then? Clearly, by some agency whereby we are brought into a state of righteousness. We are brought into such a state through the forgiveness of our sins, and the purification of our nature, with the resulting new spiritual life—all being the fruit of our Lord’s redemptive mediation. This view is thoroughly scriptural, and fully answers for the meaning of this text, without the unexpressed, and indeed unimplied, imputation of his personal righteousness.

“For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous” (Romans 5:19). This is a text of special reliance. The relations of the race respectively to Adam and Christ are here the great subject. In the one the race fell; by the other it is redeemed. The fall was through the disobedience of Adam. St. Paul having so expressed this fact, it was very natural, and almost of course, that he should ascribe our redemption to the obedience of Christ. But we must include therein his passive obedience, because we cannot be justified without his blood. Therefore only such a form of obedience may be meant. Such a meaning simply places this text in complete harmony with others wherein our redemption through the suffering and death of Christ is expressed as the work of his obedience (Matthew 26:39; Matthew 26:42; John 10:17-18; Php 2:8; Hebrews 10:5-10). We certainly do not need for its interpretation the idea of an immediate imputation of his personal righteousness; therefore it does not prove such an imputation. There is another decisive fact: we were not made sinners by the imputation of Adam’s sin, in the sense of this doctrine—as was shown in our anthropology; therefore we are not made righteous by an immediate imputation of the personal righteousness of Christ.

“But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption” (1 Corinthians 1:30): wisdom, as he is the manifestation of the wisdom of God, specially in the plan of human salvation; sanctification, in the purification of our nature through his grace; redemption, as he redeems us with his own blood and accomplishes the work of our salvation. There is no place for imputation in any of these instances. Nor is any needed in the instance of righteousness. As through faith in the blood of Christ we are justified in the remission of sin, so is he made righteousness unto us. There is here no proof of the imputation of his personal righteousness. “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (2 Corinthians 5:21). To be made the

righteousness of God in Christ must mean to be made partakers of the righteousness provided in him. How is this righteousness provided? The answer is obvious: By his sacrificial death. This is the meaning of his being made sin for us; that is, a sin-offering. The word rendered sin—■μαρτ■α—cannot here mean anything else. Thus the whole ground of this righteousness lies in the sacrificial death of Christ. Hence his personal righteousness is not only omitted from this ground, but is really excluded. It is only from a mental habit of always seeing in Christian righteousness the imputed righteousness of Christ, that any one could think of finding the proof of such a doctrine in this text. Indeed, it proves the contrary.

There is one fact which is in itself conclusive against this doctrine of imputation. It is the fact that the salvation in Christ, both as a present attainment and a future blessedness, has its complete ground in his vicarious sacrifice. A brief statement of facts will show this. Herein we have reconciliation with God (Romans 5:10; Ephesians 2:13; Ephesians 2:16; Colossians 1:20-22); the forgiveness of sin (Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14); justification (Romans 3:24-25; Romans 5:9); righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21); regeneration and a new spiritual life (Hebrews 9:14; 1 John 1:7; Revelation 1:5); adoption and heirship (Galatians 4:4-7.); meetness for heaven and the possession of future blessedness (Revelation 7:14-17).Thus it is that all the blessings of a complete salvation are grounded in the vicarious sacrifice of Christ. Hence there is no place for the imputation of his personal righteousness, and no need of it. Indeed, it is excluded. It is possible, as we before pointed out, to express the vicarious sacrifice of Christ in the terms of obedience, but we cannot express that form of his personal righteousness which is held to be imputed to us, in the terms of such sacrifice. The fundamental distinction of the two, as maintained in the doctrine of imputation, renders this impossible. The imputation of the personal righteousness of Christ in our justification, and as the ground of our title to a heavenly inheritance, is thus thoroughly disproved.

4. In Arminianism.—In Arminianism the atonement is the true and only ground of justification, but in a sense consistent with the system. In this system the vicarious sufferings of Christ were not the actual punishment of sin in the satisfaction of retributive justice, but a provisory substitute for penalty, so that sin might be actually forgiven. This accords with the nature of justification as being such a forgiveness. In this sense the atonement is the real and only ground of justification. This sense agrees with vitally related facts: with the actual guilt of redeemed sinners until actually forgiven in justification; with such forgiveness as the essential fact of justification; with the real conditionality of forgiveness or justification. Were the atonement absolute, as it must be if in the mode of penal substitution, there could be neither guilt nor forgiveness in the case of any redeemed by Christ, nor any conditionality of justification. The reality of these facts is conclusive of a merely provisional ground of justification in the atonement. It is none the less real, or necessary, or sufficient because only provisional in its nature.

5. Justification Purely of Grace.—This is the doctrine of St. Paul, repeatedly expressed (Romans 3:24; Romans 4:16; Titus 3:5-7). It is eminently such on our own doctrine of atonement. The pre-eminence which the doctrine of satisfaction here assumes is utterly groundless. This was clearly shown in our discussion of the atonement. According to the doctrine of satisfaction God remits no penalty; and where there is no forgiveness of sin there can be no grace of forgiveness. On the doctrine which we maintain, the atonement fully provides for the forgiveness of sin, but in itself simply abates nothing of our guilt. Our justification or the forgiveness of our sin must therefore be purely an act of grace. The thought of this grace is intensified in view of the fact that

the ground of its exercise is a provision of the infinite love of God.

III. The Condition Of Justification.

1. Faith the One Condition.—By the condition of justification we mean the personal action required for its attainment. That requirement is faith, and faith only. But this faith is specific as it respects both its object and nature, and these facts must be set forth in order to complete the idea of faith itself as the condition of justification. The Scriptures leave us no reason to doubt that faith is the real and only condition of justification. This is so openly true that a mere reference to a few texts will here suffice (Romans 3:21-26; Romans 4:3; Romans 4:23-25; Galatians 3:24). The same truth is emphasized in many texts which discriminate faith from works, and affirm that we are justified by faith and not by works, or by faith without works (Acts 13:38-39; Romans 3:20-22; Romans 3:28; Romans 4:2-5; Romans 9:31-32; Galatians 2:16). This fact makes doubly sure the sense of Scripture, that faith is the one condition of justification.

It is utterly groundless to say that it is only the works of the ceremonial law that are excluded from all part in the justification of sinners. Works of the moral law are equally excluded. This is manifest in the great argument of St.

Paul through which he reaches the impossibility of justification by works. The impossibility lies in the universality of sin: “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). The deeds of sin with which he deals are specially violations of the moral law, either as manifest in the light of nature or as given by revelation. There is this further decisive fact : The impossibility of justification by deeds of law is affirmed of the Gentile whose only law is the moral law. In this case there could be no reference to the ceremonial law. Hence there is the same condition of justification for the Gentile as for the Jew (Romans 3:29-30; Galatians 3:8; Galatians 3:22).

2. The Imputation of Faith for Righteousness.—With the word impute we have also the words count and reckon. Faith is imputed for righteousness, counted for righteousness, reckoned for righteousness (Romans 4:3; Romans 4:5; Romans 4:9; Romans 4:22; Romans 4:24). There is no difference of meaning in these words, as here used, that requires any notice. They are all the rendering of the same word, λογ■ζομαι.

Two facts should be specially noted. One is, that it is faith itself, and not its object, that is thus imputed. This is certain even where a pronoun is the immediate antecedent to the verb. Here is an instance: “For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness” (Romans 4:3). Here only the faith of Abraham can be the antecedent to the pronoun it; and hence only his faith could be the subject of the imputation. Further, faith itself, as so named, is repeatedly the immediate nominative to the imputation. Here are instances: “His faith is counted for righteousness;” “faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness” (Romans 4:5; Romans 4:9). Hence any attempt at a metonymical interpretation of faith, so that it shall mean, not itself but its object, that is Christ, and hence mean the imputation of his personal righteousness, is utterly vain. The other fact is, that the faith is counted, reckoned, imputed to him whose personal act it is. This is what is imputed to Abraham, to the Jew, to the Gentile. In neither case is there the slightest intimation of an imputation of any personal act of another. For what is faith imputed? For righteousness. This is the only answer, because such is the uniform statement of the Scriptures. But what is the meaning of righteousness, as the term is here used? Only two views are worthy of

any consideration: one, that faith itself constitutes a proper and real personal righteousness; the other, that righteousness means the legal state consequent upon the remission of sin on the condition of faith.

Faith itself cannot constitute a true personal righteousness, such as consists in a complete fulfillment of personal duties. Considered as a duty, faith could fulfill only its own obligation, and therefore could not answer for any other duty. It never can constitute the sum of Christian obedience. Such a view would infinitely exalt it even above the high place which the Scriptures assign it in the economy of the Christian life. Besides, the relation of faith to righteousness is entirely overlooked. In the view of St. Paul faith is simply the condition of righteousness, whereas in this view it constitutes the righteousness. Also, it takes us entirely away from the atonement in Christ as the only ground of justification, and from the remission of sin as the vital fact thereof. The truth of the question lies in the other view, that the righteousness for which faith is imputed means the legal state consequent upon the remission of sm. In an earlier part of this discussion it was shown that Justification and remission of sins mean the same thing. We further find that the imputation of righteousness has the same meaning as the other two facts. The proof of this oneness of meaning in the three forms of expression lies in a single passage, wherein are set forth, in one sentence and without any real distinction, the righteousness of God, justification, and remission of sins, as conferred on the same condition of faith in Christ (Romans 3:21-26).The imputation of faith for righteousness is thus easily understood. It means simply that faith is accepted as the condition of justification or the remission of sin, whereby the believing sinner is set right with God.

3. Faith in Christ the Condition.—The fact here stated has already appeared, but should be more fully presented. In a general view faith in Christ is the condition of justification. “But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, . . . even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe” (Romans 3:21-22). The righteousness of God, as here presented, means the righteousness which he confers in our justification; and it is conferred on the condition of faith in Christ.[790] [790] For the same truth, seeGalatians 3:21-24:Php 3:8-9. In a definite view, faith in the redeeming Christ is the condition of justification. “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” (Romans 3:24-26). This one text may here suffice, as it expresses so formally and fully the truth which we stated. Justification or the remission of sin is through faith in the blood of atonement, or in the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. This accords with our whole view of the subject. Christ is a Saviour only through an atonement in his blood. So is he offered in the Gospel as the Saviour of the lost. The assurance of salvation is to all who accept him in faith; but the faith which is unto salvation must accept him as the Saviour through an atonement in his blood.

4. Nature of the Faith.—As justification is a blessing distinct and definite in kind, so the faith on which it is attained must be specific in its form. We shall the more readily reach its true nature by carefully noting the leading distinctions of faith. Preparatory to this, however, it is important to observe what is common to faith in all its forms.

There can be no faith without something objective to the mind in the form of reality or truth. There must be such reality or truth in the mental apprehension, however that apprehension may be mistaken. All faith that is properly such must have respect to evidence—such evidence as verifies to the mind the reality or truth of what is believed. So far faith is one in kind, whatever the differences of its objects. That which is believed may be purely secular, something in the plane of geography, or history, or science ; or it may be some profound truth of religion respecting God or Christianity ; but whatever the object, faith in its truth must have a ground in evidence. Such is a law of faith in all its spheres.

There is another view of faith in which profound distinctions arise from differences in its objective truths. Thus arise the distinctions of faith as intellectual, practical, and fiducial.

Many truths have for us no practical concern in any matter of either duty or welfare. Such are many facts of history, of geography, of botany, of zoology, of astronomy; and, because they are such, faith in them, however sure, can never rise above an intellectual form. Our faith in such facts or truths never can become practical, because they possess nothing which should influence our conduct; never can become fiducial, because they proffer no relief of any need. Here then is a limitation of faith to a merely intellectual form, which is determined by the character of its objective truths.

There are other truths which deeply concern us in respect to both our duty and our well-being. Faith in such truths may be strongly practical, because they embody weighty reasons or motives of practical concern. In such a characterization of faith as practical, it is surely not meant that it is any less intellectual than that form which we have so characterized. The real distinction is from a difference in the objects of faith, which in the one case limit it to an intellectual form, and in the other lift it into a practical form. There are many illustrations of such a faith in both sacred and secular history. Out of the former we may instance the faith of Noah. God made known to him the coming destruction of the world by the flood; and, further, that by the building of an ark he should save himself and family (Genesis 6:13-22). Noah believed these divine communications, and the practical results followed: “By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house” (Hebrews 11:7). His faith found in the truths which it embraced the sufficient reasons or motives for his work. This instance can hardly fail to suggest others. Indeed, it is this practical element of faith which, more than any thing else, finds its illustration in this remarkable chapter. Such is the practical power of faith. Such motives as may strongly influence conduct lie in the truths believed, and through faith they become practical forces in the life. The very nature of these forces explains the transcendent practical power of Christian faith. This power is so great because the practical motives embodied in the truths- of Christianity infinitely transcend all other motives which may influence human conduct.

Then in the objective truth which the faith embraces there may be deeply needed help, and also the most assuring trustworthiness; in which case faith may take the form of confidence or trust. We thus reach what is distinctive of the faith which is unto justification. In the approach to its exercise there is a profound sense of need. There is the sense of sin and peril; and with it the sense of an utter self-helplessness. In the stress of such an exigency the soul looks to Christ and believingly apprehends in him the salvation which it so much needs. It apprehends, not only the fullness of his grace, but also its freeness; not only that he is mighty to save, but also that he graciously waits to

save. Here, then, is the most assuring trustworthiness. The act of trust is still wanting, but the soul is ready for it. Now in the apprehension of Christ in his atonement, and in the fullness and freeness of his grace, the soul trustingly rests in him for the needed salvation, and thereon receives the forgiveness of sin. This is justification by faith. And such is the distinctive character of the faith which is unto justification.

While faith is the one and only condition of justification, yet a true repentance is always presupposed, because only in such a mental state can the proper faith be exercised. An impenitent soul cannot properly trust in Christ for the forgiveness of sin. In such a state there can be no real sense of its need, and therefore no possibility of the act of trust. Nor can it be consistent with either the holiness of God or the requirements of his moral government that he should forgive an impenitent soul. The spirit of impenitence is at once the spirit of self-justification with respect to past sins and the very essence of rebellion against God. The forgiveness of such a soul would be, in effect, a free license to future sinning. Before the gracious act of pardon there must be a true contrition for past sins, a godly sorrow which worketh repentance unto salvation (2 Corinthians 7:10).

Justification by faith is a provision of the divine economy of salvation which admirably meets the pressing need of a sinful race. It is the only provision which can meet such need. There is no real redemption from sin, nor entrance into a true spiritual life, without a prior consciousness of sin. At the very beginning, therefore, the sinner must come to the sense of a sinful and lost condition. What now can meet the exigencies of his case? You may tell him to mend his life for the future; but in the depths of his soul is the sense of an utter helplessness for such amendment, and also the sense of demerit on account of past sins, for which such amendment, even if it were possible, could make no atonement. Nothing that you can advise him to do, nothing that you can offer him, save Christ, can meet his necessity. He is consciously a perishing, helpless sinner, and from the depths of his soul there is a cry for help. Now offer him Christ in his atonement, and an instant forgiveness and salvation through faith in his grace, and you thoroughly meet his necessities. The fact has been verified by innumerable happy experiences.

It is only very shallow thinking that can object to such an economy as opposed to the interests of morality. The deep sense of sin, the genuine repentance, the spirit of consecration to a good life in the service of God as the prerequisite of forgiveness, the known necessity of a good life in order to the retention of the justified state, the grateful love for the great salvation so graciously provided and conferred—all combine in the enforcement of the highest form of Christian morality. The question of practical results is confidently appealed to the history of the evangelical Churches, wherein great prominence is given to the doctrine of justification by faith. No system of ethics apart from Christianity, nor any unevangelical form of Christianity, lifts up so many into a truly good life.

5. Harmony of Paul and James.—On the question of justification they are in seeming opposition. We cite a single text from each: from Paul: “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law” (Romans 3:28); from James: “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only” (James 2:24). In each instance the text gives the conclusion of the author after a discussion of the question, and therefore stands as a formal statement of his doctrine. There is a further noticeable fact, that each finds the illustration and proof of his doctrine in the life of Abraham. But this fact, instead of perplexing the question of consistency between

them, opens the way to an easy reconciliation. The complete reconciliation lies in the fact that they are treating distinct forms of justification: Paul, that in the forgiveness of sins; James, that in actual and approved obedience. The former is by faith without works; the latter by works of obedience, which spring from a living faith as their practical source. These statements are fully verified by the references to Abraham. That of Paul is to his faith in the great promise of God respecting the birth of Isaac, which faith was counted to him for righteousness (Genesis 15:3-6). No doubt the promise of Isaac infolded a promise of the Messiah. This is the instance which Paul adduces as at once an illustration and a proof of his doctrine of justification without works; but a justification in the sense of forgiveness (Romans 4:2-5; Galatians 3:6-8). The reference of James is to the offering up of Isaac (Genesis 22:1-12). But this event occurred some twenty-five or thirty years after that referred to by Paul, and is so thoroughly different that it well might be adduced for the illustration and proof of a very different kind of justification. James does so adduce it: “Was not Abraham our Father Justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar” (James 2:21)? Now between two kinds of justification so thoroughly different there can be no doctrinal contradiction. For every such contradiction there must be opposing affirmations respecting the same thing ; but when Paul declares that we are justified by faith, without the deeds of the law, and James, that we are justified by works, and not by faith only, they are not speaking of the same thing, and therefore there cannot be any contradiction between them. Such is the usual mode of reconciling them. The mode is valid, and the reconciliation complete.

However, the interpretation of James often falls short of his true doctrine. Such is the case when the interpretation is that we are justified by works, as works are the evidence of a true and living faith. This must mean that we are justified by faith, while works are allowed no direct part therein. The instance of Abraham is often so interpreted. But more was required of him than faith, and more was rendered, even the offering up of his own son; and this act of obedience was of direct account in his justification, and not simply as an evidence of the genuineness of his faith. Obedience answers to duty as really as faith, and is even more definitely a fact of personal righteousness. The justification of Abraham, as maintained by James, was really forensic in its character; that is, it was God’s judicial approval of his personal character. This is the meaning of the Scriptures: “For now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me” (Genesis 22:12). That “thou fearest God” means a personal character which God’s judgment approved. He so approved this special instance of Abraham’s obedience (Genesis 22:16-18). The obedience was itself righteous. This is the doctrine of James and the sense of Scripture.

Faber: The Primitive Doctrine of Justification; Ritschl: History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation; Calvin: Institutes, book iii, chaps. xi-xviii; Owen: The Doctrine of Justification, Works (Goold’s), vol. v; Buchanan: The Doctrine of Justification; Alexander: Faith, v, vi; Shedd: Dogmatic Theology, Soteriology, chap. v; Hodge: Systematic Theology, vol. iii, chap. xvii; Moehler: Symbolism, book i, part i, chap. iii; Burnet: The XXXIX Articles, Article XI; McIlvaine: Justification by Faith; Newman:The Doctrine of Justification; Heurtly: Justification, Bampton Lectures, 1845; Schmid: Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, § 42; Harkey: Justification by Faith; Wardlaw: Systematic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 678-727; Wesley: Sermons, V, VI, XX; Works, vol. vi, pp. 100-124; Watson:Theological Institutes, Part Second, chap. xxiii; Hare: Scriptural Doctrine of Justification; Bunting:Sermons, vol. ii, pp. 60-84; Davies: Treatise on

Justification; Curry: Fragments, viii, ix; Merrill: Aspects of Christian Experience, chaps, iv-vii.

152. Chapter 6: Regeneration.

Chapter 6

Regeneration.

While regeneration is closely related to justification, there are real points of difference between them. They differ widely in the grounds of their necessity. The necessity for justification lies in the fact of guilt, while the necessity for regeneration lies in the depravity of our nature. Hence they must fulfill different offices in the work of our salvation. It is the office of justification to cancel our guilt, while it is the office of regeneration to renew or purify our moral nature. Yet in other facts the two are closely related. They are coincident in time. There is no reason for any chronological separation; not even where the consciousness of the moral change wrought by regeneration is a gradual attainment. Further, we are justified and regenerated on the same act of faith. The two great blessings are not separately offered to separate acts of faith; they are offered together as inseparable blessings of the salvation in Christ, and so are received on one and the same act of faith.

Regeneration, like justification, is a vital part of Christian soteriology. It must be such, since native depravity is a reality, and regeneration a necessity to a truly spiritual life. It follows that a truthful doctrine of regeneration must be profoundly important. Yet it is one respecting which error has widely prevailed, and greatly to the detriment of the Christian life. However, as between evangelical systems, the doctrine of regeneration has been far less in issue than that of justification, mostly because it is less directly concerned in the doctrinal view of the atonement.

I. The Nature Of Regeneration.

1. In the Light of the Scriptures.—The nature of regeneration must be studied in the light of the Scriptures. The true doctrine must be found in the meaning of the terms and facts wherein the gracious work is expressed. The question is not open to a philosophical interpretation, nor to any purely scientific treatment. The reason is, that we cannot m any such mode reach the facts which vitally concern the doctrine. For instance, we cannot thus reach the nature of depravity, in which lies the necessity for regeneration. We know that it is a state of our sensuous and moral nature, and we know its characteristic tendency to evil; but just what it is in itself we cannot know. Yet the nature of depravity as a subjective state must largely determine the nature of regeneration. Therefore, as we cannot in any purely scientific or philosophic mode know the nature of depravity itself, neither can we in any such mode discover the inner nature of regeneration.

Some have thought the subject more open to rational treatment on the ground of a trichotomic anthropology than on the dichotomic. We do not see any clearing of the question in this view. Trichotomy is not an established truth; and so long as it remains uncertain in itself it can render little service in the interpretation of any doctrine. Further, trichotomy effects no change in the real question, so far as it relates to our thinking. No class of sensuous or moral phenomena, as now known, is eliminated or in the least modified; no new class is introduced. Nothing is other than it

was for our thinking. Hence the assumption of three distinct natures in man—of a psychic nature intermediate to the physical and mental, and additional to them—cannot clear the way to any direct insight into the nature of depravity as a subjective state. We are just as far short of any such insight as we were on the ground of a dichotomic anthropology. Not a few have been pleased with Henry Drummond's treatment of regeneration. This is really the subject, although his own topical word is biogenesis.[791] The treatment is admirable in literary quality, and attractive in scientific cast. The laws of biogenesis on which his doctrine is constructed are thoroughly valid. Life is begotten only of life. Biogenesis holds the ground securely against abiogenesis. There is no life from the lifeless. We see no reason to question other laws set forth: that the source of life must answer for the kind or grade of that which it produces; and that a lower form of life can be lifted up into a higher form only through the power of the higher. On the ground of such principles only a divine source can answer for a truly spiritual life in man. This is the necessity for regeneration. Man must be born from above; must be born of God. However, the treatment is new only in its scientific cast and terminology, and in the application of the laws of biogenesis to the questions of regeneration. That regeneration is necessary to a truly spiritual life, and that it is possible only through the divine agency, are truths long familiar to our evangelical theology, and widely and effectively preached from many pulpits.

[791]Natural Law in the Spiritual World: Biogenesis.

, lead into serious error respecting the real necessity for regeneration, According to these laws, as here set forth, that necessity must have been original to the constitution of man; while the real necessity lies in a corruption of human nature consequent to the Adamic fall. There is in Drummond no proper recognition of this ground. Indeed, it could not be made to chime with his doctrine. Nor do his principles require either the atonement in Christ or the special mission and work of the Holy Spirit for which it provides. It is true that in his treatment there is frequent recognition of both Christ and the Holy Spirit as the source of the new spiritual life, but this fact cannot affect the truth of our position; for nothing in the original constitution of man could require the grace of a redemptive economy for its relief. If in his original constitution man was placed in the plane of a purely natural life, then, according to the laws of biogenesis, he would need a spiritual endowment which only divinity itself could confer, in order to a truly spiritual life; but he could not need the grace of a redemptive economy as the provisional ground of such endowment. These inevitable implications mean some serious error in the doctrine of Drummond. Regeneration, whether in respect to its nature or necessity, cannot be explained on the ground of "natural law in the spiritual world."

2. Representative Terms.—There is a class of Scripture terms in which regeneration, or the gracious work which it represents, is expressed as a new birth. We may instance the following: born again (John 3:3; John 3:7; 1 Peter 1:33); born of God (John 1:13; 1 John 3:9; 1 John 4:7; 1 John 5:1); born of the Spirit (John 3:5; John 3:8). These several forms of expression have the same meaning respecting the nature of regeneration. When we reach the deeper principle of their interpretation we shall find that meaning very clear and full. There are other forms of expression which contain the same truth respecting regeneration, but we get their full meaning only as we read them in the light of the truly representative terms. With such limitation, they still render valuable service in setting forth the true nature of regeneration. However, the terms which set forth this great moral change in the light of a new birth are properly designated the representative

terms. They are the ground of the specific term regeneration—παιγγενεσ■α—the one in common theological use for the expression of the doctrine.

3. Analogical Interpretation.—In these forms of expression there is a comparison of spiritual regeneration with natural generation or birth. The comparison implies some analogy between the things thus compared. Accordingly, some attempt an interpretation of regeneration on the ground of such analogy. It is easy to institute points of comparison; but if we stop short of a really interpreting principle, little light is gained for the real question. Under these figurative expressions, or in natural generation and birth, we may find the inception of a new life, a new life in the mode of derivation, and a transition into a new mode of life. These are facts of natural generation and birth; and it is easy to find corresponding facts in regeneration. It surely means the inception of a new life, and a new life by derivation or communication, and a new mode of life. In this manner regeneration is interpreted, but the interpretation is superficial, and fails to give us any clear insight into its real nature. The failure arises from the fact that these points of comparison mean nothing in themselves for the nature of the new life received in regeneration. They are too broadly applicable for any such definite meaning. The same facts are true of all orders of propagated life; just as true of the lion as of the lamb; just as true in the animal plane as in the human. These points of analogy lead us up to the one fact which is full of meaning for the nature of regeneration, but fall short of it, and therefore fail to give us any clear insight into that nature.

4. Deeper Principle of Interpretation.—Underlying the points of comparison usually presented in the analogical treatment, there is a deeper fact which gives us the true nature of regeneration. It is the fact that the offspring is in the likeness of the parentage. This principle rules in all the forms of propagated life. It is the determining law of species. It here suffices that we merely state this law, as it was sufficiently discussed in our anthropology. We there found it a valid and sufficient ground for the genetic transmission of depravity from Adam down through the race. This is the principle which opens the clearer view of regeneration. As by natural generation we inherit from the progenitors of the race a corruption of the moral nature, so by the new birth we receive the impress and likeness of the Holy Spirit. This is our interpreting principle. Nor is it fetched from afar, but is right at hand in the classical passage on regeneration: “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (John 3:6). In the first part the truth is deeper than the derivation of a body of flesh in the form and likeness of the parental body; it means the inheritance of a corrupt nature. This was shown in our anthropology. In this corruption of nature lies the necessity for the new birth. It was on the ground of this fact that Christ said to Nicodemus: “Marvel not that I said unto thee. Ye must be born again.” But such a necessity can be met only by a divine operation within the moral nature which shall purify it and transform it into the moral likeness of the divine. All this is in the meaning of the words of Christ: “That which is born of the Spirit is spirit”—spirit, not essentially, but in the sense of a spiritual or holy quality. As the depravity of the original parentage is transmitted through natural generation, so through regeneration we are transformed into the moral likeness of the Holy Spirit. This meets the necessity for regeneration. There is no other way in which it can be met. Thus we find the real meaning of being born of the Spirit. The nature of the regenerate state is thus manifest. It is a state of subjective holiness. We state the characteristic or the predominant fact, without reference to the proper distinction between regeneration and entire sanctification. It must be a state of subjective holiness because it is the result of an operation of the Holy Spirit which as really transforms the soul into the moral likeness

of himself as the laws of nature determine the likeness of the offspring to its parentage.

There is no mystery in this doctrine which should in the least discredit it with any who believe in God. Just what it is in the inner nature of a mineral, a plant, or an animal which determines its peculiar cast, we do not know; but God knows, and it was easy for him to so determine the nature in each. So did he make man, even in his own image; and, after he has fallen into a corrupt state, he can renew him in holiness after his own image. If this is not possible, no agency of God is possible in either creation or providence.

5. Other Forms of Presentation.—Regeneration, or that moral renovation which it represents, is expressed in other forms of thought, but the deeper idea of a moral transformation into the likeness of the divine holiness is ever present. A few instances will answer for illustration; and we shall thus bring other texts into service in setting forth the nature of regeneration.

“Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh” (Ezekiel 36:25-26). Here is a state of moral corruption and of insensibility to spiritual things. The filthiness and the heart of stone can mean nothing less. Such is the subject of the moral renovation. The renovation is a purification, and the inception of a new spiritual life. Such is the meaning of the sprinkling with clean water, the cleansing, and the new heart and new spirit. Such is the work of regeneration.

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things arc passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17). To be in Christ, as here expressed, is to be in living union with him. This is the state of an actual salvation, and the same as the regenerate state. To be thus in Christ is to be a new creature, or a new creation. By such a new creation we are transformed into a state of holiness like unto the primitive holiness wherein man was made in the likeness of God. This is the same deep sense of regeneration.

“That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Ephesians 4:22-24). The old man is both a corrupt nature and a vicious habit of life. The new man is the opposite in both respects. This is plain from the contrast in which they are placed. It is manifest in the fact that the new man is created in righteousness and true holiness. The old man and the new are such that the former can be put off and the latter put on only through a renewal in the spirit of our mind. This must be a thorough moral transformation. It is such in fact, for it is being created anew in the image of God. This is the same deep truth of regeneration which we found in its representative terms. St. Paul expresses the same truth elsewhere, and in very similar words: “Seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him” (Colossians 3:9-10).

6. The New Life.—Regeneration is the ground of a new spiritual life, a life in righteousness. In the very nature of it, as set forth in the Scriptures, it must be such. Is it expressed as a new birth or a being born of God? “If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.” “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin.” “Beloved, let us

love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world" (1 John 2:29; 1 John 3:9; 1 John 4:7; 1 John 5:4). Or is regeneration a being born of the Spirit? "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. . . . That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:2-4). "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Galatians 5:22-23). Such are the fruits of regeneration; for the Holy Spirit plants his graces, not in the vicious soil of the flesh, but only in the soul which by regeneration is morally transformed into the likeness of himself. As regeneration is a new creation whereby we become new creatures in Christ, so old things pass away, and all things become new; a good life replaces the evil life (2 Corinthians 5:17). "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Ephesians 2:10). In regeneration the old man is put off, and not only as a corrupt nature, but also as an evil life; and the new man is put on, not only by the purification of the moral nature, but also in the habit of a new life in righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:9-10). Further, regeneration is expressed as at once a crucifixion and a resurrection with Christ; and on these grounds a new spiritual life, a truly Christian life, is set forth as both a privilege and a duty (Romans 6:3-14). By such crucifixion we die to sin; and by such a resurrection we are made alive in Christ. Such is the deep meaning of Paul when he says: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Galatians 2:20). Only a truly spiritual or Christian life can properly answer to the life in Christ attained in regeneration.

II. The Work Of The Holy Spirit.

1. Testimony of the Scriptures.—That regeneration is attributed to the persons of the Trinity severally is entirely consistent with its being specially the work of the Holy Spirit. It is in this case as in the works of creation and providence. These are specially the work of the Father, and yet the Son and the Spirit are represented as co-operative in both. The consistency of such representation lies in the unity of the three in the divine Trinity. The case is the same respecting regeneration. The classical text in which we found the clearest light on the nature of regeneration is in itself quite decisive of the fact that it is specially the work of the Holy Spirit (John 3:5-8). The same truth appears in the fact that we are saved "by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5). Baptism, here expressed as the washing of regeneration, is the sign of an inward purification which is efficaciously wrought by the Holy Spirit. There are other texts which set forth the same truth, though in the use of another word—sanctification—in place of regeneration (2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2). This special work of the Spirit is in full accord with the pervasive sense of Scripture respecting his agency in the economies of religion.

2. Immediate Agency of the Spirit.—Such an agency of the Holy Spirit should be emphasized because it is vital to the reality of regeneration itself. There is no other mode of his operation whereby the soul can be transformed into the moral likeness of himself. In the miracles of our Lord the leper was not cleansed nor the dead quickened into life by the use of intermediate agencies: the divine power acted immediately upon the subject of the miracle, and so was efficacious in its work (Matthew 8:2-3; John 11:41-44). Only in this mode can the Holy Spirit be efficacious in the regeneration of the soul.

3. The Only Efficient Agency.—Whatever may be conditional to regeneration, or whatever must precede or accompany it, still it is efficaciously wrought solely by the power of the Holy Spirit. The error of baptismal regeneration has widely prevailed. It is thoroughly the doctrine of Romanism; predominantly, of Lutheranism and Anglicanism. But the effect is impossible to such a cause. No man can rationally think it possible that the outward application of water to the body should effect the interior renovation of the soul. Baptism is the sign of an interior purification by the power of the Holy Spirit, but can have no part in the efficacious agency whereby it is wrought. It is true that the Scriptures verbally place baptism close to regeneration (John 3:5; Acts 2:38; Ephesians 5:26; Titus 3:5; Hebrews 10:22). In like manner they place baptism equally close to justification or the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16). But is it possible in fact, or can any one rationally think it possible, that the application of water in baptism should cancel the guilt of sin? Justification or the forgiveness of sins is definitely and only the act of God; and baptism can have no part in it, except as a sign or confession of the faith whereon the gracious forgiveness is granted. Baptism is equally without efficacy in itself for our spiritual regeneration.

Some hold that we are regenerated by the power of the truth. Such is the common rationalistic view. It is definitely the doctrine of the Disciples, or Campbellites. Some in the fellowship of thoroughly orthodox Churches hold the same view.[792] The fact is not really other because the Scriptures are designated as an instrumental agency, nor because there is also set forth an agency of the Holy Spirit. The real point is that an efficient agency is assigned to the Scriptures in the work of regeneration. In verification of this position we cite a single passage: “The change of heart in regeneration is produced by a previous change of judgment. The erroneous opinions of the sinner are corrected, and that corrects his feelings. He receives new information, and that gives another direction to his affections. Plainly, the Bible removes his delusions, and, in showing him the true nature of objects, makes him love many things which he formerly hated, and hate many things which he formerly loved. When he believes its report; when he takes Bible views of objects, looks at them through its telescope, looks at them through its microscope, looks at them through its atmosphere; when he looks at God, looks at Christ, looks at himself, looks at his soul, looks at this world, looks at death, looks at eternity in Bible light, the look revolutionizes him. See what a commotion has been produced among the affections of his spirit, so soon as this heavenly light, altering the decisions of his judgment, has dawned on his mind! He is now with ardor pursuing objects which he formerly despised, or feared, or abhorred ; and fleeing, as when a man flees from the plague, or from his house on fire, from objects which he formerly considered harmless, or in which his soul delighted. The Bible light has disclosed friends where he thought there were none but foes, and foes where he thought there were none but friends.”[793] This passage cannot mean any thing less than an efficient agency of divine truth in the regeneration of the soul. And what is true of it is equally true of the fuller discussion.

[792]Anderson:Regeneration, sec. iii.

[793]Ibid., pp. 82, 83.

Those who maintain this doctrine assume to find the proof of it in the Scriptures themselves. Some texts are seemingly in their favor (John 15:3; John 17:17; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23). That divine truth, as revealed in the Scriptures, fulfills important offices in the attainment of salvation and the maintenance of a truly spiritual life, is not to be questioned. That it possesses in itself the power of

regenerating the soul, must be denied as at once unscriptural and impossible. The texts which seemingly attribute regeneration to the power of the truth cannot be interpreted as actually so meaning without placing them in opposition to the many which definitely ascribe that work to the divine agency, and in a manner to mean that it is the only efficient agency. There is no need of an interpretation which involves such an opposition of texts. The many services of the truth in our attainment of salvation, and in our maintenance of a true Christian life, will, without any notion of its regenerating power, easily interpret the texts adduced in proof of such a power.

It is not in the nature of truth, not even of divine truth, that it should possess the power of regeneration. The Scriptures, which contain this truth, give us a knowledge of divine things; but such knowledge has no direct power over our moral nature. They contain many holy precepts, enough indeed for our guidance into all duty; but precepts have not in themselves the power of ruling our lives; and much less have they the power of sanctifying our nature. Wherein, then, lies the great power of the Scriptures in the religious life? The answer is obvious: It lies in the practical motives embodied in the great religious truths which they reveal. Such motives may act upon our moral and religious feelings, and through them become a ruling force in our religious life. But such is the only mode of their power; consequently, they can never reach the moral nature with any power of regeneration.

We have no power of self-regeneration. The nature of inherited depravity precludes its possibility. As a subjective state It Is as really in us and of us as if original to our nature. Hence a power of self-regeneration would be the same as a power of changing one's own nature. There can be no such power. It is the sense of Scripture respecting our natural state that we have no such power (John 3:6; Romans 7:5; Romans 7:14; Romans 7:18; Romans 7:21; Romans 8:3-8). In this moral impotence lies the necessity for the economy of redemption. Regeneration is a true sphere of the divine monergism.

There is also a sphere of synergism. Regeneration is not an absolute work of the Spirit. We have already shown its conditionality. There are prerequisites which cannot be met without our own free agency. There must be an earnest turning of the soul to God, deep repentance for sin, and a true faith in Christ. Such are the requirements of our own agency. There is no regeneration for us without them. Yet they are not possible in the unaided resources of our own nature. Hence there must be a helping work of the Spirit prior to his work of regeneration. There is such help. The Holy Spirit enlightens, awakens, and graciously draws us. All this may be without our consent, and even despite our resistance. We may finally resist, or we may yield to the gracious influences, and be born of the Spirit. Here is the sphere of synergism.

III. Regeneration And Sonship.

1. Regeneration the Ground of Sonship.—To be born of God is to be born into his family, and to become his child. Sonship is thus immediately from regeneration. This is the clear meaning of the Scriptures. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12-13). The same truth is given in another text, though the form of expression is different: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:26-27). There is here the same faith in Christ as the condition of sonship; while the baptism into Christ and the

putting on Christ are both the sign and the reality of regeneration, which is the immediate ground of the sonship. As regeneration is a reality, so is there deep meaning in such a ground of sonship. Adam was the son of God, but only on the ground of creation. We are all his offspring, but in a like mode. But the idea of a divine parentage underlies the sonship which has its ground in regeneration. To be born of God is to be placed nearer the divine Fatherhood than is possible to the angels.

2. Adoption and Sonship.—Sometimes this sonship is represented as by adoption: “But ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father” (Romans 8:15). This text means a gracious sonship, for it is that to which the Holy Spirit is here represented as witnessing. But the very characterization of the Spirit as the Spirit of adoption clearly means a gracious sonship by adoption. We have elsewhere the same view: God sent forth his Son to redeem us, “that we might receive the adoption of sons” (Galatians 4:5). In civil government sonship by adoption is sonship by provision of law, not on the ground of parentage. In the absence of such ground adoption is the only mode of sonship. Now there is a sense in which we are alien from God; out of filial relation to him. Hence, when we are so viewed as the subjects of a gracious affiliation, our sonship may very properly be represented as in the mode of adoption. But it is never really such in fact. The new birth always underlies this sonship.

3. The Heritage of Blessings.—As related to the Father’s love and the inheritance of his children, sonship by adoption is the very same as sonship by regeneration. They are all heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, and shall be like him (Romans 8:14-18; Galatians 4:4-7; 1 John 3:2). It would be impossible to add any thing to the passages given in the reference that could heighten the view of that inheritance.

Faber: The Primitive Doctrine of Regeneration; Anderson: Regeneration; Phelps: The New Birth; Heard:The Tripartite Nature of Man, chap, xii; Delitzsch: Biblical Psychology, v, Regeneration; Wesley:Sermons, xviii, xix; Fletcher: Discourse on the New Birth, Works, vol. iv, pp. 97-117; Merrill: Aspects of Christian Experience, chap, viii; Pope: Christian Theology, vol. iii, pp. 1-27; Raymond: Systematic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 344-361; Schmid: Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, § 46; Leighton: Works, Theological Lectures, xv, xvi; Shedd: Dogmatic Theology, Soteriology, chap, iii; Backus: Scripture Doctrine of Regeneration; Sears: Regeneration—Unitarian view.

153. Chapter 7: Assurance.

Chapter 7

Assurance.

I. The Doctrine.

1. Meaning of Assurance.—We mean by assurance the persuasion or confidence of a believer in Christ that he is a child of God. As the atonement is the ground of the gracious affiliation, so the assurance of its attainment, specially in its Christian form, is the privilege only of believers in Christ. The matter of assurance is definitely that of sonship. There is a doctrine of assurance which allies itself with that of absolute election to salvation, and means a certainty of future blessedness. The view is this: The attainment of a gracious state is conclusive of election; and election is conclusive of both final perseverance and future blessedness. We are not here concerned with this view, and, without further notice of it, proceed with our own doctrine. The assurance we maintain respects simply a present state of grace. As before observed, the state is definitely that of sonship. This is specially true as it respects the assurance received from the witness of the Holy Spirit. Here are the evidences: “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Romans 8:16; Galatians 4:6). These are the classical texts on the witness of the Spirit, and are in themselves entirely sufficient for the present point. Justification and regeneration are so closely related to this sonship that we easily think them included with it in the matter to which the Spirit witnesses; but the Scriptures do not so include them. It is true that we attain an assurance of both, but not by the direct witness of the Spirit, as in the case of sonship. They come to be facts of assurance through the witness of our own spirit—which will hereafter be set forth. By a limitation of assurance through the witness of the Spirit to the definite fact of sonship, as the Scriptures limit it, we shall secure for his witnessing a clearness of interpretation not otherwise attainable. As a mental state or fact of consciousness, assurance is like faith; yet not so much the definite act of faith as the resulting persuasion of truth in what we have believed. Consciousness readily distinguishes between the definite act of faith and the consequent persuasion of truth in the matter believed. Of course the distinction is the clearer and fuller as the matter involved the more deeply concerns us. If it be something of profound interest for our future, then the abiding confidence in its truth will be as real and clear in our consciousness as was the definite act of faith wherein we first believed it true. The assurance of a gracious sonship is such a form of confidence. There is reason for so characterizing it. So far as derived from the witness of our own spirit, it springs from appropriate testimony, and therefore must partake of the nature of faith. And, while the witness of the Spirit is given in an entirely different mode, yet the assurance which it produces is not different in kind, nor distinct in fact, from the assurance received through the witness of our own spirit.

2. Truth of Assurance.—The truth or reality of assurance will receive its clearest and fullest presentation in the treatment of the witness of the Spirit and the witness of our own spirit.

Preparatory to that presentation we may notice a few facts which combine in the proof of such a privilege. As already shown, the matter of assurance is that of a state of salvation which is attained through Justification and the new birth. We thus enter into God's favor and become his children and heirs. These privileges are possible through the wonderful provisions of his redeeming love. To this end he sent forth his Son "to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God" (Galatians 4:4-5; 1 John 3:1). Such is the actual and only ground of this sonship. And we attain it only through a gracious act of God toward us in the forgiveness of our sins, and a mighty work of God within us whereby we become his children. It is not consistent with any reasonable view of either that it should be hidden from us.

If God freely forgives our sins he will in some way assure us of the fact. If an officer of government should pardon a criminal the fact would surely be made known to him. How then shall God hide from us the forgiveness of our sins? To one and another Christ said, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." In every such instance there were two distinct facts: one, the act of pardon—an act purely within the mind of Christ; the other, a making known the act to the subject of the forgiveness. The act of pardon was complete in itself, and would have been none the less complete without the making it known; but how naturally the latter fact goes with the former! In view of the character of Christ we could not reasonably think of him as withholding the assurance of forgiveness in any such instance. God is not less merciful in the forgiveness of our sins. Nor are we less in need of the information than were those who went to Christ in their sin and sorrow. And no more reasonably could we think of God as hiding from us his gracious act of forgiveness. The new birth is a mighty change wrought within us. Such we found it to be in our treatment of regeneration. We are therein born of God, born into the kingdom of God, and so become his children and heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. The life is new. The love of God replaces the enmity of the carnal mind. Instead of condemnation there is peace with God. The fruits of the Spirit replace the works of the flesh. Surely it is not in the nature of so mighty a change wrought within us, nor consistent with the greatness of the privileges into which it brings us, that we should be left without any assurance of either.

There is for us a new life; a Christian life; a life of Christian duty. There are many duties. They require the faithful service of Christ, piety toward God, and charity toward men. The fulfillment of these duties is possible only with the activity of our moral and religious affections. They must be purposely and consciously performed. Such performance requires the proper motives of piety and charity. Such a life cannot be hidden from the personal consciousness. We must be capable of knowing whether our life is such; of knowing when it is such. It is, therefore, in the very nature of such a life to make itself known in our personal consciousness, and hence to give us assurance of its possession.

3. Sources of Assurance.—It has already appeared that there are two sources of assurance: the witness of the Holy Spirit, and the witness of our own spirit. The fact of a witness of our own spirit will be sufficiently shown in the treatment of its nature; therefore it need not be separately considered. Not a few deny the witness of the Holy Spirit. Yet the fact has sure ground in the Scriptures. There is sufficient proof in a single text: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Romans 8:16). On a denial of the meaning which we claim for this text all reference to the Holy Spirit as a personal agent must be denied to this chapter

(Romans 8). Such denial is worse than groundless. In proof of this we glance at a few of the references I “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” Here the Spirit must mean, not the gracious freedom attained, but the personal agent who achieves it. “If so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.” This indwelling of the Spirit cannot mean simply a spiritual state or pious disposition. In a far deeper sense of Scripture, Christians are “the temple of the Holy Ghost,” and the “habitation of God through the Spirit.” These facts must mean a personal presence or indwelling of the Holy Spirit. “But ye have received the Spirit of adoption. “ Here the Spirit of adoption must mean, not the filial disposition of an adopted child, but the divine Spirit through whose agency we become the children of adoption. This meaning is thoroughly scriptural. So the words respecting the witness of the Spirit to our sonship, as above cited, cannot be interpreted in the sense of a filial disposition which assures us of adoption, but must mean a distinct and direct witness of the Spirit himself. The fact of such a witness of the Spirit will further appear in the treatment of his testimony.

If this were a solitary instance of the personal agency of the Spirit, or even a rare instance, we might feel less confident of our position; but it is not even rare: the Scriptures are replete with such instances. In our discussion of the personality and divinity of the Spirit we found many in the works of creation and providence, in the dispensations of religion, and notably in the economy of redemption. Through his personal agency we are born into the kingdom of God and constituted his children. So the witness of the Spirit to our sonship is an instance of his personal agency in perfect accord with his manifold offices in the work of our salvation. This fact confirms the truth of his personal witnessing to our adoption.

II. Witness Of The Spirit.

1. A Distinct Witness.—Two or more witnesses may jointly testify to the same thing, but each is a distinct witness. Such a witness is the Holy Spirit to our sonship. The fact is in the meaning of these words: “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God” (Romans 8:16). The original word here used for witnessing—συμμαρτυρ■ω—means two or more witnesses jointly, yet distinctly, testifying to the same thing. As two are here designated, the word in this instance means no more. It cannot mean less. Such is the force of σ■ν in composition with μαρτυρ■ω. Many authorities might easily be cited for this interpretation.

It was in view of the original word that Mr. Wesley said: “It is manifest, here are two witnesses mentioned, who together testify the same thing: the Spirit of God, and our own spirit.”[794] “The apostle’s term, συμμαρτυρ■ω, ‘beareth witness with,’ is the very term which was used in the Greek language to denote a concurrence of testimony, where more than one witness testified to the same thing.” “I have never found the word used in a different sense by any writer in any one instance.”[795] This testimony is given after much research, and numerous authorities are cited in its support. We add other testimonies: “The words in the original evidently imply the sense which our translators follow. . . . Συμμαρτυρε■ν signifies to be a fellow-witness, or to witness the same thing that another does ; and so the word constantly signifies in Scripture, and is never used but where there is a concurrent evidence of two witnesses.”[796] “For the concurrence of the two witnesses the critical testimony is overwhelming.”[797] Many authorities, both classical and ecclesiastical, are given in confirmation of this meaning.

[794]Sermons, vol. i, p. 95.

[795]Walton:Witness of the Spirit, pp. 84, 222.

[796]Bishop Sherlock: Works, vol. i, pp. 154, 155.

[797]Young:Witness of the Spirit, Fernley Lecture, 1882, p. 86.

If such be the meaning of this text, as surely it is, the Holy Spirit must be a distinct witness to our sonship. If the sense of two witnesses be disputed, or even disproved, what must follow? Not that the text does not mean a distinct witness of the Spirit, but that it does not mean a witness of our own spirit. On a denial of two witnesses the rendering must be: “The Spirit itself beareth witness to our spirit, that we are the children of God.” Such a rendering is entirely consistent with the form of words in the phrase τ■ πνζ■ματ■ ■μ■ν; and if the true one, the meaning must be that our own spirit is simply recipient of the testimony of the Spirit; and in no other form of words could a distinct personal Avitnessing of the Spirit to our sonship be more clearly or definitely expressed. With such a result it would still remain true that there is a witness of our own spirit to our sonship, though the proof of it could no longer be found in this text. On either view, therefore, a distinct witnessing of the Holy Spirit must be accepted as a truth of the Scriptures. We add a single text in confirmation: “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Galatians 4:6). These words cannot be interpreted on the ground of a merely filial disposition of the children of God as the witness to our adoption, but must mean the testimony of the Spirit himself. Hence the text proves a distinct witnessing of the Spirit to our sonship.

2. A Direct Witness.—If the Holy Spirit is a distinct witness to our adoption he must be a direct witness. Any other interpretation must merge his testimony into that of our own spirit; and thus we should have only one witness and one testimony instead of two witnesses and a distinct testimony of each. The error of such an interpretation is not rare. We here give an instance: “The part that the Spirit of God hath had in this matter is, that he both graves upon us the lineaments of a living epistle of Jesus Christ, and tells us in the epistle of a written revelation what these lineaments are. The part which our own spirit has is, that, with the eye of consciousness, we read what is in ourselves; and, with the eye of the understanding, we read what is in the book of God’s testimony: and upon our perceiving that such as the marks of grace which we find to be within, so are the marks of grace which we observe in the description of that word without that the Spirit hath indited, we arrive at the conclusion that we are born of God.”[798] In this view there are two works of the Spirit, as concerned in our assurance of a state of grace: one, a work of inspiration whereby he describes, in a written revelation, the distinctive characteristics of a child of God; the other, a work of regeneration whereby these characteristics are wrought in us. But in all this there is no direct witness of the Spirit to our sonship; indeed, no proper witnessing in any form. The citation is a very accurate statement of the witness of our own spirit, but of that only; and the formal manner in which it is made not only omits all witness of the Spirit, but really excludes it. In this it is openly contrary to the Scriptures, in the clearest sense of which, as we have seen, the Holy Spirit is not only an actual witness, but a distinct and direct witness, to our sonship.

[798]Chalmers:Lectures on Romans, p. 275.

Another instance may be given in order to set forth the more clearly this error of interpretation. “The power to do good comes from the influence of the Holy Spirit; and therefore the good we do is such an evidence of our being the sons of God as we stand obliged to the Spirit of God for. . . .

The great privileges mentioned in this chapter (Romans 8), such as being made free from the law of sin and death, of walking, not after the flesh, but the Spirit, being such as we receive from the Spirit of God, are therefore evidences of the Spirit for our regeneration."[799] In this view the witness of the Spirit is given simply and solely through the fruits of his gracious work within us. As we consciously possess the fruits of this work, so are we assured that we are the children of God. This, however, is simply the witness of our own spirit, and all proper witnessing of the Spirit is excluded. Thus the learned bishop, after clearly showing us that the Spirit is a distinct witness, wholly excludes him by a wrong interpretation of his testimony.

[799]Bishop Sherlock: Works, vol. i, pp. 157, 158. The witness of the Spirit is given neither through his work of regeneration whereby we become the children of God, nor through the fruits of the new spiritual life, but by an immediate operation within our consciousness in a manner to assure us of the gracious sonship. The state of sonship is prior to this testimony. "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." It is thus manifest that the witness of the Spirit is to a sonship already existing. Therefore his testimony cannot be given through the work of regeneration whereby the sonship is constituted, but must be given directly within the consciousness of believers in Christ.

There is an argument much in use for the proof of a direct witness of the Spirit, which we think of doubtful validity, and also of doubtful propriety: of doubtful validity, because it proceeds upon a mistaken view of facts; and of doubtful propriety, because it may easily lead to a merging of the witness of the Spirit into that of our own spirit. Yet it is an argument much in favor with the best Wesleyan writers on this subject, including Mr. Wesley himself. [800]We are not unmindful of the respect due to such authors.

[800]Wesley:Sermons, vol. i, p. 88; Watson:Sermons, vol. ii, pp. 347, 348; Walton:Witness of the Spirit, pp. 42-47; Prest:The Witness of the Spirit, pp. 140-142; Young: The Witness of the Spirit, p. 61. The argument assumes a priority of the witness of the Spirit, as compared with that of our own spirit; assumes it as the necessary ground of the fruits of grace through which our own spirit witnesses. If the facts be such, or if the experiences through which our spirit witnesses have their immediate and only source in the witness of the Holy Spirit to our sonship, then must he be a direct witness. Such is the argument. We here give an instance of its construction: "But is it not obvious to you, that love to God directly implies the knowledge of his love to us, as our reconciled Father? God's love to us is the cause of our love to him, and must therefore be known by us before we can love him. So, too, as to peace. Can we have this before we know whether we are at peace with God, before we know that his anger is turned away from us? What is the cause of the distress of that penitent mourner in sin? He tells you, and he tells you truly, that it is because God is angry with him. Now, how do you propose to calm his agitation? You tell him that he is to examine himself, whether he has peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, and that, if he has, he may then infer that God's anger is turned away from him; that is, he feels he has not either peace or joy, and you tell him that, in order that he may obtain them, he is to construct an argument whose basis is that both peace and joy are already in his possession. Brethren, love, and peace, and joy are all fruits of the Spirit, 'given unto us,' on our 'being justified by faith,' as the Spirit of adoption. The graces which the apostle enumerates constitute 'the fruit of the Spirit;' but his very first work, on our believing, and that by which this fruit is produced, is to bear witness to our adoption into God's

family, and thus to enable us to call God our Father. The fruits of the Spirit flow from the witness of the Spirit."[801] [801] Watson:Sermons, vol. ii p. 348. The argument mistakes the source of the experiences through which our own spirit witnesses to our sonship. It attributes them to the witness of the Holy Spirit, whereas they spring in fact from his work of regeneration. The witness of the Spirit cannot produce them, because it is not in itself renewing or sanctifying. Without the inner change wrought by regeneration no assurance of adoption could yield the spiritual fruits of peace, and love, and joy. With their source in regeneration, the assurance of sonship through the witness of the Spirit may give them a deeper and richer tone, but it cannot be their original source. Regeneration is a mighty work which at once reveals itself in the consciousness of the soul, even in peace, and love, and joy. Therein the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, and instantly flows back in love to God. And the Spirit's ''very first work, on our believing, and that by which this fruit is produced, is," not " to bear witness to our adoption," but to renew us in the image of God ; not to assure us that we are the children of God, but to constitute us his children through the work of regeneration. An appeal is made to the case of the penitent, full of fear and trembling; "You tell him that he is to examine himself, whether he has peace and joy," that he may be assured of the divine favor. No, we would not so direct him; nor would the Holy Spirit witness to his adoption, and so assure him of the loving favor of God. The one thing for such a penitent to do is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, whereon he shall receive forgiveness and be born of God. Through this mighty change, whence the fruits of the Spirit so promptly spring, he becomes a child of God; and his own spirit will be instant with the Holy Spirit in witnessing to his adoption. The groundless assumption that the experiences through which our own spirit witnesses to our sonship are the immediate fruit of the Spirit's witnessing, and are else impossible, leaves this argument without validity. The argument is objectionable in other points. There is too much detail in the matter to which the Spirit is held to witness. There is thus included a direct assurance of forgiveness, of the love of God therein, and of an heirship to eternal life. Now, while the Scriptures are specially definite respecting sonship as the matter of assurance, so much addition by detail must be of questionable propriety. It is true that, with the assurance of sonship, we receive the assurance of these other blessings, but not without the witness of our own spirit. Further, if, as this argument maintains, peace, and love, and joy, with many other gracious experiences, are the immediate fruit of the Spirit's witnessing to our sonship, it is but a short and easy step to the conclusion that his witness is given simply and only through these fruits. But we should thus merge his witnessing into that of our own spirit, and hence lose the direct witness of the Spirit in the very argument so much relied upon for its proof.

3. Manner of the Witnessing.—It is easier to state the result of the Spirit's witnessing than to explain the mode of his agency. The result is the assurance of a gracious son within the ship. The assurance is produced by an immediate operation of the Spirit within the mind of a believer in Christ. This, however, is merely the statement of a fact, not any explanation of its mode. There is no manifestation of the Spirit apart from the assurance which he produces. There is neither outer nor inner voice whereby he reveals himself, nor any direct communication to our intelligence, but simply an operation within the mind whereby he produces the assurance of adoption. In this respect the mode of the operation is the same as in the work of conviction. There is such a work of the Spirit; and it is one of the offices which he is ever fulfilling (John 16:8-11). The fact of sin is thus brought home to the heart and conscience of men. There may be instances in which some truth or providence is used as a means; but there is no limitation to such instrumentality. When no

awakening truth is present to the mind; when no event elicits serious reflection; when all the surroundings lead the mind far away from the thought of sin—even at such a time the Holy Spirit directly touches the springs of moral feeling, quickens the conscience, and instantly there is the deep sense of sin and peril. So, by an operation equally immediate, he produces in the mind of a believer in Christ the persuasion or confidence of sonship. Such is the witness of the Spirit. The mode of the Spirit in this witnessing remains a mystery; yet the resulting assurance of sonship is none the less real or precious. This is not the only instance of mystery in the work of the Spirit. His work of inspiration is equally such, but without any detriment to the truths of religion thus given to the world. Such too is his work of regeneration; but the new spiritual life and the sonship into which we are born are none the less real or blessed. There is for us an utter mystery in the perceptions of the ear and the eye; but sounds are just as sweet and scenes are just as beautiful as if we understood their mode. So it is respecting the assurance of sonship through the witness of the Spirit.

III. Witness Of Our Own Spirit.

1. Nature of the Testimony.—In this case the witnessing is indirect or mediate, and proceeds on a comparison of certain facts of religious experience and life with the relative facts of Scripture. The Scriptures clearly note the distinctive and determining facts of this gracious sonship. We find such facts in our own experience and life. When, therefore, on a proper comparison, we discover an exact or, at least, real accordance between these facts within us and those within the Scriptures, we receive the witness of our spirit that we are the children of God. It is true that this witnessing comes to us in the form of an inference, but it is a thoroughly warranted inference, and therefore truly assuring. These statements may here suffice, as the nature of this witnessing will more clearly appear in the illustrations which immediately follow.

2. Illustrations of the Witnessing.—Sonship is a state of peace with God. “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 5:1; Romans 8:1). On the one side is condemnation; on the other, peace. The difference between these states, as they enter into our religious experience, is very real; so real that we can readily determine which is our own state. If we find in ourselves the sense of peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, that peace witnesses to our sonship (1 John 3:19-21). The children of God love him: “Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God” (1 John 4:7). It is true that brotherly love is foremost in this text, but clearly it also means that those who are born of God love him. We thereby test ourselves. We read in the Scriptures: “The carnal mind is enmity against God” (Romans 8:7); and we are sure that such is not the state of our own mind. We read again: “Love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God;” and we are sure that such is our own experience. We thus have the witness of our own spirit that we are born of God, and therefore are his children.

It is characteristic of the children of God that they love one another. “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.” “If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us” (1 John 3:14; 1 John 4:12). It is easy to apply this test. And if we find in ourselves this love, love for the children of God because they are his children, then shall we have the witness of our own spirit to the truth of our sonship. A truly filial spirit is the spirit of

obedience to God. Such is the spirit of all who are in a truly regenerate state. On the other hand, the possession of such a spirit is the proof of such a state. “If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him” (1 John 2:29). If we have the consciousness of such a filial disposition as a ruling force in our life, then have we the sure evidence of a truly regenerate state, and the witness of our own spirit that we are the children of God. The children of God are led by the Holy Spirit: “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God” (Romans 8:14). The life of any one so led must be in the fruits of the Spirit, not in the works of the flesh (Romans 8:4-10). Each of these lives is such in its facts that it must reveal itself in the personal consciousness. Further, the two are in such wide contrast that we may readily determine which we are living. This is manifestly the case in view of their characterization and distinction in the Scriptures (Galatians 5:16-25). Now everyone whose life is in the fruits of the Spirit is led by the Spirit of God, and therefore must be a child of God. Hence every one whose life is consciously such must have the witness of his own spirit that he is a child of God. Such is the witness of our own spirit to this sonship.

3. Process of the Witnessing.—There is really a logical process. This is manifest in the nature of the witnessing, as previously stated, and also in the several illustrations which we have given. However, it does not follow that this process must be formally conducted before our own spirit can give its assuring testimony. Even in its reasoning the mind often moves with great rapidity, and reaches the result almost instantly; so that the process is scarcely appreciable in time, or even observable in consciousness. Such is the case here. The peace and joy received in conversion are anticipated, and therefore bear instant testimony to our adoption. Such is the case in many instances. There are exceptions. Instances are not wanting in which there is a gradual manifestation of the gracious change. Here there must be a gradual witnessing of our own spirit. In such instances the witness of the Holy Spirit is in a like gradual manner. This is entirely consistent with his part in the work of assurance. His testimony need not be instantly full because it is immediate. In the Christian life the witness of our own spirit may be promptly given. Here, however, much depends upon the depth of experience and the fullness of consecration. If the religious life is low and the evidences of a gracious state correspondingly feeble, we need the more of them, and hence must institute a wider comparison of our experience and life with the Scripture notes of this state, in order to an assuring witness of our own spirit. The same course may be necessary in seasons of temptation or trial, wherein the soul is brought into heaviness or doubt. Usually, however, with a living experience and a true consecration, the witness of our own spirit is so promptly given that we scarcely observe any process, and seemingly our assurance is an abiding state of mind.

IV. The Assurance Given.

1. Subjectively One.—While assurance is the result of a twofold witnessing, yet as a mental state it is single, not double. It is such notwithstanding the profound difference between the witnesses and the modes of their witnessing. There is not one form of assurance from the witness of the Spirit and another from that of our own spirit, but a single, simple state of confidence springing from the joint witnessing of the two. There is nothing really singular in this. Through many and widely diverse evidences we may reach the certainty of some truth which deeply concerns us; the evidences are multiform, but in the eye of consciousness the assurance attained is purely unitary. So the assurance of sonship received from the joint testimony of the two witnesses is subjectively

one.

We are thus prepared even easily to dispose of what has been regarded as a very serious difficulty respecting the witness of the Spirit. It is a fact that some men of an intense Christian experience, and thoroughly observant of all the facts of their religious consciousness, deny a direct witness of the Spirit. We may instance Dr. Chalmers: “I could not, without making my own doctrine outstrip my own experience, vouch for any other intimation of the Spirit of God than that which he gives in the act of making the word of God clear unto you, and the state of your own heart clear unto you.”[802] He thus limits assurance, just as in a passage previously cited from him, to the witness of our own spirit, and also denies to his own experience all recognition of a direct witness of the Holy Spirit. How then can we reconcile this denial with the fact of such a witness, and a witness surely possessed by the great and good Chalmers himself? Very easily on our own interpretation of the doctrine. We have seen that in the work of assurance the Spirit makes no direct communication to the intelligence, nor in any way reveals himself, but simply by an immediate operation within the consciousness produces the assurance of a gracious sonship. We have also seen that the two witnessings coalesce in a purely unitary state of assurance, wherein consciousness observes no distinction between the two. Therefore the assurance of Dr. Chalmers was subjectively the very same that it would have been with his fullest belief in the fact of a direct witness of the Spirit. Hence there was nothing in his experience in the least contrariety to the reality of such a witness.

[802]Lectures on Romans, p. 276.

2. Variable in Degree.—Assurance admits of degrees; and there are many reasons for its actual variations. In the instance of regeneration, whereby we are born into this sonship, many things may vary the strength of its manifestation in our consciousness. Prior habits of life are very different. Temperaments widely differ. Some are gentle in their emotional nature; others, very intense. There are wide differences in the intensity of conviction and contrition. All these facts must have a determining influence upon the strength of our assurance of the new birth. The results of such facts must enter into the experiences of our Christian life, with a like determining influence therein. This is specially true of our personal temperament. Some are timid, doubting, hesitant, respecting their own spiritual good; others are joyous, hopeful, confident. These differences must greatly vary the strength of assurance.

Then there are wide differences in the actual Christian life, differences in the depths of experience and the measure of spiritual consecration. The assurance of sonship must vary accordingly. The witness of our own spirit cannot be as strongly assuring where the experience and consecration are but slight as where they are deep and full. Further, the witness of the Holy Spirit must usually correspond in the degree of its strength with that of our own spirit. A full assurance from his witnessing where the actual Christian life is in a low state would not only be false to the truth, but would also be a very serious peril to the soul. Yet, with all these reasons of variation, the comfortable assurance of a gracious sonship is a common Christian privilege.

3. Thoroughly Valid.—The Holy Spirit is surely a thoroughly competent and trustworthy witness. Through his own agency are we born into this sonship, and he must have perfect knowledge of the result of his own work. When, therefore, by an immediate operation within our religious consciousness he assures us of this sonship, there can be no error in his witnessing. As by

immediate inspiration, and in a manner entirely apart from the usual modes of knowledge, he gave to prophets and apostles the highest forms of divine truth, and the knowledge of events both past and future; as by direct action upon the moral feelings he produces the deep sense of sin and peril; so in a like mode of his agency he can and does produce in our religious consciousness the assurance that we are the children of God. In this gracious work neither mistake nor deception is possible with the Holy Spirit; and the assurance which he gives is thoroughly valid.

We have already explained the witness of our own spirit, and here present it simply in the light of its validity. The Scripture notes of this sonship are surely true; and they are so clearly and fully given that we may surely know them. Then all that we further require is such a knowledge of like facts in our own experience that we may know their agreement with those Scripture notes. Can we have such knowledge of these facts? Surely we can; and for the reason that they are facts of experience. In the very nature of them they must be such. Only through a very great change do we enter into this sonship. There is a transition from darkness into light; from death into life; from the bondage of sin into the liberty of the Gospel; from condemnation into peace with God; from the unrest and trouble of sin into a reposing trust in his love. Such a transition must clearly manifest itself in our deepest consciousness. These new experiences abide with us in our Christian life, and daily manifest themselves in our consciousness. When therefore we institute a comparison of these surely known facts of experience with the Scripture notes of this gracious sonship, and find their close agreement clearly open to our view, then the witness of our own spirit that we are the children of God must be thoroughly trustworthy. With the joint testimony of two such witnesses assurance itself is thoroughly valid.

Wesley: Sermons, x-xii; Chalmers: On Romans, lect. liv; Sherlock: Works, vol. i, Discourse viii; Walton:Witness of the Spirit; Watson: Sermons, civ; Prest: The Witness of the Spirit; Davies: Treatise on Justification, lect. x; Young: The Witness of the Spirit, Fernley Lecture, 1882; Bishop Merrill: Aspects of Christian Experience, chap. x.

154. Chapter 8: Sanctification.

Chapter 8

Sanctification. The term sanctification is in frequent use, particularly with Methodists, for the expression of a full salvation or a completeness of the Christian life. It is not in itself adequate to such expression, for the reason that it is often used in Scripture in a lower sense, or without the idea of completeness.[803] Hence in its doctrinal use it is often accompanied with the word entire; so that the full expression is entire sanctification. This is not without warrant in the words of St. Paul wherein he prayed that the Christians of Thessalonica might be wholly sanctified (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

[803]Wesley:Plain Account of Christian Perfection, pp. 50, 51.

Other words or formulas are also in use: such as holiness, Christian perfection, the higher Christian life. Christian purity, love enthroned; but such formulas are merely representative of the doctrine, not the full expression of its content. Hence, which shall be used is a matter of mere individual preference. The doctrine itself is the question of interest.

I. Meaning Of Sanctification.

Holiness in man is a moral or religious state; sanctification, a gracious work of God whereby that state is produced. The idea of the divine holiness underlies that of human holiness. Without the former there is no place for the latter. That God is holy is a reason for holiness in ourselves: “Because it is written. Be ye holy; for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:16). There was no such an idea in Greek thought; not even the idea of the divine holiness. This being the case, there could be no such reason in the Greek mind for personal holiness. Hence new meanings were necessary to the Greek words appropriated for the expression of these purely biblical ideas.[804] [804] Cremer:Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek,■γιος. As the divine holiness is a reason for Christian holiness there must be a likeness between the two. This is possible notwithstanding the infinite fullness of the one and the narrow limitations of the other—just as it was possible for man to be originally created in the image or likeness of God. However, no true view of the subject can ever overlook that difference. There is another point of difference: the divine holiness is an eternal possession, while Christian holiness is always an attainment. The latter fact gives propriety to the use of the word sanctification, which means a holiness wrought in us by a gracious work of God. A thorough study of the biblical terms of sanctification might be helpful in this discussion, but it would require an elaboration for which we have no room. There are convenient sources of information for any who may wish to engage in this study.[805] It will suffice for our own purpose that we treat such terms as we have occasion to set forth their meaning.

[805]Lexicons of the Greek Testament, severally by Cremer, Robinson, and Thayer; Lowrey:The Possibilities of Grace, pp. 42-66; Beet:Holiness as Understood by the Writers of the Bible; Franklin:Review of Wesleyan Perfection, part ii.

1. Ceremonial Sanctification.—While the terms of sanctification have a far deeper meaning, as we shall point out, they are sometimes used in the sense of a setting apart from secular to sacred uses, a consecration to God and religion. Here the meaning is the same in application to both things and persons. Thus places, altars, offerings, the tabernacle, and the temple were sanctified. In the same sense there was a sanctification of the priests, and also of the Jewish people. The verb ■γι■ζω is thus used (Leviticus 8:10-12; Matthew 13:17; Matthew 13:19; 2 Timothy 2:21). Even our Lord was thus sanctified (John 10:36). Here, however, all idea of any prior ceremonial impurity is utterly excluded. The word ■γιος, which expresses the result or state of sanctification, is used in like manner; that is, in the sense of a ceremonial sanctification of both things and persons (Matthew 7:6; Matthew 24:15; Luke 2:23; Acts 7:33). While such a form of sanctification is without any strictly ethical character, yet it served a valuable purpose in the Hebraic economy. It was a primary lesson in the divine education of the Hebrew people up to the true idea of holiness.[806] [806] Walker:Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation, chap. vii.

We may here note the fact that these terms of sanctification are sometimes used in the sense of veneration or reverence. They thus mean a devout and worshipful state of mind respecting God. Here is an instance: “This is it that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me” (Leviticus 10:3). The trisagion of Isaiah—“Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts”—is the expression of adoring reverence (Isaiah 6:3). The first petition in our Lord’s Prayer—“Hallowed be thy name”—■γιασθ■τω τ■ ■νομα σο■—is replete with the same spirit’ (Matthew 6:9). Such too is the meaning of the commandment: “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts” (1 Peter 3:15).

Such an adoring reverence is possible only with a deep sense of the divine holiness. There is much in the greatness and majesty of God, much in his mighty works, much in the thought of his infinite knowledge and power, to awaken admiration and awe; much in his justice to inspire fear; much in his love to kindle a grateful love in us; but not without the sense of his absolute holiness can we bow to him in adoring reverence. This is the spirit of the heavenly worship: “Holy, holy, holy. Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come” (Revelation 4:8).

2. Deeper Moral Sense.—The distinction here is between the ceremonial and the moral forms of sanctification. The first is outward and official; the second, inward and of the moral and religious nature.

Regeneration furnishes the best exemplification of this work. In the full extent of it, regeneration is of the nature of sanctification. This was shown in our treatment of that subject. It must be such from the very ground of its necessity, which lies in the depravity or corruption of our moral nature. The removal of this corruption is possible only through an interior purification. Such purification is the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration, so far as it is therein accomplished. It is hence true that, in the full extent of it, regeneration is of the nature of sanctification; and whatever be the work of sanctification, as distinctively held, it cannot be different in kind. Certainly we have in regeneration the best exemplification of its nature.

3. Entire Sanctification.—The meaning of entire sanctification is obvious in the light of what has preceded. If regeneration were so thorough as to complete the subjective purification there could be no place for the special work of sanctification. In case of serious degeneration, as in some instances in the churches of Corinth and Galatia, there would be need of a renewed purification; but it would be accomplished by a renewed work of regeneration, if regeneration were primarily

complete sanctification. The theory then is that regeneration is not in its primary work complete sanctification; that it does not immediately produce a fullness of the inner spiritual life. The doctrine is under no necessity of assuming that this is never the case, particularly so far as the subjective state is concerned. We could not affirm that there are no exceptions ; and, not only for the reason that we see no doctrinal necessity for it, but also because some, even from the hour of their conversion, give constant proof of a fullness of the spiritual life, if not in its maturity yet in its entirety. Mr. Wesley himself never denied the possibility, nor even the actuality, of such instances, though he thought them rare, even if ever actual. The common fact is that of incompleteness. Hence it is the definite work of entire sanctification to complete the subjective purification. So far the statement is simple and easily made; but a philosophy of the facts is no easy attainment. They will be more fully considered in the next section.

4. Two Spheres of the Sanctification.—We think it important to observe that there are two spheres of sanctification, as the doctrine is distinctively held: one within the moral nature; the other within the actual Christian life. The two are closely related, the former being the necessary ground of the latter. Only as the nature is sanctified can the life be in holiness. But the perfection or maturity of the Christian graces is not an immediate product of the subjective purification. Hence the importance of distinguishing the two spheres, so that we shall not fall into the error of maintaining the doctrine of an instant attainment of perfection in such graces. Here the law of growth must be admitted. On the other hand, in the light of this distinction we may see the more clearly the possibility of an instant subjective purification.

II. Sanctification Of The Nature.

1. Incomplete in Regeneration.—The doctrine of an incompleteness of the work of regeneration underlies that of entire sanctification, particularly in its Wesleyan form. Without such incompleteness there could be no place for the definite second-blessing view. That somewhat of depravity remains in the regenerate, or that regeneration does not bring to completeness the inner spiritual life, is a widely accepted doctrine. Indeed, exceptions are so few that the doctrine must be regarded as truly catholic. However, it does not necessarily carry with it the doctrine of entire sanctification as a possible attainment in the present life. Hence many who hold the former deny the latter. On the other hand, the impossibility of such sanctification is no consequence of the incompleteness of regeneration. The grace which therein so largely purifies our nature surely can wholly cleanse it. Hence there is place for the doctrine of entire sanctification as an attainable blessing in the present life. The question of a remnant of depravity is not without perplexity as the nature of depravity as a whole is difficult for thought, so that of a remnant, not different in kind from the whole, is difficult. Consequently, there is perplexity in the notion of entire sanctification.

It must not be overlooked that the Scriptures represent the corruption or depravity of human nature in figurative forms, nor that the figures are taken from the physical plane. The same is true of the forms in which the cleansing or purification of the soul is expressed. Thus the subjective state of evil is represented as one of filthiness or uncleanness; and, accordingly, the sanctification is represented as a cleansing or washing or purifying (Psalms 51:2; Psalms 51:7; Ezekiel 36:25; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 2 Corinthians 7:1). But for any true conception of either the corruption or the cleansing we must look through the physical imagery and seek to grasp in thought the spiritual realities which it represents. Here, however, is the very point of difficulty—the difficulty of grasping

in clear thought the spiritual things which lie back of these physical representations.

If depravity existed in the soul in the form of a substance, as poison exists in a living body, or alien elements in water, or alloy in gold, not only the notion of its nature, but also the notion of sanctification, and whether in part or in whole, would be simple. Remove all the poison from the living body, all alien elements from the water, all alloy from the gold, and in each case the purification is complete. In such a sense the removal of all remnants of depravity would be entire sanctification. But the view is purely physical, and hence can afford no clearness of conception. It is too Manichaean for any truly Christian theology. Depravity is a moral state of the soul, not a substance within it. These facts should not be overlooked in the treatment of entire sanctification. They clearly show that, whatever the certainty of its possibility, or even of its actuality, the nature of it cannot be directly apprehended in thought. The repetitious use of the figurative terms respecting remnants, and roots, and alloys, and sediments cannot exactly define the incompleteness of regeneration; nor can such use of the physical terms of washing and eradication exactly define the purely spiritual work of entire sanctification. It is useless to assume an unattainable clearness of view on these questions; and the proper recognition of such obscurity as we have pointed out might save us from unseemly pretensions, not only to a perfect conception of the inner nature of sanctification, but also to an actual presentation of it with perfect clearness both in itself and in its distinction from regeneration.

Some clearly see the obscurity at this point; if not in their own view, yet in the view of others. “In entering, some years since, upon a re-examination of the difficult subject of holiness, I found that all the light which I had previously received, whether from reading, instruction, or meditation, was inadequate to the demands of my own reason, and also to answer the numerous inquiries propounded to me by my discriminating pupils. Unsatisfied and wearied with all that I had ever seen or heard in explanation of its unexplained mysteries, I sat down, not to reading and collating, but to patient and prayerful thought.”[807] These are the utterances of a mind thoroughly candid in temper, rarely acute in analytic power, and clear in philosophic insight. Their date is 1871. To the mind of Dr. McCabe such was then the obscurity of this subject in all former presentations of it.

[807]McCabe:Light on the Pathway of Holiness, p. 3.

“Every effort I have made to define clearly to my own mind precisely what is meant by sin in believers has deepened the conviction that the subject is one of manifold difficulty, and about which there is great confusedness of thought. I find evidences of obscurity in all the writings about it. The most eminent divines are not clear. They all agree in the fact; but when they attempt to explain they become confused. The difficulty is to make plain what that sin is from which Christian men are not free, which remains in, or is found still cleaving to, believers; how to discriminate between the some sin that is removed in regeneration and the some sin that remains. And it is just around this point that revolves the whole question of entire sanctification, both as to what it is and its possibility.”[808] Such are the statements of this writer after a careful study of our best authorities on the question. Surely these testimonies strongly favor the suggestion of less pretension to a thorough clearness of the doctrine.

[808]Foster:Christian Purity, p. 117.

However, as the truth of native depravity is not conditioned on a capacity in us fully to apprehend it, or clearly interpret it in thought, so the truth of a remnant of depravity after regeneration is not so conditioned. In each case the inner state may be known through its activities, as manifest in our consciousness. There is another mode of information. By the observation of others, as to their tempers, words, and acts, we gain an insight into their inner nature, and may thus know its characteristic tendencies, whether to the good or the evil. In such manner we may have the proof of a remnant of depravity, whatever its own obscurity for thought. Hence there is here no mystery in the distinctive doctrine of entire sanctification which should discredit its reality, just as there is no mystery of regeneration which should discredit the reality of a large measure of sanctification therein. On the broadest distinction there is for us the possibility of two lives—two alternatively: one in the flesh; the other in the Spirit. Tic latter is possible only through the presence of the Spirit as a renewing and purifying power in the soul; the former, inevitable in his absence. This does not mean that the subjective state of all in each class is precisely the same. If we judge the inner state of the unregenerate simply by the outer life we shall be constrained to admit wide differences therein, or at least the presence of moral forces which in many instances greatly restrain the natural tendencies of such a state. The real truth is that, with the reality of a common native depravity, there are degrees of moral perversity. So, if we judge the inner state of the regenerate by the outer life, we must admit the truth of differences therein; that the spiritual life is far deeper in some than in others. There may be such a work of the Spirit within the soul as shall give completeness to the inner spiritual life; but such completeness is rarely the work of regeneration. This is the view which underlies the distinctive doctrine of sanctification.

If direct proof of an incompleteness of regeneration, such as constitutes a necessity for the distinct work of sanctification, be demanded, what shall we offer? We can hardly pretend to any direct or formal Scripture statement of such a fact. There are very definite statements respecting both the necessity and nature of justification, also respecting the necessity and nature of regeneration. On the latter question we may instance the words of our Lord (John 3:3-7). Here the necessity for regeneration is definitely stated as lying in an inherited depravity of nature; but not in all the Scriptures is there any such statement respecting a necessity for sanctification as lying in an incompleteness of regeneration. Certainly the truth of this statement cannot be questioned. What then? Is it a truth which is adverse to the doctrine of sanctification? No, not to the real truth of the doctrine; though it may be adverse to some unwise teaching respecting it. The assumption of a definiteness which cannot be shown, and which does not exist, must be a weakness in any teaching. There is such a weakness of more or less teaching on this question. The failure to show the assumed definiteness in the Scripture ground of the doctrine is, in the view of many, the disproof of the doctrine. Here is the point where many halt.

We might adduce the consciousness of the newly regenerate, or even of the regenerate generally, in proof of an incompleteness of regeneration. Mostly, such have inner conflicts which accord with such incompleteness, and which would he out of accord with a state of entire sanctification. But we have already considered the question whether the Christian consciousness is a source of theology, and found it not to be such; hence we cannot admit it to a place of authority in this case. The Christian consciousness has its value for theology, not, however, as its source, but as confirmatory of its doctrines. It is confirmatory of any doctrine of the Scriptures with which it is in strict accord. But the Scriptures themselves must furnish the doctrine before the accordance can

be known or the affirmation be of any doctrinal value. This is a principle which is not always properly observed. We mean no doctrinal dissent from Mr. Wesley if we say that in some instances, as recorded in his Plain Account of Christian Perfection, he gave too much doctrinal weight to individual professions of experience. That he so did is manifest in modifications of his own views.

But, while the Scriptures are without any explicit or formal utterance of an incompleteness of regeneration, yet the idea is clearly present in many forms of words respecting the new regenerate life, or even the regenerate life generally; so that the doctrine of such incompleteness may fairly claim for itself a sure basis in the Scriptures. Now, with the doctrine so found in the Scriptures, we may validly adduce the facts of Christian experience in its affirmation. There is widely in the consciousness of the regenerate a sense of incompleteness in their spiritual life; a sense of the lack of that fullness which is the happy experience of some Christians, and which must be the common privilege of believers. The doctrine thus grounded in the Scriptures and affirmed by the common Christian consciousness may easily command the common Christian faith, and be accepted as a doctrine of the weightiest practical concern. So far the elements of the doctrine of sanctification are clear and sure.

However, it should not be thought strange that some question the truth of this doctrine, or even oppose it. On the face of the Scriptures not a few things are seemingly against it. Other facts aside, we would most naturally think of regeneration as a complete work of subjective purification. As we are born of the Spirit, so do we receive the impress of his own likeness. “That which is born of the flesh is flesh”—in the sense of depravity; and “that which is born of the Spirit is spirit”—in the sense of holiness (John 3:6). If the likeness is complete in the former case, why not in the latter? “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?” “What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous” (Job 14:4; Job 15:14)? We thus prove the native depravity of the race. Conversely, then, why should any uncleanness remain in the soul when it is born of the Holy Spirit? Further, it is clearly true that not a few texts adduced in proof of entire sanctification in some instances express simply the regenerate state; and if they mean a complete work in the one case, why should they mean an incomplete work in the other? Much might be added in the same line. However, the aim of these remarks is not to support this view, and thus to overthrow what we have before maintained, but rather to show a reason for charity toward such as do not accept it. They can hardly question the possibility of more or less degeneration in the regenerate life, and in such case must admit the need of its renewal. And if, with the completeness of regeneration, they hold, not only the possibility of such degeneration and the need of such renewal, but also the common privilege and duty of a wholly sanctified and consecrated life, they hold what is most vital in the doctrine of sanctification, and should be regarded as its friends, not as its enemies.

2. Completion in Sanctification.—The one distinction of entire sanctification, as compared with regeneration, lies in its completeness. The work of the Holy Spirit, as graciously wrought in the soul, is the same in kind in both. This fact opens the way to a clearer view of entire sanctification. As regeneration is, in the full extent of it, a purification of the nature, or an invigoration of the moral and religious powers, or both, so entire sanctification is a completion of the gracious work. So far as we may grasp in thought the work of regeneration, we may also grasp that of entire sanctification. As before stated, we have no direct insight into the nature of depravity; but its

characteristic tendencies or forms of activity are open to our observation; and so far as such facts are an expression of that nature we come to know what it is. Much of the natural history of man rests upon such ground. The same is true respecting the natural history of the animal orders. Through the observation of their habits of life we reach a clear notion of the tendencies of their nature. We thus know the ferocity of the tiger and the gentleness of the lamb. In like manner we know the subjective state of depravity in man; and so far we may know what must be the work of the Holy Spirit in his purification. Further, while we cannot accompany the Spirit as direct witnesses of his work within the soul, we may know its nature in the gracious fruits which immediately spring from it, as we observe them in the new life of its subjects. Indeed, we have a far deeper source of knowledge, even that of a conscious experience of the change thus wrought—a change so thorough that old things pass away and all things become new (2 Corinthians 5:17).

We have no instance of any such change among the animal orders, and hence no illustration therein of this gracious work. The nature of the tiger is never changed into that of the lamb. Whatever the seeming docility induced by methods of training, they are as powerless for the effectuation of any real change of his nature as the flesh and blood of the lamb which for the hour may appease his voracious hunger. But among men there are innumerable examples of the transforming power of regeneration; indeed, innumerable witnesses of its actual experience. The facts thus presented are equally applicable to the work of entire sanctification. If somewhat of depravity remains in the regenerate, or there be any lack of thoroughness the invigoration of the moral and religious powers, there is need of a deeper work, that both the cleansing and the invigoration may be complete. The need is the same in kind as in the case of regeneration, and the work of the Holy Spirit the same. As in a very large measure the work is wrought in regeneration, so is it completed in entire sanctification. The clearer spiritual discernment, the easier victory over temptation, the greater strength unto duty, the intenser love, and the closer communion with God answer to that completion. There are many examples of such a complete work, many witnesses to its attainment. Is the inner work of entire sanctification in the mode of repression or in that of eradication? Such a question is in issue among the friends of the doctrine. Any thorough solution of it would require an insight into the metaphysical nature of depravity, and also into the metaphysical nature of regeneration, which we do not possess, and unto which we cannot attain.

Bishop Foster clearly holds the view of repression;[809] also Beet.[810] Dr. Whedon is in full agreement with them: "'Washed their robes'—purified their characters. This is a very vivid image of sanctification through the atonement. It illustrates how deep the doctrine of the atonement maintained in the Apocalypse. But we must look through the intense imagery at the literal fact, and not allow our imagination to be lost in the imagery. There is no literal robe, no literal washing of the robe in blood. What is true is that Christ died for our sins, and through the merit of his atonement the Holy Spirit is bestowed upon us, giving us power to resist temptation, to repress our disordered affections, and bring all into obedience to the law of Christ. And that is sanctification."[811] In this characterization of the inner work of sanctification there is no word which means eradication, but there are words which mean repression or subjugation.

[809]Christian Purity, p. 74.

[810]Holiness as Understood by the Writers of the Bible, p. 69.

[811]Commentary,Revelation 7:14. On the other hand, Dr. Lowrey maintains the side of eradication. His view is set forth in a criticism of the passage above cited from Dr. Whedon: “The first part of the note is a proper caution. But the doctrine of repression brought out in the second part, as definitive of sanctification, we must pronounce extremely erroneous. And to the positive assertion, ‘And that is sanctification,’ we have only to say, And that is not sanctification. Is power to resist temptation and repress disordered affections all that grace does for us? Then every unconverted man is sanctified, for he has natural power ‘to resist temptation and repress disordered affections.’ All codes of criminal laws are founded upon the assumption that every man has such power. And repressive obedience to the law of Christ, in the sense here mentioned, is possible to the natural man. Grace, then, does nothing more for us than resolution and good habits can do. The Greek here, and similar original words elsewhere, teach that grace penetrates into the texture of our spiritual being, and destroys ‘disordered’ affections by, as Dr. Chalmers says, ‘the expulsive power of a new affection.’”[812] [812] Possibilities of Grace, p. 55.

If the words of Dr. Whedon mean no more than appears in this criticism, he certainly falls far short of the truth of sanctification. But they may fairly mean much more; and it seems to us that he really meant much more in their use. Much of the same criticism might be made, and even more aptly, upon the state of regeneration, as usually maintained. In the doctrine of sanctification, in its truest Wesleyan form, there is conceded to the regenerate a power of repression or subjugation over the remnants of depravity. No other position is more fully maintained by Mr. Wesley himself. But surely this does not level the regenerate state to that of the unregenerate. In the one there is spiritual life; in the other, spiritual death. Further, the repression or subjugation may be so thorough in sanctification that the disorderly affections shall become orderly, or passively yield to the dominance of the higher spiritual life. The theory of repression certainly does not mean the freedom and full vigor of evil forces which constantly war against the soul. The notable formula of Dr. Chalmers, “the expulsive power of anew affection,” is entirely consistent with the theory of repression; indeed, more consistent than with that of eradication. The new affection is not from the creation of a new power, but from the development of a capacity all the while latent in the mind; so the expulsion of a prior affection is not an eradication of the power which it manifests, but a suppression of its activity. “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear” (1 John 4:18). Here is the same principle. But how does love cast out fear? Certainly not by an eradication of the capacity of fear, but by a suppression of its activity. This is the only mode in which love can cast out fear, or one affection expel another. Every possible affection must have its capacity in our nature. Hence, if in sanctification there is not only a suppression of all disordered affections, but also an eradication of all capacity for them, there can be no possible lapse from that state. But nothing could be more contrary than this result to the truly Wesleyan doctrine of sanctification. In a discussion of his own proposition, “sanctification is not the destruction of the passions,” Dr. Lowrey seems to us in full accord with the view of repression, and against that of eradication.[813] [813] Possibilities of Grace, pp. 219, 220. The reality of sanctification concerns us far more deeply than any question respecting the mode of the work within the soul. Sanctification, whether in part or in whole, is in the measure of the incoming and power of the Holy Spirit. It is entire when through his presence and power the evil tendencies are subdued and the dominance of the spiritual life is complete. We know nothing more of the mode of this inner work than we know of the mode of the

Spirit in the work of regeneration. It may be in a more thorough subjugation of the sensuous and secular tendencies, or in a higher purification and invigoration of the moral and religious powers, or in a fuller presence and power of the Holy Spirit, or in all; but whether in one or another, or in all, the sanctification is entire when the spiritual life attains complete dominance. There is the same need of this special work in any incompleteness, whether from a lack of fullness in regeneration, or from deterioration after regeneration, or after entire sanctification.

3. Concerning Sin in the Regenerate.—The truth of a remnant of depravity in the regenerate is not the truth of all the teaching respecting it. That remnant must not be exaggerated in the interest of the doctrine of sanctification, nor to the detriment of the truth of regeneration. The latter point needs to be guarded as vitally important. That this doctrine is exaggerated in some of its confessional statements we have no question. We may give two instances. In the articles of the Anglican Church, after a very strong characterization of inherited depravity, the doctrinal statement proceeds thus: “And this infection of nature doth remain, yea in them that are regenerated; whereby the lust of the flesh, called in Greek φρ■νημα σαρκ■ς, . . . is not subject to the law of God. And although there is no condemnation for them that believe and are baptized; yet the apostle doth confess, that concupiscence and lust hath of itself the nature of sin.”[814] In the Westminster Confession, after an equally strong characterization of native depravity, these words follow: “This corruption of nature, during this life, doth remain in them that are regenerated; and although it be through Christ pardoned and mortified, yet both itself, and all the motions thereof, are truly and properly sin.”[815] [814] Article ix.

[815]Chap, vi, v.

These we call mistaken views of regeneration; exaggerations of the depravity in the regenerate. Such is not the sinful state of a soul newly born of God into a gracious sonship. How shall we account for such exaggerations? Partly from the history of the doctrine. The doctrine itself was not original with either the Anglican Convocation or the Westminster Assembly, but was with each an inheritance from an early Christian age. The material fact is the close historical connection of the doctrine with that of baptismal regeneration. This connection may easily account for the very low view of regeneration. But the view is false to the truth of that great and gracious work; false to the Scriptures respecting it; false to the consciousness of the truly regenerate. The superficiality of regeneration is no implication of its incompleteness. Nor should it be undervalued, as it sometimes is, through an unwise zeal for the doctrine of sanctification. The less the work of regeneration, the greater the work of sanctification; so the former is sometimes held to be a very imperfect work, that the greater prominence may be given to the latter. But it is unwise, and a perversion of vital truth, to lower one fact in the work of salvation in order to exalt another. Regeneration is not a superficial work; nor is it, nor can it be, a small thing to be born of the Spirit.

Further, there is a mistaken use of certain instances of defective Christian life, particularly in the churches of Corinth, Galatia, and Asia, which leads to a false view of regeneration. The mistake arises in the treatment of such instances just as though they represented a true and normal regenerate life, whereas the Scriptures treat them as instances of very serious degeneration. This must be plain to any one who will study even a part of the appropriate texts (1 Corinthians 3:1-4; Galatians 1:6; Galatians 3:1-3; Galatians 5:7; Revelation 2:2-6; Revelation 2:13; Revelation 2:16; Revelation 3:2-3). Hence they cannot fairly represent the true regenerate life. If the aim was to

prove that there may be serious degeneration without an utter forfeiture of the regenerate state, these instances would be in point; but they cannot be in point for the proof of the traditional doctrine of sin in the regenerate, because in such use it must be assumed that they fairly represent the normal regenerate life; and such an assumption is openly contrary to the Scriptures.

We cannot think Mr. Wesley's notable sermon "On Sin in Believers" entirely clear of this error.[816] It is the traditional doctrine which he therein maintains, and which he largely supports with such instances of degenerate Christian life as we before noted. There is in his discussion no dissent from that doctrine respecting the low state of the regenerate life which it assumes; no discrimination between the true regenerate life and that defective form of it represented by these instances of serious degeneration. Such is the doctrine which Mr. Wesley maintains in that sermon, and which he declares to have been the doctrine of the Church from the beginning. So broadly and invariably has it been held, that it must be viewed as truly catholic. The opposing doctrine of entire sanctification in regeneration was new with Zinzendorf, and wholly unknown before him. In emphasizing such facts Mr. Wesley further shows that it is the traditional doctrine of sin in the regenerate, even in its fullest strength, which he maintains in that notable sermon. Mr. Wesley was doctrinally educated in the Anglican articles, and in the ninth, which formulates this doctrine, just as he was in the others; and, while he came to far deeper and clearer views of the regenerate life than this article allows, yet is it the doctrinal basis of his sermon " On Sin in Believers."

[816]Sermons, xiii.

We make no issue with Mr. Wesley in his sharp criticism of Zinzendorf respecting this new doctrine; though we would as soon believe and teach that regeneration is entire sanctification as to believe and teach that it is intrinsically a low spiritual state, a life half carnal, and that, simply as such, it never can be any better. We should be nearer the truly Wesleyan doctrine of regeneration in the former case than in the latter. The doctrine of Zinzendorf could easily be so perverted as to become a serious detriment to the spiritual life; but it should not be overlooked that his soteriology was strongly tinctured with antinomianism, and that this fact may account for much of the actual evil. On the other hand, such views of the regenerate life as shall answer to the traditional doctrine of sin in believers must be most harmful. According to that doctrine there is unavoidably much sin in the regenerate life; and yet that such sin is not sin; that is, that it is not counted to the regenerate as sin. There is in such a doctrine no urgent call to an earnest, consecrated Christian life; no inspiration of hope for its attainment. Such views of the regenerate life are neither truly scriptural nor truly Wesleyan. Hence we must think that Mr. Wesley's sermon "On Sin in Believers" is not true either to the real truth of regeneration or to his own truthful views of that great and gracious work. All this must be plain to any one who will fairly compare that sermon with his sermon on "The Marks of the New Birth."[817] Indeed, hisPlain Account of Christian Perfection is pervaded with views of regeneration in full accord with the latter sermon, but which are strongly out of accord with the special doctrine maintained in the former. The true regenerate life is not in the low plane of the traditional doctrine.

[817]Sermons, xviii.

4. The Second-Blessing View.—The doctrinal view of the second blessing, as definitely held, consists of two parts, one of which has already been stated, but which may here be restated in

connection with the other. The doctrine will thus be presented the more clearly.

Underlying the definite second-blessing view is the doctrine of a common incompleteness of the work of regeneration. Herein the soul is renewed, but not wholly; purified, but not thoroughly. Somewhat of depravity remains which wars against the new spiritual life; not strong enough to bring that life into bondage to itself, yet strong enough to impose a burden upon the work of its maintenance. Such is the first part. The doctrine in the second part is that the regenerate shall come to the consciousness of this incompleteness, and to a deep sense of the need of a fullness of the spiritual life; that these experiences shall be analogous to those which preceded the attainment of regeneration, and be just as deep and thorough. The fullness of sanctification shall be instantly attained on the condition of faith, just as justification is attained; and there shall be anew experience of a great and gracious change, and just as consciously such as the experience in regeneration. That Mr. Wesley held and taught such views there can be no doubt; though we think it would be a wrong to him to say that he allowed no instances of entire sanctification except in this definite mode. We see no perplexity for faith in the possibility of such an instant subjective purification. Through the divine agency the soul may be as quickly cleansed as the leper, as quickly purified in whole as in part. We admit an instant partial sanctification in regeneration, and therefore may admit the possibility of an instant entire sanctification.

Such a view of sanctification does not mean that there need be no preparation for its attainment. The necessity of process of such a preparation is uniformly held, even by such as hold strongly the second-blessing view. The idea of such a preparation is inseparable from the process of experience through which, according to this view, the regenerate must pass in order to the attainment of entire sanctification.[818] [818] Peck:The Central Idea of Christianity, chap, v; Lowrey:Possibilities of Grace, pp. 137-158, 287--330.

However, this process of preparation need not be chronologically long. No assumption of such a necessity could be true to the soteriology of the Scriptures. Let it be recalled that the question here is, not the maturity of the Christian life, but the purification of the nature. For the attainment of the former there must be growth, and growth requires time. But, while the subjective purification may be progressively wrought, it is not subject to the law of growth; and it is so thoroughly and solely the work of God that it may be quickly wrought. Neither is there any necessity that the mental process of preparation shall be chronologically a long one. Here, as in many other spheres, the mental movement may be very rapid. It is often so in conversion. In many instances the whole mental process has been crowded into an hour, or even less time. Even heathen have been saved, born of the Spirit through faith in Christ, under the first sermon they ever heard. But there is as really a necessary process of preparation for regeneration as for entire sanctification; and such preparation need require no more time in the latter case than in the former. That a subjective purification may be attained according to the definite second-blessing view does not limit the possibility to this single mode. There is no ground in Scripture for such a limitation. Indeed, the attainableness of sanctification according to this definitely wrought doctrine, as above stated, is a truth which lies in the soteriology of the Scriptures as a whole, and not in any definite teaching on the question. While they are full of the idea of entire sanctification, they are quite empty of any such teaching respecting the mode of its attainment. Hence any insistence upon such a mode as the only possible mode of sanctification must be without definite warrant of Scripture. Further, we think it a serious objection to this view, as thus rigidly held, that it cannot consistently allow any

preaching of holiness, or any seeking after it, or any expectation of its attainment, except in this definite mode.

Mr. Wesley held strongly the view of an instant subjective sanctification; and we fully agree with him, not only in its possibility, but also in its frequent actuality; but his own illustration of his doctrine points to a possible attainment in a gradual mode. It is given in his answer to the question: “Is this death to sin, and renewal in love, gradual or instantaneous?” His answer is: “A man may be dying for some time, yet he does not, properly speaking, die till the instant the soul is separated from the body, and in that instant he lives the life of eternity. In like manner, he may be dying to sin for some time; yet he is not dead to sin till sin is separated from the soul; and in that instant he lives the full life of love.”[819] The instant consummation here emphasized does not exclude the gradual approach to it; so that, according to this illustration, there may be a gradual dying unto sin until the death is complete; a gradual subjective purification until completeness is attained. Such a view is in the fullest accord with the soteriology of the Scriptures.

[819]Plain Account of Christian Perfection, p. 80. The privilege of entire sanctification is at once so thoroughly Scriptural and Wesleyan that from it there is among us only the rarest dissent. Yet not a few hesitate respecting the sharply defined second-blessing view. We do not share this hesitation, so far as that view represents a possible mode of entire sanctification; though we object to any insistence that such is the only possible mode. Right here is the occasion of unfortunate differences among us. However, much of the evil consequence might easily be avoided; much of it would be avoided through a spirit of mutual forbearance. Let those who hold rigidly the second-blessing view preach sanctification in their own way, but let them be tolerant of such as preach it in a manner somewhat different; and let such as hesitate respecting that special view be tolerant of those for whom it possesses great interest. All ministers who believe in the privilege of a full salvation can preach it in good faith. Indeed, they are not at liberty to omit this preaching. Who shall say that the only permissible or profitable preaching of sanctification is that which prescribes an exact mode of its attainment? The doctrine itself, and not any rigid form into which we may cast it, is the real interest; the privilege itself, the great privilege; the actual attainment, the highest aim. And if with one consent, even if without regard to definite modes, we should earnestly preach a full salvation; preach it as a common privilege and duty ; preach it as the true aim of every Christian life, surely there would be large gain in a wider spiritual edification, while many would enter into “the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ” (Romans 15:29).

III. The Life In Holiness. In the earlier part of this discussion we pointed out the distinction between the two questions respecting the sanctification of the nature and the holiness of the life. Having sufficiently treated the former, we now take up the latter. This question we desire, first of all, to present in the words of some of its leading expositors. However, there is one difficulty in such presentation; it arises from a lack of proper discrimination between the two spheres of sanctification which we before pointed out. Mostly, the subject is treated simply as one, and without any real distinction, certainly without any formal distinction, between the sanctification of the nature and the holiness of the life. This is specially true of Mr. Wesley’s treatment. While both questions appear in his discussions, yet it is without, any such distinction of the two as we think necessary to the clearer treatment of the subject. Such is the case in the passages which we shall directly cite from him; yet, with proper discrimination on our own part, the fact need not obscure his portraiture of the life in Christian holiness.

1. Portraiture of the Life.—We first present this portraiture as drawn by Mr. Wesley himself. In the first citation we observe the order of question and answer in which he wrote.

“Q. What is Christian perfection?

“A. The loving God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. This implies that no wrong temper, none contrary to love, remains in the soul ; and that all the thoughts, words, and actions are governed by pure love.

“Q. Do you affirm that this perfection excludes all infirmities, ignorance, and mistake?

“A. I continually affirm quite the contrary, and always have done so.

“Q. But how can every thought, word, and work be governed by pure love, and the man be subject at the same time to ignorance and mistake?

“A. I see no contradiction here: ‘A man may be filled with pure love, and still be liable to mistake.’ Indeed, I do not expect to be freed from actual mistakes till this mortal puts on immortality. . . .

“But we may carry this thought farther yet. A mistake in judgment may possibly occasion a-mistake in practice. For instance: Mr. De Renty’s mistake touching the nature of mortification, arising from prejudice of education, occasioned that practical mistake, his wearing an iron girdle. And a thousand such instances there may be, even in those who are in the highest state of grace. Yet where every word and action springs from love, such a mistake is not properly a sin. However, it cannot bear the rigor of God’s justice, but needs the atoning blood.

“Q. What was the judgment of all our brethren who met at Bristol, in August, 1758, on this head?

“A. It was expressed in these words: 1. Every man may mistake as long as he lives. 2. A mistake in opinion may occasion a mistake in practice. 3. Every such mistake is a transgression of the perfect law. Therefore, 4. Every such mistake, were it not for the blood of atonement, would expose to eternal damnation. 5. It follows that the most perfect have continual need of the merits of Christ, even for their actual transgressions, and may say for themselves, as well as for their brethren, ‘Forgive us our trespasses.’

“This easily accounts for what might otherwise seem to be utterly unaccountable, namely, that those who are not offended when we speak of the highest degree of love, yet will not hear of living without sin. The reason is, they know all men are liable to mistake, and that in practice as well as in judgment. But they do not know, or do not observe, that this is not sin, if love is the sole principle of action.

“Q. But still, if they live without sin, does not this exclude the necessity of a Mediator? At least, is it not plain that they stand no longer in need of Christ in his priestly office?

“A. Far from it. None feel their need of Christ like these; none so entirely depend upon him. For Christ does not give life to the soul separate from, but in and with himself. Hence his words are equally true of all men, in whatsoever state of grace they are: ‘As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me: without (or separate from) me ye can do nothing.’

“In every state we need Christ in the following respects: 1. Whatever grace we receive it is a free gift from him. 2. We receive it as his purchase, merely in consideration of the price he paid. 3. We have this grace, not only from Christ, but in him. For our perfection is not like that of a tree, which flourishes by the sap derived from its own root, but, as was said before, like that of a branch which, united to the vine, bears fruit; but, severed from it, is dried up and withered. 4. All our blessings, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, depend on his intercession for us, which is one branch of his priestly office, whereof therefore we have always equal need. 5. The best of men still need Christ in his priestly office to atone for their omissions, their shortcomings (as some not improperly speak), their mistakes in judgment and practice, and their defects of various kinds; for these are all deviations from the perfect law, and consequently need an atonement. Yet that they are not properly sins we apprehend may appear from the words of St. Paul: ‘He that loveth hath fulfilled the law; for love is the fulfilling of the law’ (Romans 13:10). Now, mistakes, and whatever infirmities necessarily flow from the corruptible state of the body, are no way contrary to love; nor, therefore, in the Scripture sense, sin.

“To explain myself a little further on this head: 1. Not only sin, properly so called (that is, a voluntary transgression of a known law), but sin, improperly so called (that is, an involuntary transgression of a divine law, known or unknown), needs the atoning blood. 2. I believe there is no such perfection in this life as excludes those involuntary transgressions, which I apprehend to be naturally consequent on the ignorance and mistakes inseparable from mortality. 3. Therefore sinless perfection is a phrase I never use, lest I should seem to contradict myself. 4. I believe a person filled with the love of God is still liable to these involuntary transgressions. 5. Such transgressions you may call sin, if you please: I do not, for the reasons above mentioned.”[820]
[820] Wesley:Plain Account of Christian Perfection, pp. 62-67.

Such is the Christian perfection which Mr. Wesley maintained. Surely he cannot be fairly accused of extravagance. His doctrine means no absolute perfection; no such perfection as might be possible in a purely spiritual being; no such perfection even as might have been possible to unfallen man. Many forms of infirmity are clearly recognized as inseparable from our present life, whatever our spiritual attainment. Indeed, with his own qualifications, the moderation of his doctrine is all that the Scriptures will allow. In another view, his doctrine is carefully guarded against harmful perversions, the possibility of which he clearly foresaw. No possible attainment in grace can for a moment free us from the need of Christ, or lift us above the propriety of praying, “Forgive us our trespasses. “Finally, love is emphasized as the central reality of Christian perfection. This is a view which Mr. Wesley has often presented, and not without the fullest warrant of Scripture. It is not meant, either in the Scriptures or in his doctrine, that love is the only Christian duty, but, rather, that with the supremacy of love the whole life must be in harmony with the will of God. It is in this sense that “love is the fulfilling of the law” (Romans 13:10). In 1767 Mr. Wesley wrote thus: “Some thoughts occurred to my mind this morning concerning Christian perfection, and the manner and time of receiving it, which I believe may be useful to set down.

“1. By perfection I mean the humble, gentle, patient love of God and our neighbor, ruling our tempers, words, and actions. . . .

“2. As to the manner. I believe this perfection is always wrought in the soul by a simple act of faith; consequently in an instant. But I believe a gradual work, both preceding and following that instant.

“3. As to the time. I believe this instant generally is the instant of death, the moment before the soul leaves the body. But I believe it may be ten, twenty, or forty years before. I believe it is usually many years after justification; but that it may be within five years or five months after it, I know no conclusive argument to the contrary.”[821] [821] Works, vol. vi, pp. 531, 532. On this great question we place Mr. Fletcher next to Mr. Wesley. In two brief paragraphs, properly regarded as classical, he gives us a picture of Christian perfection, or of the life in holiness:

“We call Christian perfection the maturity of grace and holiness, which established, adult believers attain to under the Christian dispensation; and by this means we distinguish that maturity of grace, both from the ripeness of grace which belongs to the dispensation of the Jews below us, and from the ripeness of glory which belongs to departed saints above us. Hence it appears that, by Christian perfection, we mean nothing but the cluster and maturity of the graces which compose the Christian character in the Church militant.

“In other words, Christian perfection is a spiritual constellation made up of these gracious stars: perfect repentance, perfect faith, perfect humility, perfect meekness, perfect self-denial, perfect resignation, perfect hope, perfect charity for our visible enemies, as well as for our earthly relations; and, above all, perfect love for our invisible God, through the explicit knowledge of our Mediator Jesus Christ. And as this last star is always accompanied by all the others, as Jupiter is by his satellites, we frequently use, as St. John, the phrase ‘perfect love,’ instead of the word ‘perfection;’ understanding by it the pure love of God, shed abroad in the heart of established believers by the Holy Ghost, which is abundantly given them under the fullness of the Christian dispensation.”[822] [822] Christian Perfection, pp. 9, 10. The life in Christian holiness, as here portrayed, is the same as in the citations from Mr. Wesley. The only observable difference is in respect to the element of time in the attainment of perfection or maturity. While Mr. Fletcher does not formally treat this question, yet in the use of the phrase “established, adult believers,” in the characterization of such as attain perfection, there is a clear recognition of the element of time in that attainment. This we think the true view. While there may be an instant subjective purification, only with time can there be a perfection or maturity of the Christian graces. “Mr. Fletcher is also very careful to introduce the word ‘established’ before believer, and in one place inserts the word ‘adult’ as a qualifier in the same connection. This is intended to guard against the notion that inexperienced, impulsive Christian faith, however vigorous for the time, is capable of producing at once the ripened fruit of the Spirit. It is not the warmth of the heart, but its steadiness, its depth, its breadth of love, and its tested resistance to the powers of evil, that distinguishes the ‘established’ believer; as it is through all the experiences of impulse and of emotion and of temptation incident to the Christian life that the settled and unmovable faith is acquired, which may be truthfully described as matured and ripened. Christian perfection is, therefore, not a childhood attainment. It belongs to those who have grown upon the sincere milk of the word till they are able to digest the strong meat of the Gospel, and whose spiritual senses are exercised to discern good and evil. It belongs to adult believers, to those who have become ‘rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, abounding therein with thanksgiving.’”[823] [823] Merrill:Aspects of Christian Experience, pp. 235, 236.

We add another passage, one with little detail, but intensely forceful in the presentation of the central realities of a life in Christian holiness: “By holiness I mean that state of the soul in which all its alienation from Cod and all its aversion to a holy life are removed. In this state sin is odious.

The more holy any soul, any being is, the more odious sin becomes. To a good man sin is odious; to a holy man it is more odious; to an angel it is far more so still; but to God sin must be, to us, inconceivably odious. And therefore it is said that the heavens are not clean in his sight, and that he charged his angels with folly—so insignificant is their holiness when contrasted with the holiness of God. Holiness admits of an infinite number of degrees; and there is set before us an eternal progression in holiness. But that degree of it, or that state of the soul in which temptations to sin leave there no damaging moral influence, no tarnish of sin, no pain in the conscience, no corruption of the will, no obscurity or perversion of the spiritual vision—that state in which the all-efficacious blood of Jesus has washed away all the stains of sin, and in which the Holy Spirit constantly presides, rules, and reigns without a rival—is what we call sanctification."[824] [824] McCabe:Light on the Pathway of Holiness, pp. 68-70.

Further appropriate citations could do little more than repeat what has already been well stated, and therefore may be omitted. We add a few words in the form of a definitive statement: With a true and full self-consecration to God; with a trustful resting of the soul in Christ; with a single purpose and earnest endeavor to do his will; with a gracious power through the Spirit against evil and unto a good life; most of all, with the supremacy of love in the soul, the life is in Christian holiness. Such it may be from the hour of the subjective purification, or the thorough invigoration of the moral and religious powers, and while the maturity of the Christian graces is yet wanting. If holiness of life be not possible prior to such maturity, then it must be impossible through all the time necessary to that attainment. In this case holiness of life never can be reached except through a process of growth; and therefore, for a greater or less time, the life in regeneration must be a sinful life. But such is not the Wesleyan doctrine. Mr. Wesley himself maintained the possibility of a holy life in the regenerate state, and from the hour of regeneration. Surely, then, it must be possible from the hour of the subjective sanctification.

2. Grades in Graces.—The life in holiness does not mean an exact equality in the graces of all who so live. Here the element of time must cause wide differences. As these graces acquire strength through trial and reach maturity through a process of growth, so they should be stronger and maturer in those long in the life of holiness than in those who have but recently attained it. There are other laws of difference, particularly in the matter of capacity and temperament. The religious capacity is no more equal in all men than the intellectual capacity. Such being the case, there can be no one grade for all who attain unto a life in holiness. "The point to be maintained is a pure heart, an unsinning life, and a loving service progressively commensurate with our ever-increasing capacity and light. This rule will show a disparity among entirely sanctified persons. Capacity and circumstances will make the difference. This fact should caution us not to pronounce all persons unsanctified who do not measure up to the highest standard in our estimation in sanctity of life and propriety of behavior."[825] [825] Lowrey:Possibilities of Grace, p. 227. The Christian graces of the same person must differ in perfection or strength, whatever the grade of his attainment in holiness. One may excel in one grace; another in another; but none in all. Even in sacred history different persons are examples of pre-eminence in different graces. Accordingly, the faith of Abraham, the patience of Job, the meekness of Moses, the love of John, and the heroism of Paul are familiar ideas. Peculiarities of temperament not only account for such facts, but make them inevitable. It is not in the nature of things, nor according to the working of divine grace, that any one should excel in the entire circle of Christian graces.

3. Law of Perfection in Graces.—In an earlier part of this discussion it was shown that a subjective sanctification is the necessary ground of the Christian graces, in all stages of their development; but it was also pointed out that the perfection or maturity of these graces is not an instant, not even a direct product of such sanctification. They must have time for growth; must be tested in the fields of duty and trial; must be strengthened and perfected through the proper exercise. In this manner not a few whose record is in sacred history gained the strength and fullness of their religious character. Such character could not have been gained in any other mode. A glance at the lives of the leading biblical characters will readily discover the truth of these statements. There are many such instances in Christian history. The men of distinction in Christian character and service have ever reached the perfection of their graces through the fulfillment of trying duty. No endowment of grace ever supersedes this law of perfection. There is a wisdom, a strength, a patience, a courage, a zeal, a self-consecration in the spirit of self-sacrifice which can be won only on the field of duty and trial. Take the instance of St. Paul: with the same recipiency of grace, yet without his many trying experiences, he never could have attained to such a degree of perfection in so many Christian graces. The law thus illustrated by so many notable instances is applicable to every Christian life.

It is not essential to such a life, that it shall be without variations of experience; that no shadow shall fall upon its sunshine, nor sense of sorrow mingle with its joy; that there shall be no moments of temptation or trial, hesitation or doubt. It is true that uniformity of experience is to be regarded as specially characteristic of the life in holiness; but such variations as we have indicated are, as occasional facts, entirely consistent with the truest constancy. In all and through all there may be the unmovable steadfastness of faith and the fullness of love. If it be not so, there is for us no present attainment of a full salvation; none, indeed, in the present life. Whatever the blessedness of this state, it is not the heavenly state. With the fullness of salvation we are still in the body and in the common relations of life. Many infirmities and trials are inseparable from this bodily state; many burdens and sorrows, unavoidable in these relations. The imagination, especially when warmed by the mystical temper, may picture a state of indifference to outward things; a state in which the soul is so lost in God as to be free from all anxiety and care, and even without wish of ease from pain; a state in which sickness and death are indifferent to the calm repose, and even the peril of souls awakens no solicitude; but such a reverie is far more replete with hallucination than with the truth and reality of sanctification. Certainly it is neither Paul-like nor Christ-like. The doctrine of sanctification must not be so interpreted as to be made a doctrine of despair to all Christians who have not consciously attained to such an experience, particularly in the definite manner of the second-blessing theory. No such interpretation can be true, because it must deny the salvation of the truly regenerate. The truly regenerate are saved, and in the maintenance of a truly regenerate life must be finally saved. If there is any clear truth of soteriology in the Scriptures this truth is there. Through faith in Christ they have received the double blessing of justification and regeneration. By the one they are freed from the guilt of sin, and by the other they are born into the kingdom of God and become his children (John 1:12-13; John 3:36; Romans 5:1-2; Romans 8:1). The texts given by reference are replete with the truths just stated, as are many others which might easily be added. Indeed, such is the pervasive sense of the Scriptures. We are redeemed by Christ that we might become the sons of God (Galatians 4:4-5; 1 John 3:1). That sonship is surely attained through regeneration. “And if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” “And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ” (Galatians 4:7; Romans 8:17). Wesley taught

this doctrine, and so did Fletcher and Watson; and so has every truly Wesleyan representative who has ever written upon the subject. Is the maintenance of a life in the fullness of sanctification essential to final salvation? Yes, if we are under a dispensation of law; no, if we are under a dispensation of grace. But we are under grace, and not under the law. Such is the doctrine of St. Paul: “For ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid” (Romans 6:14-15). Our privilege and duty point in the same direction, and bid us strive after all the gracious attainment for which we are apprehended by Christ Jesus (Php 3:12). Yet with the sense of many shortcomings we may, and we must still cling to Christ and hope in him. So must we encourage others to do. Never may we break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax. The Master never does (Isaiah 42:3; Matthew 12:20).

4. The Assurance of Sanctification.—The assurance of sanctification is a part of the doctrine, as it is usually maintained. There may be some differences of view respecting the source or sources of assurance, while there is agreement respecting the fact itself. Such a form of assurance is a mental state respecting some fact or truth, and is well known in consciousness. As a mental state it is much the same, however greatly the facts or truths which it respects may differ. But, while the mental state is thus one, it may arise from different sources. As in the present question the matter of assurance is the fullness of salvation, so the assurance itself can arise only from such facts or agencies as shall verify to the mind the reality of such a gracious attainment.

Two sources of such assurance are usually claimed: the witness of the Holy Spirit; and the witness of our own Spirit. Thus the witnesses are held to be the same in this case as in the assurance of sonship. There is no apparent reason for any question respecting the latter witness, but there may be differences of view respecting the former.

There is a direct witness of the Spirit to our sonship, as was shown in our doctrine of assurance. In that case the Scriptures are explicit; but they are not explicit respecting such a witness to the fullness of salvation. It is not claimed that they are; hence that there is such a witness can be maintained only as an inference. This is the manner in which it is maintained: “What I would now urge is, that if a sensible evidence of adoption may be expected, that the same kind of evidence may be expected, with increased luster, to accompany the different stages of our progress in holiness. If God vouchsafe to the merely justified an evidence of gracious acceptance, would he be likely to withhold from those whose hearts are entirely consecrated to him an evidence that the offering is accepted? Indeed, the doctrines of the evidence of adoption, and of entire sanctification in this life, being proved, it seems a matter of course that the inward testimony of the Spirit to the truth of the latter, whenever it takes place, would be afforded” (George Peck: Christian Perfection, pp. 440, 441). So far as this argument relates to the assurance of sanctification through the witness of the Spirit, it has little weight. Here is still the significant fact that, while the Scriptures are explicit respecting a direct witness of the Spirit to adoption or sonship, they are quite silent respecting such a witness to entire sanctification. The prominence given to this blessing must not be overlooked. In the view of not a few it is quite equal to regeneration, whereby we become the children of God; indeed, in the view of some, even greater. Such is the assumption of the argument above cited; and that superiority is made the ground of an inference in favor of a direct witness of the Spirit to the attainment of sanctification. The argument is really this: if there is a direct witness of the Spirit to our regeneration and sonship, there must be such a witness to the greater blessing of an entire sanctification. But if there be such a witness of the Spirit, and for the

reason just given, why the silence of Scripture respecting it? Why is his witness an explicit truth of Scripture in the one case and in the other left to inference? Nor can such a witness of the Spirit be affirmed by the consciousness of the wholly sanctified. In order to any such affirmation, this testimony must be so communicated to their intelligence that they shall know it to be given directly by the Spirit. Such, however, is not the manner of the Spirit in his witness to our sonship. Therein his testimony is given simply in the mode of an impression in our consciousness; an impression in the form of an assurance that we are the children of God; and we are directly cognizant only of that impression, not of the agency of the Spirit whereby it is produced. That there is such a witness of the Spirit we know only through the Scriptures. Such must be the witness of the Spirit to the state of entire sanctification, if there be any such a witness. The advocates of the doctrine assume this in making the direct witness of the Spirit to our sonship the chief ground from which they infer such a witness to our sanctification. But, being such, the consciousness of the sanctified cannot be cognizant of the agency of the Spirit therein, and therefore cannot verify the fact of such a witness. On the explicit ground of Scripture we know that there is a direct witness of the Spirit to our sonship; but there is no such ground on which we may know the fact of such a witness to our sanctification. Still there may .be such a witness. We have neither denied it nor attempted to disprove it. We have shown that there is no sufficient ground for its confident assertion. It is better, therefore, that such assertion be not made.

We do not question the fact of an assurance of entire sanctification. There may be a direct witness of the Holy Spirit to such a gracious attainment; but without such a witness the assurance is still possible. The inner work of salvation is such that it clearly reveals itself in the consciousness of its subjects. Regeneration so reveals itself. It brings a heavenly light and life into the soul; it brings a heavenly peace and love and joy. The soul is deeply conscious of these new experiences, and finds in them the assurance of salvation and acceptance in the loving favor of God. It is conscious of renewed blessings; of blessings often repeated; of some as very deep and precious. So the full salvation may reveal its fullness in the consciousness of the happy recipient. The fullness of peace and purity, rest and love, may thus be known; but as the facts of experience through which our own spirit witnesses to our sonship must ever be tested and approved by the Scriptures, so must the experiences through which it witnesses to a full salvation be tested and approved.

5. Sanctification a Common Privilege.—There is a divine side to this question as well as a human side. If we look only at the human we shall more than doubt the possibility of a full salvation in the present life. In this single view we shall see nothing but the weakness and sinfulness of man. But if we look also on the divine side we shall see the infinite efficiencies which center in the economy of redemption; efficiencies which work together for our salvation from sin. Let us say, then, that man is corrupt and sinful, and in himself not only weak, but utterly helpless ; but against all this let us affirm the truth that on the divine side there is a mighty Saviour, an all-cleansing blood, and a divine Purifier. In these central truths of our soteriology lies the possibility of a present full salvation. If such a salvation meant a deliverance from the manifold infirmities which are inseparable from the present life, then, indeed, would it be impossible so long as we live; but such infirmities are not sins, and therefore are not inconsistent with a state of full salvation.

Many texts mean the privilege of a life in holiness, a very few of which may here be cited. They so mean because they cannot be properly interpreted without the truth of such a privilege. “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” “But as he which hath called

you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written. Be ye holy; for I am holy" (Matthew 5:48; 1 Peter 1:15-16). The perfection and holiness here required must be possible in this life. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matthew 22:37-40). The meaning is not that such love is literally the fulfillment of every duty, but, rather, that when in its fullness it is the ruling power of the life. With the possibility and the actuality of such love, the fulfillment of all the other duties must be possible. The life would thus be in holiness. The divine commandment of such love means its possibility. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thessalonians 5:23). This prayer means the possibility of the blessings for which the supplication is made. The blessings have respect to both the nature and the life. In the first petition, "sanctify you wholly," the life may be included, but the nature cannot be omitted; and the words of the petition express their own meaning respecting its entire sanctification. The second petition relates to the life, and has the same meaning of entirety: that ‘‘your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." A life in which this prayer is fulfilled must be a life in holiness. "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). The saints in heaven were thus cleansed before their entrance into that holy place: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Revelation 7:14). The prior text clearly means a cleansing in the present life ; for it is while we are walking in the light, and on that condition, that it is promised. Now there can be no question about the completeness of the cleansing of the saints in heaven. The words, "washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," can mean nothing less. But the words, "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin," are not less full of the idea of completeness. There is still a great difference between the saints in heaven and the saints on earth, in that the former are freed from the manifold infirmities to which the latter are still subject; but infirmities are not sins, and, while they remain, the completeness of the cleansing is still the meaning of the words, "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." The great prayer of St. Paul for the Christians of Ephesus is replete with the ideas of a full salvation in the present life. That it is a prayer involves no uncertainty of the privileges of gracious attainment which its petitions properly mean. In no doctrinal utterances was St. Paul ever more deeply inspired than in this prayer. Hence its petitions have the same doctrinal meaning respecting the privileges of gracious attainment that they could have if cast in the most definite forms of doctrinal expression. Further, these petitions mean for all Christians the same fullness of spiritual blessings which they meant for the Christians of Ephesus, for whom they were directly offered. With these preparatory statements, the prayer shall express its own deep meaning to such as devoutly meditate upon its petitions: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all

that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen" (Ephesians 3:14-21).

Wesley: Plain Account of Christian Perfection; Fletcher: Christian Perfection; George Peck: Scripture Doctrine of Christian Perfection; Bangs: Letters on Sanctification; Foster: Christian Purity; Jesse T. Peck: The Central Idea of Christianity; Mahan: Christian Perfection; Boardman: The Higher Christian Life; Steel: Love Enthroned; Wood: Perfect Love; Merrill: Aspects of Christian Experience, chaps. xiii-xv; Beet: Holiness as Understood by the Writers of the Bible; Lowrey: Possibilities of Grace; Crane:Holiness the Birthright of All God's Children; Franklin: Review of Wesleyan Perfection; Boland: Problem of Methodism.

155. Chapter 9: The Church.

Chapter 9 The Church.

I. The Church And Means Of Grace. As the Church is divinely constituted for the work of evangelization and the spiritual edification of believers, and also contains the divinely instituted means for the attainment of these ends, it may properly be treated in connection with soteriology.

1. Idea of the Church.—The word church, as we find it in the New Testament, is mostly the rendering of the Greek word ■κκλησ■α (Acts 8:1; Acts 11:26; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 1 Corinthians 11:18; 1 Corinthians 11:22; 2 Corinthians 1:1; Galatians 1:2). This word is composed of ■κ, from or out of, and κβ■ε■ν, to summon or call, with the idea of a convocation for the consideration or transaction of some public business. The primary idea is that of an orderly assembly, though the term is not withheld from a thoroughly disorderly one. Of this we have an instance in the following record: “Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly— ■κκλησ■α —was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together” (Acts 19:32.). But the primary idea of an orderly assembly, lawfully convened for public business, fully appears in the words of advice which the town clerk addressed to this disorderly body: “But if ye inquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly” (Acts 19:39)—■ν τ■ ■υν■μ■ ■κκλησια. In like manner, Christians are called into churchly association. The idea of a divine call of believers in Christ often occurs in the New Testament. They are called unto a heavenly hope and a glorious inheritance (Ephesians 1:18); called into a brotherly fellowship, in the unity of the Spirit (Ephesians 4:1-4); called of God unto his kingdom and glory (1 Thessalonians 2:12); called with a holy calling, according to the divine purpose of grace in Christ Jesus (2 Timothy 1:9). In other forms of expression there is present the same idea of a divine call: “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9). While the privileges and duties of all who are thus called of God are made prominent in these texts, the idea of their organic association is ever present. In that association which springs from their heavenly calling they compose a Christian Church. There are, however, specially observable differences between a Church in the primary sense of the term and a Church in this Christian sense. In the former case the call is merely human, and the convocation for purely secular purposes; while in the latter the call is divine and the purposes truly spiritual.

Such is the deeper Christian idea of the term church, whether in its purely local application or as comprehensive of the whole body of believers. There are in the New Testament many instances of the former application. Thus we read of the church at Jerusalem (Acts 8:1); of the church in the house of Priscilla and Aquila (Romans 16:3-5); of the church in the house of Philemon (Philemon 1:2). We also read of the churches of Galatia and of Asia (1 Corinthians 16:1; 1 Corinthians 16:19). In these instances the plural term means local churches, just as the singular term in the prior instances. But in other uses it is clearly comprehensive of the whole body of Christian believers. Such is the fact in the words of our Lord: “And I say also unto thee. That thou art Peter,

and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). The Church to which Christ is made head over all things; the Church by which the manifold wisdom of God is made known unto principalities and powers in heavenly places; the Church in which God is glorified throughout all ages, is the Church which comprises all true believers in Christ (Ephesians 1:22; Ephesians 3:10; Ephesians 3:21). The term is now in common use with like distinctions of meaning. "We use it in the local sense when we speak of an individual church, as, for instance, of Trinity, or Calvary, or St. Paul's; but when we speak simply of the Church, or the Church of Christ, we use it in its most comprehensive sense.

There is a present use of the term for which there was no occasion in apostolic times—a use in its denominational applications. "We now speak of the denominations severally as Churches; as, for instance, the Presbyterian, the Protestant Episcopal, or the Methodist Episcopal Church. Any Christian communion rightfully organized as a Church is entitled to such designation. The rightful organization of our leading evangelical Churches cannot be questioned, except on thoroughly prelatical ground—such ground as has no place in the New Testament. If the principles of ecclesiastical polity observable therein justify the denominational existence of the Protestant Episcopal Church, they must equally justify such existence of the Presbyterian and the Methodist Episcopal Churches. No one denomination is the Church in its comprehensive sense. No one is in this sense the visible Church, which comprises all who are in Christian communion; no one is the invisible Church, which comprises all who are truly Christian. We accept the Apostles' Creed, and therein declare our faith "in the holy catholic Church; "but this is the general or invisible Church in its most comprehensive sense. Hence we still need a more specific idea of the Church than any which has yet appeared. Such an idea we may find in some of the confessional definitions. Perhaps the one given in our own Articles of Religion is as satisfactory as any other: "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same."[826] This is properly the definition of a local church, but, so far as the more vital facts are concerned, may be accepted as the definition of a denominational Church, however numerous the local churches which it comprises. The chief question in this definition, and the one most in dispute, concerns the due administration of the sacraments, but it must be passed, at least for the present.

[826]Article xiii. The origin or historical founding of the Church is a question respecting which there are some differences of opinion. Christ spoke of his kingdom or Church as yet future, though close at hand: "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17). Accordingly, when he sent forth the chosen twelve he thus commanded them: "And as ye go, preach, saying. The kingdom of heaven is at hand." In the deeper ideas the kingdom of heaven, as here designated, is not other than the Church. He also speaks of his Church as yet future: "Upon this rock I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18). It is in the meaning of these words that his Church was not yet builded; really, not yet founded. It is also in their meaning that Christ is himself the founder and builder of his Church. There is a deep sense in which this is true. Yet it seems equally true that Christ did not in any formal manner organize a Church. On a superficial view these facts may seem discordant, but a deeper insight discovers their complete harmony. The practical forces of Christianity, to which all true Christians are subject, must unite them in social compact. Such a force is the personal influence of Christ; an influence not only over

those with whom he was personally associated, but over all who love him. We see its power over the early disciples of Christ; it not only united them closely with himself, but drew them into living sympathy and loving fellowship with each other. Christianity was to them a new spiritual life, which they shared in common; and this life was a bond of union. By such forces were they drawn together in the closest fellowship (Acts 2:41-47); and their organic union in the constitution of a church was the inevitable result.[827] [827] Van Oosterzee,Christian Dogmatics, vol. ii, pp. 700, 701.

2. Duty of Church Membership.—As the divinely instituted means of grace are mostly within the Church, membership therein is necessary to their full enjoyment. The duty of church membership often appears in the New Testament. It is present in the emphasis which is placed upon the public confession of Christ: “Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 10:32-33). Such a confession of Christ carries with it the idea of membership in his Church. Such too is the meaning of the duty of an unyielding fidelity to him, even when subject to the severest persecutions (Revelation 2:10). There could be no liability to such persecution, nor call to such fidelity, without the public confession; nor such confession without the membership. The same ideas appear in the assurance of the divine succor of the persecuted, and the promise of a crown of life as the reward of their fidelity. The duty of church membership appears in another view. The evangelization of the world is clearly the mission of Christianity. But the fulfillment of this mission requires the Church, because the instrumental agencies for its accomplishment are not else possible. Hence membership therein is plainly a common Christian duty; for if one might omit or refuse it, so might another, and so might all. In this case there could be no Church, nor any of the instrumental agencies through which the work of evangelization is prosecuted. But without such means, and without the Church which must furnish them, Christianity could have no future; nor could it ever have attained a place in history. What if Peter and Paul, and the fathers and martyrs, and the great reformers, and the many efficient heralds of the Gospel had assumed the position of privacy in their Christian life, and refused all organic union and co-operation? In that case their evangelistic work never could have been wrought, and Christianity, instead of becoming the ruling power of the world and the salvation of mankind, would have perished in its inception.

3. Means of Grace.—We may properly reckon as means of grace all spiritual helps arising from our union with the Church. In this view they might be presented with many distinctions; but no advantage could arise from such detail in their presentation. The churchly association of living Christians is one of mutual affection and sympathy. They watch over each other in love. The more stable and mature are often a blessing to the less experienced. Many a time the kindly word of one saves or recalls another from an erring step. This is in the fulfillment of a Christian duty: “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted” (Galatians 6:1). In living churches there are officers whose special duty it is to render this service. A watchful but kindly oversight is the duty of the pastor, and a duty which the members must respect: “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give an account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you” (Hebrews 13:17). Such a service is of inestimable value to many.

Christian fellowship is a privilege of church membership, and one of large spiritual profit. We are constituted for society, and are accordingly endowed with social affections. Life would be utterly dreary without its social element. But in no sphere is there deeper need of this element than in the religious. The Christian life would be lonely and lacking in spiritual vigor without the fellowship of kindred minds. On the other hand, the communion of souls alive in Christ is a fruition of grace. Here is a means of much spiritual profit. The word of God is a means of grace. It is such as read and studied privately, and also as heard in the faithful preaching of its truths. As in the treatment of regeneration we had occasion to show that there was no immediate regenerating power in the truth, so now it should be observed that it possesses no immediate power of conferring spiritual blessings. This, however, does not affect the reality of its value as a means of grace. Its value lies in the fact that, whether read and studied privately or duly heard as faithfully preached, it brings the mind into communion with its living realities, which summon to fidelity in duty and call forth aspirations for the blessings of grace now and the blessedness of heaven hereafter.

Among all the divinely instituted means for the accomplishment of the mission of Christianity the chief place is assigned to the preaching of the Gospel. Such is the meaning of the great commission: “Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). While the universal propagation of Christianity is thus required, the preaching of the Gospel is the divinely prescribed means for its accomplishment. The apostles wrought accordingly in the fulfillment of the duty assigned them; and so wrought their colaborers. Such too has been the method of all their faithful successors in the ministry. And such must be the method even to the end; must be, because it is God’s way of bringing souls to Christ and building them up in the Christian life. These views have many illustrations in the history of the Church. Every age of evangelistic power and progress bears witness to the faithful preaching of the Gospel; every truly spiritual reformation has been led by such preaching; every living Church of to-day has a living ministry. The preaching of the Gospel must not lose its place as a means of grace; therefore it must not lose its efficiency; for without the latter it cannot retain the former. Ministers must so preach the Gospel that it shall accomplish the part assigned it in the divine plan. They have no more sacred duty, no profounder responsibility.

Prayer is a means of grace of very large value. It affords the privilege of close communion with God, especially when the soul is alone with him in its supplications. In this communion there often arises a deep sense of our need, of our helplessness and unworthiness; but there comes with it an assurance of the divine fullness and love, which enlarges our petitions and inspires the confidence of a gracious answer from our heavenly Father. There is spiritual benefit simply in such close communion with God; but there is a larger benefit in the blessings which he grants us in answer to our prayers. The Scriptures are replete with the promises of such blessings; replete with instances of their fulfillment.

Some requisites are so obviously necessary to the genuineness and power of prayer that they need only to be named. Prayer requires sincerity. The purpose of amendment and a good life must ever be breathed into our supplication for the forgiveness of past sins. Repentance or contrition, and the spirit of consecration, are equally necessary. Without them there can be no true prayer of the soul. There must be faith; faith in the form of confidence that our petitions will be granted.

There are certain elements of power in prayer which have a clear and sure ground in Scripture. As prayer itself is so vital to our spiritual life, and its prevalence so necessary to its best service therein, we may briefly, yet with profit, set forth these elements of its power.

Fervency of mind is one element. Here is its Scripture ground: “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (James 5:16). Our translation does not fully express the meaning of the original—■υεργουμ■νη—which means inwrought, inworking with force or energy. In such a prayer the mind is intensely active. The object for which we pray is grasped in all the vigor of thought and feeling. The mind wrestles, struggles for its attainment. Such a prayer is not a mere form of words upon the lips, but an intensity of thought and feeling within the soul; and such a prayer “availeth much.” Only with deep meditation upon the importance of the things for which we pray, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, which shall not be denied us, can we attain to such fervency.

Another element of power lies in the help of the Holy Spirit. There are in Scripture clear promises of his help, and statements which mean the same thing (Zechariah 12:10; Ephesians 6:18). Then we have these explicit words: “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered” (Romans 8:26). There is here a clear recognition of our own weakness, “for we know not what we should pray for as we ought.” So “the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities.” There are many ways in which he may thus help us. He may give us a deeper sense of our spiritual needs, clearer views of the fullness and freeness of the divine grace, and kindle the fervor of our supplication. But we reach a deeper meaning in the words, “But the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us.” He joins us in our prayers; pours his supplications into our own. Nothing less can be the meaning of these deep words. The same meaning is in the verse immediately following: “And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.”

Here is the source of the glowing fervor and the effectual power of prayer. There are instances which cannot else be explained. Such was the prayer of Jacob (Genesis 32:24-30); such the prayer of Moses (Exodus 32:9-14); and such the prayer of Elijah (James 5:17-18). Many such instances have been witnessed in the history of the Church; very different, indeed, in the circumstances, but verily such in their marvelous fervor and power. Praying souls have been lifted far above their own powers and wrapped in a divine fervor. Unyielding faith has grasped the blessing, and the gracious heavens have bent down to the needy earth.

Another element of this power lies in the intercession of Christ. In his high-priestly office he presents our prayers with the incense of his own blood and the intercession of his own prayers: “And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel’s hand” (Revelation 8:3-4). Thus it is that Christ presents our prayers with the incense of his redeeming grace and the prevailing pleas of his intercession. With the clear apprehension of such elements of its power, even the rarest instances of the fervor and efficacy of prayer should cause no surprise. We must think that our heavenly Father will graciously hear the supplications of his children, even of the feeblest, when in the use of their own

powers they pour their souls into their petitions. Even earthly parents answer the prayers of their children: “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him” (Matthew 7:11)? But far greater powers than our own are at work in our prayers, particularly in their higher forms of fervency. The Holy Spirit helps our infirmities, lifts us up into a strength infinitely above our own, and breathes his own prayers into our supplications. Then our great High Priest receives these supplications, and through the blood of atonement presents them in his own intercession. Prayer now rises above all that is merely human and takes unto itself the efficiencies of divinity. The marvel then is, not that prayer sometimes has such power, but that we so rarely attain to its exercise.

4. The Sacraments.—We here view the sacraments as means of grace. Other important questions respecting them must be deferred for separate treatment. The term sacrament is from the Latin word sacramentum, which in its classical use meant the pledge-money deposited by the parties at issue in a lawsuit, and, at a later date, the security which they gave instead. It also meant the oath of a soldier whereby he pledged his fidelity in the military service. Finally it meant simply an oath, obligation, or bond. On the ground of such ideas the Latin fathers applied the term to baptism and the Lord’s Supper. These sacred ordinances were viewed as sacraments because the observance of them meant an assumption of the obligations of a Christian life and a pledge of fidelity to Christ. Such they are as viewed on the human side; but they have a sacramental meaning also from the divine side. They are signs and pledges of the divine grace. Such meaning is expressed in one of our own articles of faith: “Sacraments ordained of Christ are not only badges or tokens of Christian men’s profession, but rather they are certain signs of grace, and God’s good will toward us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm, our faith in him.”[828] The two views are thus combined: “A sacrament is an holy ordinance instituted by Christ in his Church, to signify, seal, and exhibit unto those that are within the covenant of grace the benefits of his mediation; to strengthen and increase their faith, and all other graces, to oblige them to obedience.”[829] [828] Article xvi.

[829]Westminster Larger Catechism, Q. 162. The sacraments have a symbolical character. Baptism represents the work of regeneration through the agency of the Holy Spirit. The Supper represents the atonement in the sacrificial death of Christ. It is also commemorative of his death. Both the emblematic and the memorial services are presented in a single text of Scripture. When, in the institution of the supper, Christ gave the bread to his disciples, he said: “Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying. This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord’s death till be come” (1 Corinthians 11:24-26).

Much account is made of the sacraments as seals. The view is well stated in the following citation: “They are also seals. A seal is a confirming sign, or, according to theological language, there is in a sacrament a signum significans, and a signum confirmans; the former of which is said, significare, to notify or to declare; the latter, obsignare, to set one’s seal to, to “witness. As, therefore, the sacraments, when considered as signs, contain a declaration of the same doctrines and promises which the written word of God exhibits, but addressed by a significant emblem to the senses; so also as seals, or pledges, they confirm the same promises which are assured to us by

God's own truth and faithfulness in his word (which is the main ground of all affiance in his mercy), and by his indwelling Spirit by which we are 'sealed,' and have in our hearts 'the earnest' of our heavenly inheritance. This is done by an external and visible institution ; so that God has added these ordinances to the promises of his word, not only to bring his merciful purpose toward us in Christ to mind, but constantly to assure us that those who believe in him shall be and are made partakers of his grace. These ordinances are a pledge to them that Christ and his benefits are theirs, while they are required, at the same time, by faith, as well as by the visible sign, to signify their compliance with his covenant, which may be called 'setting to their seal.'"[830] [830] Watson:Theological Institutes, vol. ii, p. 612. In considering the sacraments as means of grace we should not overlook the limitation which such designation imposes. Means to ends have no intrinsic power for their effectuation. Means of grace are not in themselves grace, nor fountains of grace, but simply aids, in the proper use of which grace is attained. All this is true of the sacraments. They are not in themselves grace, nor the immediate source of grace. There is no profit in their observance without the proper mental exercise; no benefit in any merely mechanical or magical mode. The doctrine of such benefit is a pernicious error, which has been widely and deeply harmful to the spiritual life. It is a doctrine of salvation without sanctification. The substance is lost in the ceremony; the circumcision of the heart, in the circumcision of the flesh. The error carries with it ecclesiasticism and sacerdotalism, transubstantiation and consubstantiation.

How, then, are the sacraments means of grace? In the same manner as the word of God. In the latter we have the best exemplification of the former. And we have already seen how the word of God is a means of grace. It is such as it makes duty clear to us and sets before us incentives to its fulfillment; such, as it reveals the salvation in Christ and assures us of its attainment on a compliance with its terms. In the form of signs, or in the mode of representation, the sacraments fulfill like offices. Through them such lessons are impressively given.

Baptism sets before us the need of spiritual regeneration, and points us to its divine source in the agency of the Holy Spirit. The Lord's Supper signifies to us the atonement in his death as the only ground of our salvation. In this manner the great lesson is most impressively given. Therein Christ crucified is openly set before us (Galatians 3:1). In no service do we get nearer to the cross. Still, there is no spiritual attainment unless we grasp in thought the great truth of the atonement, and in penitence and faith appropriate the provisions of its grace. The grace we need is not in the water, but in the work of the Holy Spirit which its baptismal use represents; not in the bread and wine, but in the atonement which their sacramental use signifies. That the sacraments are seals means no other mode of spiritual benefit. It is true that they are something more than mere signs of grace; they are divine pledges of its bestowment. But the bestowment is pledged only on the proper conditions; and these lie, not in the mere observance of the sacraments, but in the proper mental exercise. Hence there is in their sealing office no new law of spiritual benefit. The promises of God are a means of grace as they warrant our faith. A divine seal or pledge is the same, with the only difference that it may be a stronger warrant. But it can be such only as viewed from the human side. On the divine side God's pledge can add nothing to the certainty of his promise, which rests simply on his own fidelity. Hence it is in condescension to our weakness that he pledges his own good will toward us. Thus when God made promise to Abraham he ratified it by an oath, that both he and "the heirs of promise" with him might have the stronger assurance of its fulfillment (Hebrews 11:13-18). The oath of God is not without value because it could really add nothing to

the certainty of his promise; it is of value because it helps the weakness on the human side and gives the stronger warrant of faith. In such a manner the sacraments, as seals of the divine covenant, are means of grace.

II. Christian Baptism.

1. Meaning of the Rite.—Baptism is the sign of spiritual regeneration. This is its central, though not its only, meaning. These statements accord with its definition in our Article of Religion: “Baptism is not only a sign of profession and mark of difference whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized; but it is also a sign of regeneration, or the new birth.”[831] Such in substance is the doctrine of other Protestant Churches, particularly of those in the line of the Reformed.[832] [831] Article xvii.

[832]Westminster Confession, chap, xxviii. In some instances baptism seems closely related to justification; quite as closely, indeed, as to regeneration. It must be so related in the great commission; for justification is a part of the salvation therein set forth (Mark 16:15-16). There is a like meaning in the words of Ananias to Saul: “And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16). This washing must include the remission of sins. The most notable instance appears in the words of Peter in his sermon on the day of Pentecost: “Then Peter said unto them. Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38). Yet baptism is not to be thought conditional to justification in the manner that faith is. Much less can we think it a saving ordinance. Faith is a necessary condition of justification, while baptism is not. That it is not is conceded by all who require the profession of a state of grace in order to baptism; for such a state must include justification; and it is a very plain fact that baptism cannot be the necessary condition of a state of grace which must precede its observance. The meaning of the text cited is, that baptism is a sign or profession of the faith on which justification or the remission of sins is received. It is also the rite of initiation into the Christian Church, just as circumcision was the rite of initiation into the Abrahamic covenant or the Jewish Church.

It is still true, as before stated, that baptism is specially the sign of spiritual regeneration. As water purifies our physical nature, so in its baptismal use it signifies a purification of our moral nature through the agency of the Holy Spirit. This is the meaning of the words of our Lord: “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:5). The baptism is the sign of the moral purification which is efficaciously wrought by the Holy Spirit. Such, too, is the meaning of the words: “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost” (Titus 3:5). Here the only efficacious regeneration is in the renewing power of the Holy Spirit; of which, therefore, the baptismal regeneration must be the sign.

2. Mode of Administration.—The questions respecting the mode and the subjects of baptism have been much in dispute. Both have been frequently and elaborately discussed; so that ample sources of information are easily at the command of any who would thoroughly study them. Our own treatment must be limited to brief statements. The original words specially concerned in the question of mode are β■πτω and βαπτ■ζω. The immersionist relies much upon them for the proof of his doctrine. His argument is based upon their meaning in classical use; but, while it may be presented with seeming strength, it is far from being conclusive. If in such use these words

invariably meant immersion, the fact would not itself prove that such is the only mode of Christian baptism. It would not so prove for the reason that in many instances Greek words receive new meanings in their biblical use. We have an illustration in the words for holiness, the new meanings of which were pointed out in our treatment of sanctification. Many instances might easily be added. It will be shown that the words relating to baptism are used in Scripture without the meaning of immersion. Further, while such is the common meaning in their classical use, there are exceptions. This is the position of writers of the best scholarship)—immersionists included. Indisputable instances of such use are given.[833] Hence it is futile to attempt to prove from the classical use of the original words that immersion is the only mode of Christian baptism. The question of mode must be studied in the biblical use of these words and in the light of the instances of baptism recorded in the New Testament. Other facts which concern the question will be noticed in the proper place.

[833]Beecher:Baptism, pp. 9-18; Dale:Classic Baptism. In the biblical use of the original words there are instances in which the idea of immersion is inadmissible, and also instances in which it is excluded. In the ceremonial cleansing of a leper two birds were used in the following manner: “And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water. As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip—β■ψει—them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water” (Leviticus 14:5-6). It is obvious that immersion is an impossible meaning of the original word in this case. The living bird could not be immersed in the blood of the slain bird; much less could the living bird, with the cedar wood and the scarlet and the hyssop, be so immersed. Boaz said to Ruth, “Dip— β■ψεις —thy morsel in the vinegar” (Ruth 2:14). It is true that immersion is not an impossibility in this case, but the notion of it is surely very unnatural to the action invited. “When it is said that Jonathan dipped—■βαψεν—the end of a rod in a honeycomb, it cannot mean that the immersion of the end was a necessary part of his action (1 Samuel 14:27). ‘‘That thy foot may be dipped—βρϕ■—in the blood of thine enemies” (Psalms 68:23—Sept. 24). Here immersion would be an unnatural meaning; indeed, an impossibility, except in a most extraordinary case. It is said of Nebuchadnezzar that ‘‘his body was wet—■β■ϕη—with the dew of heaven” (Daniel 4:33—Sept. 30.). Such a baptism cannot mean immersion.

Baptisms were frequent among the Jews, so that the institution of Christian baptism brought no novelty into Jewish thought. There was a baptism in the washing of hands. The Pharisee with whom our Lord dined marveled that he had not first washed—■βαπτ■σϑη—before dinner (Luke 11:38). He marveled because the custom was so uniformly observed: “For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, except they wash—βαπτ■σωνται—they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing—βαπτισμους—of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables” (Mark 7:3-4). The washing of hands is not by dipping; not even when they are dipped in a basin of water. In such case the dipping is simply for the purpose of taking up the water into the hands in order to the washing. Besides, it was not the custom of the Jew to use a basin in this washing, but to have the water poured upon his hands. While in the former case the idea of immersion as the mode of washing is entirely inadmissible, in the latter it is utterly excluded. It is equally inadmissible in the washing of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels, and tables. Immersion in any such case is merely a matter of convenience, and does not belong to

the mode of the washing. The aim is a cleansing or purification in the use of water; and water is applied in the mode of pouring, or in a manner answering to the idea of pouring. Such a washing the Scriptures call a baptism. In the Mosaic economy there were many ceremonial services in the mode of sprinkling. The assembled people were thus sealed unto God in the covenant which he made with them (Exodus 24:8; Hebrews 9:19-20). The Levites were consecrated to their office by sprinkling: “Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them. And thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of purifying upon them” (Numbers 8:6-7). “And almost all things are by the law purged with blood” (Hebrews 9:22). This summary follows a detailed statement of purifications or “divers washings”—διαφ■ροις βαπτισμο■ς (Hebrews 9:10). These purifications, whether in the use of blood or water, were in the mode of washing or sprinkling. Their symbolical meaning was the same as that of Christian baptism, with the only difference of a deeper spiritual idea in the latter; and there is no apparent reason why this rite should be restricted to the mode of immersion, while so many purifications were mostly in that of sprinkling. It is plain that nothing in the mode can be necessary to the service of the rite. Baptism by pouring or sprinkling as fully signifies an inner purification as baptism by immersion. To deny this is to discredit the emblematic service of the many rites of purifying in the Mosaic economy. The apostles, in common with the Jewish people, were familiar with the meaning of these rites and the mode in which they were administered. Therefore only a specific communication or command could have conveyed to their minds the idea of immersion as the only mode of Christian baptism. But no such communication or command was given. Certainly there is no account of any. We have seen that βαπτ■ζω, in the use of which the observance of this rite is enjoined, has no such specific meaning. Surely, then, it could have no such meaning for the apostles, whose minds were so familiar with baptisms and purifications in the modes of washing and sprinkling. The facts presented in this paragraph are strongly against the position of the immersionist. The gracious work of the Holy Spirit is often expressed as a baptism, and not only without the idea of immersion, but in its exclusion. “So shall he sprinkle many nations.” “Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean” (Isaiah 52:15; Ezekiel 36:25). The terms of the symbolical purification are here employed to express the efficacious work of the Spirit in the actual purification of the soul. The idea of immersion is thus excluded. “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me . . . shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire” (Matthew 3:11). In such baptism Christ fulfilled the prophecy of Joel: “I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh” (Joel 2:28). This fulfillment began on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:16-17). The one word of mode is pouring, not immersion. “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water” (Hebrews 10:22). In like manner, the cleansing work of the blood of Christ is symbolically expressed as in the mode of sprinkling: “But ye are come unto . . . Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling” (Hebrews 12:22-24). Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:2). The texts cited in this paragraph make it plain that the purifying work of the Spirit is expressed as a baptism, but ever m the mode of sprinkling or pouring, never in that of immersion. Why, then, should immersion be necessary to the baptism with water whereby his efficacious work is symbolized? It is plain also in the same texts, as it is in others, that baptism is symbolical of the cleansing work of the blood of atonement. Why, then, should immersion be necessary in the symbolization, when in the actual cleansing the blood is represented as applied in the mode of

sprinkling ? Indeed, these terms of pouring and sprinkling, as thus applied to the work of the Holy Spirit and the blood of atonement, are quite conclusive against the theory of the immersionists.

We need only a brief consideration of the leading instances of baptism recorded in the New Testament. They will not be found in favor of the immersionist; rather, they will be found strongly against him. The baptism of John was special in its end—repentance for the remission of sins: “And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins” (Luke 3:3). However, baptism itself was neither peculiar to his ministry nor novel to the Jewish mind. As we have seen, baptisms were frequent, and in various modes under the Mosaic law; so that they were familiar to the Jewish people. John himself was familiar with those baptisms. What, then, is the presumption respecting the mode in which he administered the rite? Certainly not that it was uniformly in that of immersion. As the baptisms with which he was familiar were mostly by sprinkling, the presumption is strongly against such uniformity. Hence, unless he was divinely commanded to observe the mode of immersion, or there is something in the account of his baptizing which must mean immersion, there is no proof of such uniform mode, and the probabilities are strongly against it. There is certainly no account of any such divine command. It may be assumed; but assumption is without logical value for the immersionist. It may be assumed that John was commanded to baptize, and then asserted that immersion is in the meaning of the word in the use of which the administration of the rite was enjoined; but as such an assertion is groundless, so the assumption on which it rests is without value for the proof of immersion.

There is nothing in the account of the baptizing of John in proof of immersion; much less of a uniformity of such mode. One proof alleged is that he baptized in the river Jordan (Matthew 3:6). The argument hinges upon the meaning of in—■ν; but this word often means at, by, or with; so that immersion is no necessary meaning of baptizing in Jordan. If John brought the subject within or to the margin of the river, and then applied the water by affusion or sprinkling, he would be baptizing in Jordan in a manner agreeing with a proper meaning of the original words.

Another argument is based on his baptizing at Ænon because there was much water there (John 3:23). But the much water, or many waters—■δατα πολλ■—do not necessarily mean either one or many large bodies of water. A few springs or runs, without a capacity for the immersion of an adult person in anyone of them, would fully answer for the meaning of the original words. Further, it is groundless to assume that the requirement for immersion was the only reason, and therefore the actual reason, why John selected this place of much water. There was an entirely sufficient reason in the daily wants of the multitudes drawn to his ministry. These wants could be met only in a place well supplied with water. Hence there is really no proof of immersion in the reason given for John’s baptizing at Ænon. The number of the baptisms administered by John in the brief time of his ministry is conclusive against the theory of immersion. Ten months are a liberal estimate for the duration of that ministry.[834] Ten months give an aggregate of three hundred and four days; but we require considerable reduction in order to a fair estimate of the actual number in which John baptized. The Sabbaths must be deducted, because the Jewish ideas and customs then in force require it. Further, the administration of baptism could not have commenced, certainly not in any considerable numbers, with the preaching of John; and some reduction must be made on this account. Again, his ministry included the winter and the rainy seasons, so that on many days the attendance of the people would be greatly hindered; and thus there would be a loss of time for baptizing. After the proper reduction on the grounds stated, not more than two hundred and fifty

days, really not so many, could remain for this service.

[834]Hibbard:Christian Baptism, pp. 20-22. The baptisms administered by John were very many. Exact numbers are not given, but the terms used warrant the estimation of a great multitude. “Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins” (Matthew 3:5-6). In other gospels the facts are stated in like terms (Mark 1:5; Luke 3:3; Luke 3:7; Luke 3:21). The places here named contained a large population, certainly not less than two or three millions. It is not to be thought that literally all were baptized by John; yet certainly a great many were. No other view could be consistent with the statements respecting the number. Let us make the low estimate of one hundred and fifty thousand. How, then, will the case stand? The figures require an average of six hundred baptisms per day, and of one per minute for ten hours per day. Here are insuperable difficulties for the immersionist. No man could immerse sixty persons in a decent and orderly manner in one hour. No man could endure the strain of such a service for many successive days. Besides, John was a preacher as well as a baptizer; and the time occupied in preaching, and in necessary or unavoidable conversations with the many people, must be deducted from the time available for baptizing. Thus, again, is it manifest that John could not possibly have baptized so many in the mode of immersion. Indeed, it is scarcely to be thought that he could baptize so many individually in any mode. Nor is there any need to assume that he did. It is quite reasonable to think that he baptized many together, as Moses did when he sprinkled the assembled people (Exodus 24:8; Hebrews 9:19).

There is no peculiar proof of immersion in the baptism of our Lord, nothing alleged as proof which does not fully appear in other instances. Only two things can be so alleged: the meaning of the original word which expresses the act of baptizing, and the statement that Christ “went up straightway out of the water” (Matthew 3:16). Respecting the first, we have already seen that immersion is not the uniform meaning of the original word; hence it is not conclusive of immersion in this case. The going up out of the water was subsequent to the baptism, and therefore no part of it. Neither do the words mean a going up from under the water. Hence this fact is without the slightest meaning in favor of immersion. Further, as the baptisms administered by John could not have been in such a mode, except in rare instances, the presumption is strongly against the immersion of Christ. The baptisms on the day of Pentecost could not have been in the mode of immersion (Acts 2:37-41). The facts clearly show this. There was no convenient place for such an administration. Neither Kidron, nor Siloam, nor Bethesda, nor all together are to be thought of as offering such a convenience. Nor can any other place even be suggested. There is no intimation of a resort to any such place. With the best place right at hand such a mode of baptism would still have been an impossibility. The necessary time was lacking. It was probably eleven o’clock before the preaching service was concluded. The necessary conversation with the converts, either with all before the baptism began or with each as it proceeded, would require much time. Each apostle must converse with and baptize two hundred and fifty persons; such must be the average. Three minutes for the conversation and immersion in each case are an unreasonably low estimate of the necessary time. But even this estimate requires twelve and a half hours for the whole service. There is not only this lack of time, but the average physical strength could not endure the strain of such a service. The baptism of a man of Ethiopia by Philip is an instance in much favor with the immersionist. With him its argumentative value lies chiefly in the facts, as stated, that “they went

down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch," and "they came up out of the water" (Acts 8:38-39). It is obvious that the baptism was a distinct act from both the going down into the water and the coming up out of the water, in which acts both Philip and the eunuch participated alike. Indeed, the baptizing is stated as an intervening and distinct act. Hence nothing in the manner of going down into the water, not even if taken in the extreme sense of going under the water, can determine any thing respecting the mode of the baptism; much less, that it was by immersion. However, no one can soberly interpret the going down into the water in the sense of immersing. Hence there is no need of showing, as we might easily, that going to the margin of the water would express a proper and frequent meaning of the original words. Instances of such a meaning of ε■ς may be found in the account of several visitations to the tomb of our Lord on the morning of his resurrection (John 20:1; John 20:3-4; John 20:8). The idea of "going down" has a very natural interpretation in the descent of a declivity from the place where the chariot stood. There is really no proof of immersion in this instance of baptism.

Saul of Tarsus was baptized by sprinkling or affusion. The facts in the case clearly point to such a mode, and are inconsistent with that of immersion (Acts 9:17-18; Acts 22:12-16). Only two facts need be noted: one, that he was baptized in the house where he had been for three days; the other, that he was baptized in a standing posture. Such is the meaning of the two narratives. The first fact renders immersion most improbable; the second utterly disproves it.

Certain baptisms in the house of Cornelius and in the prison of Philippi may be passed with a brief notice (Acts 10:24-48; Acts 16:23-33). Nothing in either narrative favors the view of immersion; rather, the facts of each are quite conclusive of sprinkling or affusion. In the former account it is plain that the baptisms were administered in the house of Cornelius, and in the room in which Peter preached to the people therein assembled. The theory of immersion in such a case would require the most unwarranted assumption respecting the necessary means; while the facts are all natural and simple on that of sprinkling or affusion. The baptisms in Philippi were administered in the prison. Paul and Silas went not out of the prison any further than into the jailer's house, which joined on to the prison. Nor did this occur until after the baptizing. Only one phrase can be opposed to this view: "He brought them out; "but this can mean only from the inner prison into the outer apartment. Here it was that Paul and Silas preached to the jailer and others and baptized them. In this case, as in the former, the theory of immersion requires the most unwarranted assumption respecting the necessary means, while the theory of sprinkling or affusion is without any perplexity.

Two phrases of Scripture are regarded by the immersionist as quite conclusive of his theory: "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death;" "Buried with him in baptism" (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12). These phrases must be interpreted in the light of the passages to which they belong; for only in this manner can their true meaning be reached. In each passage the ruling idea is the moral change wrought in the attainment of salvation. This change is expressed as a death, a crucifixion, a burial, a resurrection. There is in these forms of expression, and for the purpose of illustration, a comparison with the crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. What, then, is the part of baptism in the expression of this moral change? Simply that of a sign; nothing else. There is then no reference to the mode of baptism. Nor is there in either phrase the slightest proof of immersion.

3. The Subjects of Baptism.—All who through faith in Jesus Christ enter into a regenerate state are proper subjects of Christian baptism. This, however, does not mean a rebaptism of any who were baptized in infancy. The fitness of the regenerate for baptism is fully recognized by Peter: “Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we” (Acts 10:47)? However, there is such unanimity in Christian thought on this question that it may be passed without discussion.

There is not such unanimity respecting regeneration as an invariable requisite to fitness for baptism. Many hold that it is; but they can hardly claim the warrant of Scripture. They may be right as to the rule, but they are wrong in allowing no exceptions. The doctrine of Peter in his sermon on the day of Pentecost is against them; for he therein enjoined baptism in profession of the faith which should be unto justification and regeneration: “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38). In like manner the baptism of Paul was prior to his regeneration, as it was prior to his justification (Acts 22:16). In view of such facts the profession of a regenerate state should not be held as an invariable prerequisite to baptism. When there is satisfactory evidence of true penitence and the purpose of a Christian life in the fellowship of the Church the sacred rite may be administered as a means of grace; as a help to the faith which shall be unto salvation.[835] [835] Merrill:Christian Baptism, pp. 10-12. Are infants proper subjects of Christian baptism? This is the chief question in issue respecting the subjects. If the question could be appealed to the faith of the Church as authoritative in the case the decision would be overwhelmingly in favor of such baptism: so widely has this faith prevailed. It is not a question to be thus settled; yet the very strong preponderance of this faith is not without weight on the side of the affirmative. The place of children, infant children, in the Abrahamic covenant means much in favor of infant baptism. The institution of this covenant is formally and fully given in the Scriptures (Genesis 17:1-14). Before this, however, great promises had been made to Abraham; some of them very similar to the promises immediately connected with this covenant, while that respecting the Messiah was even more specific and full in the manner of its expression (Genesis 12:1-3; Genesis 15:1-7). These earlier promises were gathered into this covenant made with Abraham, and therein sealed unto him and his seed. This covenant, with its promises, was renewed with Isaac, and also with Jacob (Genesis 26:3-5; Genesis 28:10-15). It is replete with the promises of both secular and spiritual blessings. The former were fulfilled in the multiplicity of the progeny of Abraham, in their possession of the land of Canaan, and in their national greatness; the latter, in the coming of the Messiah as the promised seed of Abraham, and in the salvation which he brought to both Jews and Gentiles.[836] [836] Merrill:Christian Baptism, discourse ii. That these promises included the Messiah himself, and the spiritual blessings of his kingdom, is clearly the sense of the Scriptures. Here is this definite and comprehensive promise: “And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 22:18). Christ is the seed through whom this universal blessing should come. Such is the meaning of Paul when he declares that this promised seed is Christ (Galatians 3:16). This is the promise on the warrant of which, on the day of Pentecost, Peter offered to all the grace of salvation in Christ: “For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call” (Acts 2:39). In the fulfillment of this promise the salvation in Christ comes to all without any distinction: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Galatians

3:28-29). It is in the meaning of these words that this promise infolded the rich blessing of the Gospel. Such, too, is the meaning of these words: “And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed” (Galatians 3:8). That children were included in this covenant is too plain a fact to be questioned. They were initiated by the same rite whereby the promises of the covenant were sealed unto Abraham. Their initiation was not made a matter of the divine sufferance, but a matter of the divine command. Why then should they be denied the rite of baptism, which in the Christian Church occupies the place that circumcision occupied in the Abrahamic covenant? It will be no answer to ask in objection, What benefit can baptism render infants? because the same objection would lie equally against their circumcision under the Abrahamic covenant. If the reply should be that the children are not in the spiritual state which baptism signifies, the answer is that the same objection would have excluded them from the rite of circumcision. Again, if the reply should be that infants are incapable of the faith, on the condition of which the blessings of the Gospel are offered, the answer is that they were equally incapable of the mental exercises of the Abrahamic covenant. Infant circumcision under that covenant warrants the right of infants to baptism under the Christian covenant—which, indeed, is not another, but the very same in its full development. On the ground of such facts only a divine order could annul the right of infants to Christian baptism; but no such order has been given. The identity of the Christian Church with the Church instituted in the family of Abraham furnishes the ground of further proof of infant baptism. The fact of such identity is clear in the light of the Scriptures. Abraham and his family were called of God from among the nations, and separated unto himself as his people. With them he instituted his covenant, with all its promises. Here is the central promise: “And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee” (Genesis 17:7). In this manner they were constituted the Church of God. This Church was perpetuated, and is in its fullness the Church of Christ. The Jews as a collective body ceased to be the Church, many of them being cast out because of unbelief, or broken off as branches of a tree, under the figure of which the Church is represented; but the tree remained, and the Gentile converts were grafted thereon among the branches that remained. Accordingly, they were charged not to boast against the branches, but to remember that they bore not the root, but the root them (Romans 11:17-21). In this one, ever-abiding Church there were ever the same spiritual blessings, with the only difference of a fuller development under the dispensation of the Gospel. In the right to beginning circumcision was the sign and seal of these blessings, while under the Gospel baptism took its place as the sign and seal of the same blessings; but all the while there is the one and the same Church. Now, as by authority of a divine command, infants were entitled to the rite of circumcision in the original institution of the Church, on what ground shall they be denied the rite of baptism in the same Church in its Christian state? As we have seen in another case, only a divine command could annul this right; but no such command has been given. The apostles of our Lord were familiar with the place of infants in the Abrahamic Church; with the manner of their initiation by the rite of circumcision, and with the continuance of this divine order to their own time. What, then, would they naturally think of the place of infants in the Church under its Christian form? Surely, that they were to be included in its membership just as they were in its Abrahamic form; and that they were entitled to Christian baptism, which replaced circumcision as the initiatory rite. Indeed, unless otherwise ordered, they must have thought themselves under obligation to administer this rite to

infants. When, therefore, it is demanded that we produce the divine authorization of infant baptism, we answer, that no new command was necessary; that the old command remains in force, and must have so remained in the thought of the apostles. The substitution of circumcision by baptism under that command could affect neither its authority nor the obligation which it imposed. And now, in turn, even with far weightier reason may we demand of the opponent of infant baptism that he produce a divine order which repeals the old command or annuls its authority. There is no such order. The words of our Lord respecting the relation of children to his kingdom clearly mean their right to Christian baptism. These words are so familiar that they here need no formal citation (Matthew 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17). That these children were infants in the proper sense of the word is not to be questioned. When brought to Christ he received them graciously, and said, “Of such is the kingdom of heaven.” He also said, “Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.” Such words must mean a close connection of children with the kingdom of God. Such connection must mean their right to a close relation with the Church; a right which no admissible distinction between the kingdom of God and the Church can deny. The privilege of such relationship must mean the right to Christian baptism.

Some hold that the words of our Lord, as above cited, mean a regenerate state of infants; that only on the ground of such a state could it be said that “of such is the kingdom of God.” If actually in a regenerate state their right to baptism could hardly be questioned—a fact which no doubt favors this view. However, so long as their actual regeneration is an open question, it is doubtful if in this way anything is to be gained in favor of infant baptism. Are infants in a regenerate state? Our own writers are divided on this question. While some maintain the affirmative, we cannot think it in accord with the Scriptures or the doctrines of our Church. It is not consistent with our anthropology, as set forth in our seventh article, nor with the doctrine of our ritual for the baptism of infants, particularly as expressed in the introductory part. It is inconsistent with the Scripture proofs of native depravity—the very proofs in which Methodism has ever grounded her own doctrine; particularly, with the deep words of our Lord in which he sets forth the necessity for spiritual regeneration: “That which is born of the flesh is flesh.” No words could more clearly or strongly assert the truth of native depravity. The doctrine of infant regeneration, or that all infants are born in a regenerate state, is openly contrary to this truth. The suggestion of a post-natal regeneration is without warrant, and out of harmony with the Scriptures.

“We hold that all children, by virtue of the unconditional benefits of the atonement, are members of the kingdom of God, and therefore graciously entitled to baptism.”[837] While these words base the right of infants to baptism on their membership in the kingdom of God they omit all reference to a regenerate state as implied therein. The passage attempts no definition of the nature of that membership, but simply grounds it in the universal grace of the atonement and asserts the consequent right to baptism. We cordially accept the facts thus set forth. Of course it is easy to ask questions respecting them which may not easily be answered. On the other hand, if we assume a regenerate state of infants our position is beset with far greater difficulties. Infants are born into the covenant of redemption, and are all in some measure recipients of its grace. If they live to an accountable age this grace meets them at its threshold and, unless rejected, becomes their salvation; if they die in the infant state it unconditionally regenerates and saves them. On the ground of such facts they may properly be reckoned members of the kingdom of God and entitled to Christian baptism.

[837]Methodist Discipline, 43, 1892 The right of infants to baptism is based on their relation to the atonement and the offices of the Holy Spirit, not on the faith of their parents or of any who may represent them. Yet is it most fitting that those who present them for baptism should be graciously qualified to train them according to all the spiritual meaning of the sacred rite, and should assume the obligation so to do. Also, as “we regard all children who have been baptized as placed in visible covenant relation to God, and under the special care and supervision of the Church,” the Church herself should be profoundly concerned for their proper religious training. No instance of the apostolic baptism of an infant is openly given in the Scriptures: so much must be conceded. That there were such is most probable, as appears in the instances of household baptisms (Acts 16:15; Acts 16:33; 1 Corinthians 1:16): of Lydia and her household; of the jailer, and all his; of the household of Stephanas. If there were infants and infant baptisms in these families no additional word nor other form of words would be needed for the expression of either fact. If there were infants the words clearly mean their baptism. That there was not one child yet in an infant state in any one of these families it is most unreasonable to think. So strong is the probability of infant baptism under apostolic administration. The historical argument, based upon very early Christian literature, is strongly confirmatory of the apostolic origin of infant baptism. However, as its full presentation would require an elaboration for which we have no room, we pass it with a brief notice. It seems quite needless to adduce any testimony from writers of the fourth century, or even of the third, as it will hardly be questioned that infant baptism was then the custom of the Church.

Tertullian was a presbyter in the second century, only a century after apostolic times. His writings make it clear that infant baptism was then uniformly practiced. If in his knowledge such was not the fact, or if he had known it to be of recent origin, or an innovation since apostolic times, the fact would have been of great service to him in support of some peculiar views which he advocated, and he certainly would have so used it; but there is no such use. The sure inference is that there was no such fact. Hence Tertullian is on record as a witness to the uniform custom of infant baptism in his time—a custom long established and of unquestioned apostolic origin. In the writings of both Justin Martyr and Irenaeus there is very clear recognition of infant baptism as common in the Church. They were Christian writers of distinction within fifty years of the death of St. John. Irenaeus was a disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of John. It thus appears that these writers were very near to the founders of Christianity. Hence their clear recognition of infant baptism as the custom of the Church at so early a time is strongly confirmatory of its apostolic origin.

Beecher: Baptism, its Import and Modes; Hibbard: Christian Baptism; Bickersteth: A Treatise on Baptism; Merrill: Christian Baptism; Dale: Classic Baptism; Judaic Baptism; Johannic Baptism; Christian Baptism; Wall: The History of Infant Baptism; Wood: Lectures on Infant Baptism; Cook:Christianity and Childhood; Conant: Meaning and Use of the Word Baptizein; Noel: Essay on Christian Baptism; Carson: Baptism in its Mode and Subjects.

III. The Lord’s Supper.

1. Institution of the Supper.—Words of Scripture furnish the best statement of the institution of the Lord’s Supper. “And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said. Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying. Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed

for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:26-28). As other statements in the gospels are in meaning the same their citation may be omitted (Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20). We add the words of St. Paul: "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said. Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying. This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come" (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

2. Nature of the Supper.—The true doctrine of the supper lies in the meaning of the words of institution, as above cited. That meaning must be found in their true interpretation. It is well known that interpretations widely differ; and a glance at such differences may clear the way to the truth of the question. With the omission of slighter differences, " there are but three expositions made of 'this is my body:' the first, this is in itself before participation really and truly the natural substance of my body, by reason of the coexistence which my omnipotent body hath with the sanctified element of bread, which is the Lutherans' interpretation; the second, this is in itself and before participation the very true and natural substance of my body, by force of that Deity which with the words of consecration abolisheth the substance of bread, and substituteth in the place thereof my body, which is the Popish construction; the last, this hallowed food, through concurrence of divine power, is in verity and truth, unto faithful receivers, instrumentally a cause of that mystical participation whereby as I make myself wholly theirs, so I give them in hand an actual possession of all such saving grace as my sacrificed body can yield, and as their souls do presently need, this is to them, and in them, my body."[838] The last interpretation is substantially that of the Reformed Churches and other evangelical Protestants. The first two, while widely different in some things, are really one in the deeper principle—that of an actual partaking of the body and blood of Christ in the supper. Both are grounded in a literal sense of the words of institution: 'this is my body,' 'this is my blood.' The real difference concerns the manner in which the body and blood of Christ are so present in the supper as to be really, literally partaken of by the communicant.

[838]Hooker:Ecclesiastical Polity, book v, 167. In the Lutheran view there is no transubstantiation of the bread and wine, no change of their own constitution, but the body and blood of Christ are so present in, with, or under these elements as to be really, literally partaken of in the communion of the supper. Such participation is in no wise dependent upon the spiritual state of the communicant. The doctrine is that the ungodly, as really as the most devout, eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ. It must be so from the literal interpretation of the words of institution, "this is my body," "this is my blood;" must be so from the very nature of the real presence maintained.

There is no such real presence of the flesh and blood of Christ in the supper as this doctrine maintains. It is not possible that there should be. The impossibility was pointed out in our review of the Lutheran Christology. The doctrine requires the omnipresence, or at least multipresence, of the body of Christ; and here is the impossibility which we allege. It cannot be overcome by the assumption of a communication of divine attributes to the human nature of Christ, on the ground of its union with the divine in his personality. That union no more lifts his human nature into the infinitude of the divine than it lowers his divine nature into the finiteness of the human. The doctrine is grounded on a literal meaning of the words of institution, "this is my body," "this is my

blood;" but this meaning is unnatural and false; quite as unnatural and false as would be the interpretation of the words, "Washed us from our sins in his own blood," in the sense of a literal washing in the blood of Christ. And the doctrine itself must widely depart from a literal sense before it can reach the meaning of the real presence in the words of institution. When, with bread and cup in hand, Christ says, "this is my body," "this is my blood," the only literal sense is, this bread is my body, this cup is my blood. The words of St. Paul, as before cited, place this view beyond question (1 Corinthians 11:23-26). Hence in a strictly literal interpretation the words of institution must mean that the bread and wine are the body and the blood of Christ. This, however, is contrary to the Lutheran doctrine, according to which these elements suffer no change in their consecration, but remain bread and wine. How, then, after all the insistence upon a literal sense of the words of institution, do Lutherans construct their doctrine? They first invest the body of Christ with the necessary ubiquity, and then assert his bodily presence in, with, or under the bread and wine. We could hardly think of a doctrine of the supper more remote from the literal meaning of the words of our Lord in its institution. In the Papistical doctrine of the supper Christ is held to be literally present in his flesh and blood, through the mode of transubstantiation. By virtue of the words of consecration the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ; so that literally, orally, or by the mouth we eat his flesh and drink his blood in the communion of the supper. The doctrine further is, that Christ is present in the supper not only in body, but also in his soul and divinity. It follows that he may be worshiped in the eucharist, and the eucharist itself be presented to the people for their adoration. The only ground of such a doctrine lies in the assumption of a literal sense of the words, "this is my body," "this is my blood." Transubstantiation itself is a mere inference from this assumption. The bread and wine must be changed into the flesh and blood of Christ if they are really present in the supper, because there is no other way of accounting for their presence. This is the manner in which the doctrine is constructed. Without a literal sense of the words of institution it has not the slightest ground in Scripture. The words of institution are easily interpreted without the literal sense. By a very common figure of speech we give to an emblem or sign the name of that which it represents. This is often done in Scripture. Thus circumcision is called the covenant of God, of which it was simply the sign or seal (Genesis 17:10; Genesis 17:13). The supper of the passover is called "the Lord's passover" (Exodus 12:11); but it could not be literally the Lord's passover, which was his own personal act; but it could be properly so named as it was the memorial of such act. As the sacramental rites of circumcision and the passover received the names of the things which they represented, so the bread and wine, as the divinely appointed symbols of the body and blood of Christ, were properly so named. This interpretation is simple and natural, and free from the insuperable difficulties of a literal sense. The bread and wine are not changed into the form of flesh and blood. After the words of consecration they are still bread and wine, just as they were before. For sense-perception and the tests of chemistry they are the very same. Against such proof it is idle to appeal to an opposing authority of the divine word, because there is no such contrary word in the case. The transubstantiation maintained involves an absolute impossibility. Granted, that God could change the bread and wine into flesh and blood; but this is only a part of the doctrine. The whole doctrine is that they are changed into the flesh and blood of Christ. Herein lies the impossibility. That which never has incorporation into the body of Christ never can be his flesh and blood. There is no power even in God to make it such. Indeed, the very notion of it implies a contradiction, and, therefore, an absolute impossibility. And, surely, it will not be pretended that the bread and wine

consecrated in the sacrament are actually incorporated into the body of Christ. We need no further refutation of such a doctrine. The true nature of the supper is given in our own article of Religion: “The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner. And the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the supper is faith.”[839] [839] Article xviii.

3. Factitious Sacraments.—Only the divine agency can institute a truly religious sacrament. There are only two such in the Christian Church: Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. The additional five of Romanism are without divine authority, and therefore are purely factitious. They are formally repudiated in one of our articles: “Those five commonly called sacraments, that is to say, confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony, and extreme unction, are not to be counted for sacraments of the Gospel; being such as have partly grown out of the corrupt following of the apostles, and partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures, but yet have not the like nature of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, because they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God.”[840] [840] Article xvi.

Augsburg Confession, part i, article x; Formula of Concord, Epitome, article vii; Krauth: The Conservative Reformation and its Theology, The Lord’s Supper; Schmid: Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, part iv, chap, ii; Nevin: The Mystical Union; Council of Trent, 13th. Session, canons i-xi; Moehler: Symbolism, book i, part i, chap, iv; Capel: The Faith of Catholics, vol. ii, pp. 375-499; Vogan: True Doctrine of the Eucharist; Bickersteth: The Lord’s Supper; Calvin: Institutes, book iv, chaps. xvii-xix; Dorner: System of Christian Doctrine, vol. iv, pp. 305-333; Armstrong: The Sacraments of the New Testament; Luckey: The Lord’s Supper; Clarke: The Eucharist; Elliott: Roman Catholicism, book ii.

IV. Constitution Of The Church.

1. Laity and Ministry.—There is in Christianity a priesthood of the people. Such is the clear sense of the Scriptures; and the fact is commonly recognized by the Protestant Churches. The meaning of this priesthood is, not that Christian people are priests in any strict sense of the term, but that they have the privilege of access to God, and of receiving his blessing without the mediation of any human priest. This fact, however, does not supersede the requirement of a ministerial class in the Church. There are many religious services which cannot be rendered in an orderly and profitable manner without such a class. Every religion has a ministry. In Judaism there was a divinely appointed order for conducting the religious services. In the founding of Christianity our Lord instituted a ministry, and clearly with the purpose of its perpetuation in the Church. “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:11-12). The functions of the ministry must ever constitute it a distinct class in the Christian Church. The divine vocation of those who are properly admitted to this sacred office must itself determine such distinction.

2. Divine Vocation of the Ministry.—Mental gifts and acquirements, refinements of culture, and the power of persuasive speech are of great value in the work of the ministry, but cannot in themselves warrant the assumption of its sacred duties. Neither is deep and earnest piety such a warrant, though indispensable to the best ministerial service. A glowing zeal for the cause of Christ and the salvation of souls should always possess the mind of a minister of the Gospel; yet such a

zeal is possible, and often actual, without this special divine vocation; so that, while the lack of such zeal should discredit the profession of such a call, its possession should not in itself be accepted as the proof thereof. The idea of a divine call to the office of the ministry is most reasonable. The preaching of the Gospel, with the pastoral care which belongs to the office of the ministry, is the divinely instituted means for the conversion of sinners and the spiritual edification of believers. It is, therefore, most reasonable that God should select his own agents, and specially call them into his service. It is not a case in which the securing of the necessary service could be wisely left either to the option of individuals or to the selection of the Church. The divine call means a far better service than could otherwise be obtained. God knows best who will best serve him in this ministry. Further, the fact of a divine call is itself an element of value in this service. Whoever ascends the pulpit with the conscious obligation and sanction of such a call ascends it with far greater strength than could else be possible to him. The recognition of such a call of the minister on the part of the people elicits a peculiar interest and secures for his words a weight of influence not otherwise practicable.

There is such a call. Under the Jewish economy a particular family and tribe were divinely set apart to the priestly office. The prophets were individually called of God into the office which they fulfilled—an office more definitely representative of the Christian ministry than that of the priesthood. Our Lord selected his own apostles and divinely commissioned them to their great work. When the vacancy caused by the apostasy of Judas was to be filled the apostles prayed and cast lots that they might know whom the Lord chose in his place (Acts 1:23-26). Again, when the vast harvests, already ripe for the sickle, spread out before the few reapers, what was our Lord's instruction to them? "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest" (Matthew 9:38). The divine vocation of the ministry is the one specially divine fact in its constitution, and the one which the Church should most tenaciously hold. No question of orders or ordination has any such concern.

3. Ecclesiastical Polity.—The questions of ecclesiastical polity have been largely discussed. The actual forms of such polity, as representing the different theories, run through the whole scale from the simplest Congregationalism up to the Papacy. Theories are often maintained on the assumption of a divinely ordered polity; but there is no such polity; consequently such discussions are groundless. The question of chief importance is the adaptation of the polity to the attainment of the spiritual ends for which the Church is constituted. This should always be a determining principle. The principle means that the construction of a polity is left to the discretion of the Church; but it also means that the construction must be made in the light of her mission, and with a view to its very best accomplishment. The polity which answers to such end is easily vindicated. The discretionary power of the Church, as above stated, appears in the light of three facts: the Church must have a polity; there is no divinely ordered polity; consequently it is left to the Church, and to each Church rightfully existing as such, to determine her own polity. A brief presentation of these points will comprise about all that we need further say.

Any society formed for the accomplishment of certain purposes requires some provisions of government, without which it could not even subsist, much less attain the ends of its formation. "It seems to belong to the very essence of a community, that it should have: (1) officers of some kind; (2) rules enforced by some kind of penalties; and (3) some power of admitting and excluding persons as members."[841] So much is necessary to the existence of any community or society

constituted for the accomplishment of definite ends; and so much is necessary to the existence of a Church. Hence, after a lucid presentation of the three points named, Whately concludes: “Since, therefore, this point, and also those others above mentioned, seem, naturally and necessarily, to belong to every regular community ; since it must, in short, consist of regularly constituted members, subject to certain rules, and having certain offices it follows that whoever directs or sanctions the establishment of a community (as our Lord certainly did in respect of Christian Churches) must be understood as thereby sanctioning those institutions which belong to the essence of a community. To recognize a community as actually having a legitimate existence, or as allowably to be formed, is to recognize it as having officers, as having regulations enforced by certain penalties, and as admitting or refusing to admit members.”[842] The points thus made comprise only a minimum of what is necessary to the existence of even a local church. Much more is required when many such are united under a common government. In such case there must be constitutional provisions whereby the stability of the Church may be secured and the rights of its ministers and members protected. Also there must be provided the legislative, judicial, and executive offices necessary to the proper government of a Church so constituted.

[841]Whately:The Kingdom of Christ, pp. 63, 64.

[842]Ibid., pp. 66, 67.

There is no divinely ordered polity. No existing Church can show the original of its own form of government in the New Testament. It does not appear that there was any organic union of the local churches in apostolic times; yet the superintendency of the apostles was both a governing power over them and a bond of union between them; so that they were neither Congregational in polity, nor yet organized and governed in such manner as, for instance, the Presbyterian, Protestant Episcopal, or Methodist Episcopal Church. It would be utterly vain for any one of these Churches, as it would be for any other, to assume that its own government was fashioned after a divine pattern. The fact that no discovery of a divinely ordered polity has ever been made proves beyond question that there is none. The truth of our third point is clearly consequent to the truth of the first two. If a polity is necessary to the constitution and work of the Church, and none is divinely ordered, then it must be the right of the Church, and of every Church having a legitimate existence, to determine the form of her own government; but ever with a view to the best accomplishment of her divine mission.

Certain facts which have special significance for this question are clearly observable upon the face of the New Testament. “It is plainly recorded that they—the apostles—did establish churches wherever they introduced the Gospel; that they ‘ordained elders in every city;’ and that the apostles again delegated that office to others; that they did administer the rite of baptism to their converts; and that they celebrated the communion of the Lord’s Supper. And, besides the general principles of Christian faith and morality which they sedulously set forth, they have recorded the most earnest exhortations to avoid ‘confusion’ in their public worship; to do ‘all things decently and in order;’ to ‘let all things be done to edifying,’ and not for vainglorious display; they inculcate the duty of Christians ‘assembling themselves together’ for joint worship; they record distinctly the solemn sanction given to a Christian community; they inculcate due reverence and obedience to those that ‘bear rule’ in such a community, with censure of such as ‘walk disorderly’ and ‘cause divisions;’ and they dwell earnestly on the care with which Christian ministers, both male and

female, should be selected, and on the zeal, and discretion, and blameless life required in them, and on their solemn obligation to ‘exhort, rebuke, and admonish;’ yet with all this they do not record even the number of distinct orders of them, or the functions appropriated to each, or the degree, and kind, and mode of control they exercised in the churches. While the principles, in short, are clearly recognized, and strongly inculcated, which Christian communities and individual members of them are to keep in mind and act upon, with a view to the great objects for which these communities were established, the precise modes in which these objects are, in each case, to be promoted, are left—one can hardly doubt, studiously left—undefined.”[843] In view of such facts, and others like them, the same author elsewhere concludes: “Thus a further confirmation is furnished of the view that has been taken; namely, that it was the plan of the sacred, writers to lay down clearly the principles on which Christian Churches were to be formed and governed, leaving the mode of application of those principles undetermined and discretionary.”[844] [843] Whately:The Kingdom of Christ, pp. 89-91 [844]Ibid., p. 98. On the ground of the unquestionable facts and principles above set forth the organization of our Methodist Societies, of 1784, into the Methodist Episcopal Church, the form of her polity, and the institution of her ministerial orders are easily vindicated.

Bannerman: The Church of Christ; Cunningham: Discussion of Church Principles; Palmer: Treatise on the Church of Christ; Whately: The Kingdom of Christ; Binnie: The Church; Hodge: Church Polity; Morris: Ecclesiology; Emory: Defence of Our Fathers; Bangs: An Original Church of Christ; Stevens:Church Polity; Perrine: Principles of Church Government; Neely: Evolution of Episcopacy and Organic Methodism; Harrison: The High Churchman Disarmed: A Defence of Our Methodist Fathers.

156. Part VI.—Eschatology.

Part VI.—Eschatology.

Eschatology is the doctrine of the last things, and comprises the questions respecting the intermediate state, the second advent, the resurrection, the judgment, and the destinies of the evil and the good. Underlying these questions, however, is the deeper one of a future existence, without the truth of which they have for us no interest—indeed, no reality—but with the truth of which they have for us the deepest concern. In view of such facts it is proper, first of all, to consider the question of a future existence.

157. Chapter 1: Future Existence.

Chapter 1 Future Existence. The doctrine of a future existence properly includes two questions: one respecting the spirituality of mind; the other respecting its immortality. The relation of the former to the latter will appear in the discussion.

158. I. The Spirituality Of Mind.

I. The Spirituality Of Mind. So much was said upon this question in our anthropological argument for the truth of theism that the less is here required.

1. Falsity of Materialism.—Materialism is an unprovable hypothesis. It is such because, in order to the proof, it must be shown, not only that mental facts have an adequate ground in matter, but also that they have their actual source in matter. Neither is a possibility. We have no empirical knowledge of matter as a substantive reality. On the observation of its properties or phenomena our reason affirms it to be such a reality. But materialism can admit no such form of reason. Its purely empirical philosophy limits knowledge to the mere surface of things. It deals with phenomena, and can know nothing deeper. Hence it cannot even affirm the reality of matter; much less, discover therein the adequate ground of mental facts. Nor can it show that such facts spring from matter. It may be shown that certain actions of the brain or sensory nerves are coincident with certain mental activities; but not the slightest proof could thus be furnished that the former are the cause of the latter; not any more, indeed, than that the latter are the cause of the former. Such co incidence cannot be made to mean any thing more than a present conditioning relation of the nervous organism to such mental activities; but such relation is utterly short of being their ground. A spiritual nature in man is the only adequate ground of mental facts. That its presence cannot be discovered in any empirical way is no proof against its existence. The scientific definitions of matter and mind give us two distinct and widely different sets of facts: the physical and the mental. Their difference is so real and deep that they must have essentially different grounds. Otherwise, we might interchange their definitions or use either for both. Materialism assumes this right. “In itself it is of little moment whether we express the phenomena of matter in the terms of spirit, or the phenomena of spirit in the terms of matter: matter may be regarded as a form of thought, thought may be regarded as a property of matter—each statement has a certain relative truth. But with a view to the progress of science, the materialistic terminology is in every way to be preferred.”[845] Materialism is constrained to assume all this. That it is so constrained is conclusive of its falsity. The phenomena of matter cannot be expressed in the terms of spirit; neither can the phenomena of spirit be expressed in the terms of matter. To attempt it is to ignore all the laws of scientific definition. Materialism is constrained, as appears in the above citation, to prefer the materialistic terminology, and thus to dismiss all terms expressive of the activities of mind in the forms of thought, sensibility, and volition. All must be reduced to the physical plane, and expressed in the terms of matter. Such necessity is quite conclusive of the falsity of materialism.

[845]Huxley:Lay Sermons, pp. 145, 146.

Materialism cannot account for the facts of mind. Any attempt to render such account must proceed either on the ground of the ultimate particles of matter or on some form of their combination. In the light of reason it is not possible that the primary atoms, as discrete entities, should be the original of mental facts. The possibility would mean either a distribution of the mental powers to as many separate atoms, or that one atom should possess the wealth of a mind. Neither

is possible. With such a distribution of the faculties there could be no unity of action between them, and hence no mental life; for such a life is possible only with the element of unity. That a single atom cannot be the seat of a complete set of mental faculties needs only to be stated. No assumption of such a possibility needs any further refutation. The combinations of the atoms, whether in cohesive, chemical, or organic forms, can originate no new powers, whatever powers previously latent may thus find the conditions of their activity. But to say that mental powers thus find the condition of their action is to assume their prior existence in the atoms. Hence materialism, in attempting to account for the facts of mind on the ground of matter, is forced back to the impossible alternatives previously noted: either that the powers of the mind must exist distributively in an equal number of atoms, or that all must exist in one atom. The absolute impossibility of accounting for the facts of mind on the ground of matter is conclusive of the falsity of materialism.

2. Truth of Spirituality.—The materialist must face the reality of mental facts. That we think and reason; that we have sensibilities which are active, not only in the secular relations of life, but also in moral and religious forms; that we freely determine the ends of our action and voluntarily work for their attainment, are as real and certain as the properties of matter or the forces operative in physical nature. If the properties of body mean a substantive matter, our mental facts mean a spiritual mind. Their only sufficient ground is in such a mind. We saw elsewhere the perplexities of materialists at this point; how they confessed the impossibility of materialistic evolution, indeed, declared the utter absurdity of the theory, on the ground of the traditional doctrine of matter. It was openly conceded that only a new definition of matter, which should include mental facts as well as the physical, could render the theory possible or even tolerable. But matter is not changed by any new definition; its properties remain the very same. Defining matter in the terms of spirit does not make it spiritual or invest it with any of the properties of spirit. There is still the same contradictory opposition of the two sets of facts; so that the two cannot combine in the same ground. And it is still true that, if physical properties mean a substantive matter as their ground, mental facts mean a substantive spirit as their ground. Indeed, the proof of a spiritual mind in man is just as clear and sure as the proof of a substantive matter in the physical universe. In the continuity of consciousness the personal self ever abides as the self-conscious subject. I am personally the same in the experiences of to-day that I was in the experiences of ten, twenty, or fifty years ago. In the light of consciousness nothing is more certain to me than this fact. Such is the certainty of every man respecting himself, as he gathers up in memory the experiences of his past life. No length of life nor changes of experience, however extreme, can in the least affect his certainty. That the personal ego ever abides as the self-conscious subject of the experiences of the longest life is a fact which no subtlety can disturb. But it is a fact which can have no possible ground in materialism. The reason is obvious. Matter in the bodily organism of man, just as in every other form, is in perpetual flux and change. Not an atom of a present human brain will remain in it a few years hence. Thus in the progress of a long life many complete changes occur. With such changes the continuity of self-consciousness would be absolutely impossible on the ground of materialism. Spiritual mind, ever abiding in simple unity of essence, is the only possible ground of such consciousness. The fact of such consciousness is, therefore, conclusive of a spiritual mind in man.

3. The View of Scripture.—The Scriptures very clearly distinguish between the soul and the body, and as clearly mean the spirituality of the former. Such is the case in the account of the creation of

man. Nothing less can be the meaning of his creation in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). There is no possible ground of a likeness to God in any creature without a spiritual nature. The account further is that God formed the body of man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, whereon he became a living soul (Genesis 2:7). That inbreathing means the creative act of God whereby he gave existence to the spiritual nature of man. “But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding” (Job 32:8). Other words are even more explicit: “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it” (Ecclesiastes 12:7). The addition of one more text may here suffice: “And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying. Lord Jesus, receive my spirit” (Acts 7:59).

159. II. The Immortality Of Mind.

II. The Immortality Of Mind.

1. Spirituality as Proof of Immortality.—The argument from the simple spiritual unity of mind, once so much relied on as a proof of immortality, is now reckoned of far less weight. It is not of much weight as direct proof; for the dependence of the mind, as of every other creaturely existence, upon God requires that the question of its immortality be viewed in the light of his purpose respecting it. With such dependence upon God, in whom we live, and move, and have our being (Acts 17:28), there is for us no immortality without his pleasure. Indirectly, however, the nature of the mind means much for its immortality. As a simple spiritual existence it is not subject to dissolution or death in the manner of compound or organic existences. Nothing in any such instance of dissolution or death can exemplify the extinction of the soul of man. Its extinction must be a virtual annihilation; and there is no natural evidence of such a destiny of the soul, but much against it. Only the clearest evidence that such is the divine pleasure could warrant the belief of it.

2. A Question of the Divine Purpose.—As the soul is naturally free from the common laws of dissolution and death, it may survive the body and exist in a future state. There is much natural evidence that it will; but as its very existence is dependent upon God, so, as we have seen, the question of its immortality can be determined only in view of the evidences of his pleasure respecting it.

3. Evidences of the Divine Purpose.—The further question then is. What are the evidences of the divine purpose respecting the immortality of the soul? These evidences lie partly in the endowments of the soul; pre-eminently in the economy of redemption.

God is the original of the soul, and of the intellectual powers with which it is endowed. Hence it is reasonable to think that he intends for it the opportunity of a development and attainment commensurate with its powers; indeed, it is unreasonable to think the contrary; for without such opportunity these powers can have no proper end in the plan of creation and providence. But the present life affords no such opportunity. Herein the most favored can only begin that intellectual life of which we are capable. With the many there is hardly a beginning. When will it be otherwise? The higher education of the masses is a remote futurity, with little promise in it. Our civilization is largely in an earthly plane, and imperatively demands much labor in which brawn has a much larger part than brain. Surely there is in the purpose of God a sphere of better opportunities for the intellectual life of man than the present life affords; a sphere which can be complete only with an immortal existence. The soul is morally constituted and subject to the law of duty and responsibility. No life ever attains a degree of perfection above such obligation: so high and exacting is this law. If it should follow that there is no perfect life, it may be for the reason that in our present state duty is beset with severe trials. Many strive after such a life, strive earnestly and persistently, and through great sacrifice and the loftiest moral heroism reach a high state of virtue. They come to the end of life in possession of the divinest graces. Shall such attainments perish in death? Shall the unyielding fidelity, the enduring fortitude, the conquering heroism, the pure flame

of love, the charity which makes glad the heart of many, the graces which bless the vision of angels and merit the benediction of God—shall all these perish in the hour of death? No: reason and religion, the character of God and the interests of the moral universe, answer. No. There must be another life in which such graces shall still live, and such souls receive the reward of the heavenly Father, who is not unrighteous to forget their work and labor of love (Hebrews 6:10).

Even the fact of sin points to a future existence. Sin itself witnesses to the high grade of our endowments, and to the sacredness of our moral obligations. The consciousness of sin is anticipative of a future state of retribution. The many instances of unpunished sin in the present life unerringly point to such a future state. The divine equity confirms the anticipation of the awakened conscience.

It may be said, in the way of objection to the views above presented, that in the light of Scripture a future existence opens to the evil no opportunity for a perfected intellectual and moral life. This fact, however, cannot invalidate the inference of such an existence from the intellectual and moral endowments of the soul, as above stated. It is simply a case of the forfeiture of great opportunities. There is such a possibility in our responsible life. Moral freedom is inseparable from such a life; and the possibility of such forfeiture is inseparable from our freedom. The common aspiration for immortality is strong and persistent through all stages and conditions of life. Nothing can repress it except the hopeless sense of an unrecoverable forfeiture of future well-being. The truer and nobler the moral life, the clearer and wider the sweep of spiritual vision, the nearer the approach to God and truth, the closer the assimilation to the divine, the intenser is the longing for immortality. This longing must be a divine implanting in the soul, and hence cannot be a delusion. God must intend its satisfaction in a future existence. A future existence is the common faith of mankind. The notion of that existence is often obscure; still it is everywhere present and persistent. There must be a sufficient reason for such a belief. It must be either an instinctive faith, or an intuition of the reason, or an inheritance from an original revelation. On no other ground can its universality be explained. But from whichever, it must be from God in a manner which makes it an expression of his purpose of our immortality. The value of faith in immortality evinces its objective truth. We all need its practical influence. Society needs it. The state needs it. “Without this faith the motives of a true and good life are infinitely lowered. The true worth of man departs. There is no longer any sphere for that practical faith which may inspire and sustain any high endeavor either for one’s own moral good or for the good of others. The noblest characters of history, the statesmen of the loftiest patriotism, the philanthropists of abounding charities, have been the creation of a faith in immortality. The benevolent enterprises which bless so many, the charities so opulent in grateful ministries, have the same inspiration. The pre-eminent beneficences of Christianity evince the power of this faith. “Lucian, the universal scoffer, saw in Christianity only one of the numberless follies of his time. His mocking spirit, while contemning all religions, sobered into candor by acknowledging the benevolence of the Christians, and he testifies to the power of their belief in immortality to keep them steadfast, and cause them to abound in all helpfulness and kindness.”[846] How is this? Are we so constituted that faith in a delusion is necessary to all that is truest and best in human life? It cannot be. Hence our immortality must be divinely purposed, and therefore must be a truth.

[846]Bennett:Christian Archaeology, p. 434.

There are few texts of Scripture in which our immortality is directly asserted; yet its truth is ever present in both Testaments, but with the clearer unfolding in the New (2 Timothy 1:10). Without the truth of immortality the deepest, divinest verities of Christianity must be denied. No place can remain for a divine incarnation in the person of the Son of God, or for an atonement for sin in the voluntary sacrifice of himself. If we are to perish utterly in the event of death we need no salvation from a future wrath, no Saviour who shall bring us to future blessedness. Hence it is that the central truths of our Christian soteriology mean the immortality of the soul.

Plato: Phaedon, or the Immortality of the Soul; Butler: Of a Future Life, Analogy, part i, chap, i; Addison:Immateriality of the Soul, “Spectator,” No. 111; Channlng: Immortality, Works, vol. iv, pp. 169-182; Drew: Immateriality and Immortality of the Human Soul; Perowne: Immortality, Hulsean Lectures, 1868; Paine: Soul and Instinct, Physiologically Distinguished from Materialism; Lee: The Immortality of the Soul; Nordhoff: God and the Future Life; Foster: Beyond the Grave.

160. Chapter 2: The Intermediate State.

Chapter 2 The Intermediate State. The question of an intermediate state concerns the condition of the dead between death and the resurrection. There is no place for such a question in religions which know nothing of the resurrection or the judgment. It is not clear that the Jews, particularly in their earlier history, possessed these truths in a manner to give them any definite view of such a state. Such may have been the case with the specially enlightened, but could hardly have been so with the mass of the people. There is, however, an open place for such a question in Christianity. As the resurrection and final judgment of the dead are therein clearly set forth, so the state of souls during the interval between death and these epochal events is properly viewed as an intermediate state. The peculiarities of a disembodied existence of souls constitute it such a state.

161. I. Question Of An Intermediate Place.

I. Question Of An Intermediate Place. This is the question whether the souls of the dead go at once to the places of final destiny, or to a place distinct therefrom, where they remain until the resurrection.

1. In the View of the Scriptures.—We find no clear light upon this subject in the Old Testament. Therein the place of the dead is usually designated by the term ■■■■■■—sheol, rendered ■δης—hades—in the Septuagint. Hades is used in the New Testament in much the same sense as sheol in the Old. In our version of the Scriptures both words are mostly rendered hell. Sheol means a dark under-world. In the popular thought of the Jews it was located somewhere in or under the earth, and was the common receptacle of the dead without respect to any distinction of character, but divided into two compartments: one, a place of happiness for the good; the other, a place of misery for the evil. It is not clear that in the popular thought of the Jews, particularly in their earlier history, there was any other place of future destiny. However, such a fact could have no doctrinal significance, for they were not an inspired people, and hence could err just as Christian people do, and even more readily, as they had a less perfect revelation. It need not be questioned that the Old Testament contains the idea of a higher place of destiny for the good than sheol represents, nor that some minds attained to this idea; but such a fact is entirely consistent with an intermediate place, and therefore means nothing against it. It is apparent in the New Testament, and quite clear in the words of Josephus,[847] that in the time of our Lord the Jews, many of them at least, believed in the resurrection and the judgment, but they might still believe, or believe not, that the dead remained in an intermediate place until they went to the places of final destiny. Hence nothing yet appears that is at all clear or decisive respecting the real question of an intermediate place.

[847]Discourse on Hades.

Even in the eschatology of the New Testament we find nothing decisive on this question. Most that we notice herein has respect to the good. That there is for them a higher place of destiny than either sheol or hades represents is most certain; but this fact is entirely consistent with an intermediate place, and therefore decides nothing. The case of Lazarus seems to favor the view of an intermediate place, as we can hardly think the bosom of Abraham, to which he was taken, is the true heaven of the good (Luke 16:22). The same is true of the words of our Lord to the dying thief: “Today shalt thou be with me in paradise” (Luke 23:43). In some of its uses paradise has a lower meaning than the true heaven; besides, Christ did not ascend to the latter on that day. Other texts, however, seem to favor the opposite view; that is, that the good go at once to the true heaven. In his dying vision Stephen saw heaven open, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God; and he died, calling upon God, and saying, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit” (Acts 7:55-60). The answer to this prayer seems to mean his immediate reception into the true heaven. In the view of Paul, to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:8); that is, when the good die they go at once to be with Christ. And as he is surely in the true heaven,

seemingly these words oppose the view of an intermediate place for the good. We have thus presented the two sides of the question; and so we leave it without any concern for the result; for it is without practical interest.

2. In the Faith of the Church.—In the earlier history of the Church the doctrine of an intermediate place was widely held. This was very natural to the circumstances. On the other hand, the minds of both Jewish and Gentile converts were very fully prepossessed with the idea of the under-world as the place of disembodied spirits; on the other, it was clear to them that the Scriptures reveal a higher and more glorious world as the place of blessedness after the resurrection. The doctrine of an intermediate place was the natural result of these facts. In later times the Romanist doctrine of purgatory strongly supported the same view. But the Churches of the Reformation rejected it; and their strong revolt from the doctrine of purgatory probably had some influence in the determination of their action. Since then the Protestant Churches have mostly rejected the doctrine of an intermediate place.

162. II. A State Of Conscious Existence.

II. A State Of Conscious Existence.

1. The Common Christian Faith.—That the intermediate state is one of conscious existence has been the common Christian faith. Exceptions have been so rare that they scarcely require notice. It is difficult to see how there could be any in the case of such as accept the authority of the Scriptures: so clear is their testimony to the truth of such an existence. At the present time, however, some maintain the cessation of our personal existence in the event of death. Many of the advocates of this view are materialists, and maintain their doctrine on materialistic ground. On such ground we are held to be naturally mortal in our whole being; hence an extinction of our personal or conscious life is the immediate consequence of death. It follows that the future life which the Scriptures reveal is the gift of God through Christ. Such it is, not only as a state of blessedness, but also as a conscious existence. But this gift is denied to the wicked; therefore there is for them no future existence. Such as hold the resurrection of the wicked equally deny their immortality. The view is that they are raised up, not for an abiding existence, but for a speedy doom of annihilation. The doctrine is maintained in opposition to the doctrine of future punishment.

We have already shown the falsity of materialism, and therefore need no further refutation of this doctrine, so far as it is based on such ground. And so far as it assumes the support of the Scriptures it is easily refuted by a presentation of texts which clearly mean the consciousness of the soul in the intermediate state.

2. The Clear Sense of Scripture.—We first adduce a few texts from the Old Testament in support of the view here maintained. Here are the words of God to Moses: “I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob” (Exodus 3:6). He says, not that I was their God when they were living, nor that I shall be such after their resurrection, but, I am their God. Such, however, he could not be if they were out of conscious existence. An unconscious state in them must have debarred the divine relation which the words mean. This is manifest in our Lord’s comment upon them: “He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living” (Mark 12:27). This clearly means the conscious existence of disembodied spirits. In a season of deep mental perplexity and trouble the Psalmist finds comfort in God: “My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever” (Psalms 73:26). Such a faith apprehends no mental extinction in death. “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it” (Ecclesiastes 12:7). If materialism be true the whole man must perish in death, and there can be no ground for any such distinction between the body and the spirit as this text makes. Nor could it be said that the spirit returns to God in the event of death if its conscious life then perishes. In very bold words Isaiah pictures the downfall and death of Nebuchadnezzar, and his greeting in sheol by the royal tyrants who had fallen and gone down thither before him (Isaiah 14:9-12). No license of rhetorical figure could allow such picturing by a sacred writer who did not believe in the conscious existence of disembodied spirits. Indeed, if there be not such an existence the whole representation was false to the truth, and gave support to the popular faith which was false.

“And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul” (Matthew 10:28). But if there is no conscious existence in the disembodied state, to kill the body is to kill the soul also. Yet while man can kill the body he is powerless to kill the soul. The appearance of Moses and Elias in the scene of the transfiguration is conclusive of the conscious state of the dead (Matthew 17:3). On the denial of such a state there is no interpretation of the words of our Lord to the Sadducees (Mark 12:24-27). The parable of the rich man and Lazarus means the conscious existence of disembodied spirits (Luke 16:19-23). Such, too, is the meaning of the words of our Lord to the dying thief: “To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise” (Luke 23:43). When dying Stephen prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit” (Acts 7:59), it was in no thought of an immediate state of extinction, but in the full assurance of an immediate entrance into a happy life. In the view of Paul, to be absent from the body, as in the state of death, is to be present with the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:6-8). But to be thus present with the Lord is certainly to be in a conscious state: “For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better” (Php 1:23). But Paul could not think an unconscious state better than the present life in the service of Christ; hence he must have thought the intermediate state to be one of conscious existence. “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth” (Revelation 14:13); that is, from the time of their death. This is the truth of a conscious state of disembodied spirits.

3. Review of Objections.—One objection is based on texts which set forth death as the termination of all mental activity or knowledge. There are texts according to which the dead know not any thing; the same thing befalleth man and beast; as the one dieth, so dieth the other; so that man hath no pre-eminence above a beast (Job 14:10; Psalms 49:12; Ecclesiastes 3:18-21). Such texts are easily and properly interpreted on the ground that they describe the state of the dead simply in its relation to the present life. In this sense there is a complete ending of human life. Any interpretation which renders these texts inconsistent with our personal consciousness in the intermediate state must render them equally inconsistent with any and all future existence. There is no need thus to place them in contradiction to the pervasive sense of the Scriptures.

It is objected that such a conscious state is an impossibility. First of all, this objection is based on the ground of materialism; but, as that ground is false, so far it is nugatory. In another view, much may be said against the possibility of a conscious mental life in a disembodied state, since the present conditions of such a life cannot there exist; but all that can really be meant is, that we are ignorant of the modes of mental activity in that state. In truth, we are equally ignorant of the modes of such activity in the present life. Familiarity with the facts of such activities means nothing as to a knowledge of their modes. Indeed, the idea of the mental life of an unbodied spirit is no more a mystery for our thought than the idea of such a life in an embodied spirit. Hence this objection, which depends wholly upon the limitation of our knowledge, is utterly groundless. No philosophy within our reach can deny the possibility of a conscious life in the intermediate state.

Some who hold the consciousness of the soul in the intermediate state reduce its mental life to very narrow limits, for the reason that it is deprived of the organs of sense-perception, and therefore of all the forms of knowledge thus rendered possible. We have no warrant for the assumption of such limitation, because we know nothing of the capabilities, certainly nothing against the large capabilities, of knowledge in an unbodied spirit. The angels are without corporeity; yet we do not think of them as limited to a very narrow mental life. Indeed, theirs is a very large mental life. No doubt such is the possibility, and such the actuality, of the life of the soul

in the intermediate state.

163. III. Not A Probationary State.

III. Not A Probationary State.

1. Significant Silence of Scripture.—The Scriptures make no announcement of any probation after the present life. The merest suggestion of such a state is all that may reasonably be claimed; and rarely is any thing more actually claimed. As to any explicit utterance in favor of a second probation, there is a dead silence of the Scriptures. How is this? Probation, with its privileges and responsibilities, very deeply concerns us. No period of our existence is fraught with deeper interest. The Scriptures are replete with such views of our present probation. They constantly press it upon our attention as involving the most solemn responsibilities of the present life and the profoundest interests of the future life. In a future probation there must be a renewal of all that so deeply concerns a present probation; yet there is not an explicit word respecting it. Such silence of the Scriptures is utterly irreconcilable with the reality of such a probation.

2. Clear Sense of Scripture.—The urgency with which the Scriptures press the importance of improving the present opportunities of salvation deny us all hope of a future probation. A few texts will make this position fear fully sure: “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest” (Ecclesiastes 9:10). “The night cometh, when no man can work” (John 9:4). “Then Jesus said unto them. Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light” (John 12:35-36). “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation” (Hebrews 2:1-3)? The many texts which assure us of salvation on our repentance and faith, but either directly or by implication deny it to us on the refusal or neglect of such terms, equally affirm the same truth. It suffices that we give a few by reference (Mark 16:15-16; John 3:14 -l6, 18, 36). The deeds for which we shall render an account at the judgment, and according to which our destiny shall be determined, are deeds of the present life. There is not the slightest reference to any other. Many texts might easily be cited in proof of these statements. However, they are so surely true that one may suffice: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (Corinthians 5:10). If there be a future probation we would rationally think of it as continuing until the final judgment. On every reasonable view of it, the responsible deeds of the great majority of mankind would be incalculably more numerous therein than such deeds of the present life. Yet in all the texts which set forth the final judgment, many of which are very specific as to the deeds for which account shall be rendered, there is not the slightest reference to any other deeds than those of the present life. This fact is most conclusive against a second probation.

3. The Question Respecting the Heathen.—A second probation is specially maintained in behalf of the heathen. Much that is plausible may be said in support of this view; and the more as against any doctrine or system of doctrines which denies the possibility of their salvation. We have no responsible part in any such issue, as we hold no such doctrine. The question before us is, not the reasons which may be urged in favor of a future probation of the heathen, but the sense of the Scriptures respecting such a probation. In the light of the Scriptures there is a distinction between the heathen and such as have the law of God in the form of a divine revelation, and between those under the Jewish economy and those under the Christian, as it respects the degree of guilt and the severity of future punishment (Luke 12:47-48; Romans 2:12; Hebrews 12:25). There is, however, no distinction as it respects their amenability to the same judgment for the deeds of the present life, or the determination of their final destiny according to the same. On these points the words of Ht. Paul are most explicit. In the first place, he sets forth a moral responsibility under the light of nature (Romans 1:18-21).That such is his meaning is perfectly clear in the passage given by reference. Then we have his declaration of the divine equity in the judgment and destiny of men, without any distinction as between Jew and Gentile (Romans 2:6-11). And finally we have these explicit words: “For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law ; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law . . . in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel” (Romans 2:12-16). Such is clearly the doctrine of St. Paul, and it is impossible to read into his words the meaning of a second probation for the heathen world. The facts above presented are so conclusive against the assumption of a future probation that opposing texts, for which nothing more can reasonably be claimed than the suggestion of such a probation, are without weight in the issue. This is true of the text respecting the sin against the Holy Ghost (Matthew 12:31-32). Only a part of it need be cited: “But whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.” It is assumed that these words imply a possible forgiveness of all sins in a future state, except the specified sin of blasphemy. Surely this is slender ground on which to base a future probation. The words, “neither in the world to come,” may mean, not a future state in distinction from the present, but simply the absolute irremissibility of the one specified sin. Further, any interpretation of the text in favor of a future probation must concede it the meaning of eternal punishment—the very doctrine against which such probation is maintained. And who knows how many finally commit the sin that never hath forgiveness? If it is true that some think this a very rare sin, it is equally true that others think it very common with the finally incorrigible; so that the promise of gain is not enough to justify the assumption of a future probation on such slight ground. The ground is equally slight in the text wherein it is said that Christ went and preached to the spirits in prison (1 Peter 3:18-20). Some of the best commentators say that the words, “he went and preached,” mean simply, he preached. But how? Not in person, but by the Spirit. And to whom? To those who were disobedient in the time of Noah. It may have been then that Christ preached to them by the Spirit, either through his strivings with them (Genesis 6:3) or in the preaching of Noah (2 Peter 2:5). Hence the assumption that Christ went and preached in hades has slight warrant in this text. That he there preached the Gospel has no warrant. Further, the narrow limits of this preaching, whatever or wherever it was, allows no ground for the assumption of a common preaching of the Gospel to the spirits of the dead. Indeed, the obscurity of the text and the uncertainty of its meaning, which appear in the diversities of its interpretation, allow it no doctrinal weight in favor of a future probation.

4. Not a Purgatorial State.—Purgatory, as an assumed Christian doctrine, is peculiar to Romanism. It has no place in the creed of any other Church, though in some it may be held by individual members. In Romanism Christians compose two classes: the imperfect, and the truly good. The former have impurities which must be cleansed away, and venial sins which must be expiated in penal suffering, in order to a meetness for heaven. Even the truly good, while free from the guilt of mortal sins, yet have deserts of temporal punishment which must be expiated. Purgatory provides for both classes, as in its penal and purifying fires both may attain to a fitness for heaven. But it provides only for such as the Romish Church recognizes as Christians; therefore it has no connection with the doctrine of a second probation.

It is a part of the doctrine that purgatory is in some respects subject to the Church. By prayers, and alms, and masses its penal sufferings may be mitigated or the hour of release hastened. The doctrine has been a fruitful source of revenue; a mighty power of oppression and extortion that has not remained unused. Hardly any other doctrine has such proportion or such potency in the Papal system. Yet there is but slight pretension to any Scripture ground of the doctrine. Indeed, there is no such ground. It may be found in Homer, and Plato, and Virgil, and other classical writers, but not in the Scriptures. It was unknown to the early Church; assumed no definite form until late in the fourth century; and was first decreed as an article of faith by the Council of Florence in the fifteenth century. The doctrine is openly false to the soteriology of the Gospel, according to which we are saved, completely saved, from the guilt and pollution of sin through the blood of Christ and the sanctification of the Spirit.

Hobart: The State of the Departed; Brown: The Dead in Christ, their State, Present and Future; Wightman: The Undying Soul and the Intermediate State; West: The State of the Dead; Whately: A View of Scripture Revelation Concerning a Future State; Bush: The Intermediate State, etc.; Merrill: The New Testament Idea of Hell; Townsend: The Intermediate World; Cremer: Beyond the Grave; Fyfe: The Hereafter: Sheol, Hades, etc.; Bickersteth: Hades and Heaven; Huidekoper: Christ’s Mission to the Underworld; Wright: Relation of Death to Probation; Craven: Excursus in Lange on Revelation, Am. ed., 1874, pp. 364-377; Dorner: System of Christian Doctrine, vol. iv, pp. 373-434.

164. Chapter 3: The Second Advent.

Chapter 3 The Second Advent.

There was a first advent of Christ, when he came as the Messiah. That coming was in the mode of an incarnation, in order to the redemption of the world. There is another coming of Christ which, in distinction from the first, we call the second advent. Its prominence in the Scriptures and in Christian thought justifies such designation.

165. I. Doctrine Of The Advent.

I. Doctrine Of The Advent. The doctrine of the advent is concerned with the manner of Christ's second coming—whether it will be personal and visible or merely in a spiritual or providential mode; also with the time of his coming, particularly whether it shall be premillennial or postmillennial. The last question must be determined in view of the concomitants of the advent.

1. A Personal, Visible Coming of Christ.—There are some signs of a present tendency of thought away from the traditional doctrine of a personal, visible advent, in favor of a merely spiritual or providential manifestation. The prevalence of the new view would carry with it a recasting of the traditional doctrines of the general resurrection and the final judgment, or, rather, the elimination of these doctrines. We see no sufficient reason for the acceptance of this view, and therefore adhere to the manner of the advent so long held in the faith of the Church. That the Scriptures set forth the coming of Christ as in a personal, visible manner can hardly be questioned. Indeed, such expression of it seems so definite and clear as to leave no place for the opposing view. A few texts will suffice for the presentation of this point.

We have the deep words of Christ respecting his going to prepare a place for his disciples and his coming again to receive them unto himself: "In my Father's house are many mansions : if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2-3). These words are clear in themselves, and clear beyond question when read in the light of the ascension of Christ and the promise of his coming again: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). Here are the very going and coming again which Christ promised in the text before cited. His going was personal and visible, and the promise is that his coming again shall be in like manner. The long-hidden purpose of God respecting the redemption of the world "is now made manifest by the appearing—τ■ς ■πιφανε■ας—of our Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Timothy 1:10), which certainly was a personal, visible coming. Then why shall not the "appearing—■πιφ■νειαν—of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13), for which we look, be personal and visible? Many such texts might be adduced, but it will suffice that we add a few simply by reference (Php 3:20; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-16; 2 Thessalonians 1:7; 2 Thessalonians 1:10; 1 Peter 1:7). If such texts are in themselves less explicit than some above cited, yet when read in the light of the former, as they should be, they clearly mean the same manner of the coming of Christ. A point is sometimes made on the meaning of parousia—παροφφ■α, from παρε■ναι—a word not rarely rendered in the sense of the coming of Christ. The point is, that the word means simply to be present with, not any act of coming. That it means to be present with is manifest in its composition, but that it means only this is contrary to fact. It is not rarely used in the sense of coming and arriving. There are instances in which such must be its meaning (1 Corinthians 16:17; 2 Corinthians 7:6-7; 2 Peter 3:12). So there are uses of the word in application to Christ which must mean more than his presence with us ; indeed, must mean his personal coming to us in order to

his presence with us (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:4). Perhaps the full meaning of the word in such use is a personal coming of Christ to be abidingly present with his people. And this accords strictly with the meaning of various texts which set forth his coming (John 14:2-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17); but we can no more eliminate from the word the meaning of his personal coming to us than that of his presence with us.

2. Theory of a Merely Figurative Sense.—A figurative sense of the second advent is opposed to the literal sense; that is, it denies a literal coming of Christ, and limits the whole account of it to the meaning of some purely spiritual work or specially providential interposition in the history of the Church. This was the position of a type of Universalism which, fifty years ago, was strong enough in some parts of our own country to make itself known. There is much less of it now. As this school denied all future punishment it was compelled to deny the traditional view of the second advent. The contention against it was based largely on the discourse of our Lord respecting the destruction of the temple (Matthew chapters 24 and 25). The endeavor was to find therein, together with the destruction of Jerusalem, the fulfillment of all that the Scriptures say respecting the second advent. At the present time some who have no sympathy with such a type of Universalism, nor indeed with any other, yet hold the same narrow view respecting the subject of that notable discourse. Such may consistently believe in other comings of Christ, and even in a final coming ; but after a figurative interpretation of that discourse, so far as it relates to the coming of Christ, they may so interpret all that the Scriptures say elsewhere respecting his second coming, and thus deny a personal, visible advent. The interpretation of that discourse on the ground of a literal advent is not without difficulty; but a theory which must interpret all that the Scriptures say upon the subject in a figurative sense involves much greater difficulty. This may be seen in the light of the evidences of a literal advent already adduced.

Respecting the discourse of our Lord, a central point of the issue lies in these words: “Verily I say unto you. This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled” (Matthew 24:34). In the preceding part the coming of Christ is set forth in such forms of expression as the Scriptures elsewhere employ in setting forth the final advent. The following points are then made: That coming of Christ occurred in the time of the generation then living, the proof of which is in the words above cited; that coming was purely figurative in its mode, not in any sense literal; therefore, all that the Scriptures say respecting the final advent may be interpreted in a like figurative manner. Two points are made in behalf of a literal sense of the final advent. The first assumes a double sense of our Lord’s prophetic utterances, or a blending of the consummation of the world’s history with the destruction of the temple and the consummation of the Jewish economy. The second assumes that the word generation, as used in the above citation, means the Jewish race, not the Jews then living. Hence, as this race still exists and may exist even to the end of time, the coining of our Lord, which he sets forth, would not be separated from his final advent, but would remain one with it. Much may be said against both of these points, but we think them less objectionable than any theory which requires the interpretation of all the Scriptures say respecting the second advent in a purely figurative sense. Stock or race is a fully recognized meaning of the original word, γενε■, in both its classical and biblical uses. The continuance of this race, despite its dispersions and tribulations, is one of the wonders of human history, and might well have been included in the subjects of our Lord’s far-reaching prophecies.

3. The Premillennial Theory.—The theory is that Christ will come personally at the inception of the millennium and reign on earth for a thousand years. Such is the central assumption, and so far there is much unity of faith among premillennialists, while on subordinate points there are many diversities of view. Some think that the martyrs will be raised at this advent, and will reign with Christ; others, that all the saints will then be raised, that they may share in the glory of his kingdom. This advent will inaugurate the millennial life of the Church, and this reign will be the chief agency through which the triumph of Christianity shall be achieved. Our concern, however, is specially, almost wholly, with the question of a premillennial advent. The chief reliance of the theory is upon a single passage of Scripture (Revelation 20:1-6). This may be said, first, that the passage scripture contains not a word respecting any advent of Christ, nor ground. a word respecting his reigning personally on the earth. Further, it is in a highly figurative or symbolical book, and is itself highly symbolical. Consequently the construction of a theory of the advent on such ground is without the warrant of any principle of doctrinal formation, and the more certainly so as there are many explicit texts on that subject. So far as the passage relates to the resurrection, it will be considered in our treatment of that question.

166. II. The Advent In The Light Of Its Concomitants.

II. The Advent In The Light Of Its Concomitants. By the concomitants of the advent we mean the great facts of eschatology which shall be cotemporary with it or immediately follow it.

1. The General Resurrection.—The Scriptures place the coming of Christ in close time-relation with the resurrection. “The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth” (John 5:28; John 5:39). These are the words of Christ himself. It is true that they do not formally name his advent, but they clearly imply it. He had just declared himself invested with the power of judgment, the final and supreme exercise of which is frequently set forth in connection with his advent. Further, that the dead shall hear his voice associates the resurrection with his advent. This is a general resurrection in the fullest sense of the term. Some texts set forth the resurrection of the righteous only, but in the most general sense, and formally associate it with the coming of Christ (1 Corinthians 15:22-23; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17). That the wicked rise at the same time is made certain by the words of Christ above cited; so that we still have a general resurrection in connection with his coming. “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom” (2 Timothy 4:1). The dead must be raised prior to their judgment; and the text properly means all the dead. These facts place the general resurrection in close connection with the coming of Christ.

2. The Final Judgment.—It is a truth of the Scriptures that Christ shall finally judge the human race: “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son” (John 5:22). “Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained” (Acts 17:31). “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ” (2 Corinthians 5:10). A few texts will suffice to show the coincidence of the final judgment with the second advent. We first adduce the closing paragraph of that notable discourse of our Lord which began with the destruction of the temple (Matthew 25:31-46). The citation may be omitted, since the facts which it sets forth are familiar. The passage is too broad in its scope for any limitation to the destruction of Jerusalem. There is the coming of Christ in his glory, with all the holy angels; the gathering of all nations before him; the judgment of all; the final destinies of all. No events in the destruction of Jerusalem could fulfill the scope of these facts. That fulfillment is possible only with the final advent of our Lord and the judgment of mankind. Hence the passage places these events in close connection. The same is true of a similar text, in which there is a like judgment of men at the coming of Christ, and a punishment of the wicked when he shall come to be glorified in his saints (2 Thessalonians 1:6-10). A text before cited in proof of the time-association of the resurrection with the second advent equally proves such association of the final judgment: “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom” (2 Timothy 4:1). The quick mean all who shall be living at the time of the advent, and the dead, all who have previously died. Hence the text sets forth the final judgment as a concomitant of the second advent.

3. The End of the World.—The second advent will be in the consummation of the world's history. "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool" (Hebrews 10:12-13). This text surely means that Christ will administer the affairs of his kingdom, even to the end, from his throne in heaven; and this fact places his advent at the end of the world. "Whom the heaven must receive, until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets, since the world began" (Acts 3:21). These words mean that Christ shall remain in heaven until the fulfillment of all the prophecies; and this fulfillment will not be complete until the consummation of the world's history. Thus again the second advent is placed at the end of the world. The same fact is made plain by the words of St. Peter (2 Peter 3:3-10). He forewarns the Church of certain scoffers who should come, saying, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." Peter answers them beforehand. They would come with the understanding that the end of the world would be coincident with the coming of Christ. Hence their objection: all things continue as they were from the beginning; there are no signs of the world's dissolution; it will abide forever; hence Christ will never come. Peter answers in two points: first, he sets forth a former destruction of the world; secondly, he declares the manner of the second destruction. In the first he corrects their mistake respecting the past; in the second, their mistake respecting the manner in which the world should come to an end. The end should come, not as the result of a gradual process of decay, as these scoffers would falsely assume, but suddenly, through the agency of fire, as the world perished before by the flood. Thus St. Peter clearly sets forth the truth, that the end of the world shall be concomitant with the final coming of Christ. The Scripture proofs of a personal advent disprove the figurative interpretation. The concomitants of the advent, which we have set forth on the ground of Scripture, forbid its limitation to any such local event as the destruction of Jerusalem. Further, they thoroughly disprove the theory of a premillennial advent. Not in any assumption of the theory shall there then be either a general resurrection of the dead, or the final judgment of mankind, or the end of the world. This theory is not only opposed to the Scriptures, but is in itself open to serious objections. Its natural tendency is to a depreciation of existing evangelistic agencies; and consequently to discouragement, and the enervation of effort in such work. Why strive for the achievement of that for which there are no sufficient means? Why not wait for the divine efficiencies which shall accompany the personal advent and reign of Christ? Yet existing agencies are such as our Lord ordained for the achievement of this great work. "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you" (Luke 24:49). "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations: . . . and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:19-20). Here are, at once, the divinely instituted agencies for the evangelization of the world and the divine guaranties of success. But there is no premillennial advent nor personal reign of Christ in the assuring promise of his abiding presence. The reign of Christ from his throne in heaven, through the mission of the Spirit, is better for the Church and the accomplishment of its work than would be his personal reign on earth. He said himself: "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you" (John 16:7). What was the better then is the better now, and will be the better even to the end of time. The personal presence of Christ in Jerusalem, with the assumed splendor of his advent and throne, instead of being an organizing and energizing agency, would disorganize all existing agencies and enervate all present endeavors for the evangelization of the world. If vast multitudes

once swept onward to the Orient simply to possess the empty tomb of Christ, what would be the movement thither if he were there in all the glory of his personal reign? The social order of the world would be deeply disturbed, while the interests of Christianity would suffer very serious detriment.

Pearson: Exposition of the Creed, article vii; Brown: The Second Advent; Carson: The Personal Reign of Christ During the Millennium Proved to be Impossible; Merrill: The Second Coming of Christ; Liddon:The Two Comings of Our Lord; Cunningham: The Second Advent of Christ; Lee: Scripture Doctrine of the Coming of Our Lord; Duffield: The Prophecies Relative to the Second Coming of Christ; Bonar: The Coming and the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus; Lord: The Coming and Reign of Christ; Warren: The Parousia.

167. Chapter 4: The Resurrection.

Chapter 4 The Resurrection. That the Scriptures declare a resurrection of the dead is too plain a fact to be questioned; hence it is needless to maintain such a proposition. The meaning of the Scriptures in such declaration is the real question of the resurrection. That meaning must be found in the interpretation of the appropriate texts. Therein lies the truth of the question.

168. I. Doctrine Of The Resurrection.

I. Doctrine Of The Resurrection.

1. The Sense of the Scriptures.—We may first state the doctrine, and then show that it gives the true sense of the Scriptures. The body in which we die shall be the subject of the resurrection. If it is not such in some proper sense there is no resurrection of the body. So far the statement is general, and may admit some qualification. There is an absolute identity of the body, and there is a proper identity. The former requires every atom of which it is composed at any given time ; the latter is consistent with less, even with much less, than the whole, just as a proper identity is consistent with the changes to which it is subject in the present life. When we say that the body in which we die shall be the subject of the resurrection we mean in the sense of a proper identity, not in that of an absolute identity. The Scriptures do not affirm a resurrection in the latter sense; nor can we affirm the necessity of every atom to the constitution of the resurrection body. For aught we know, far less than the whole will suffice for such body.

There is no proof of such a doctrine of the resurrection except in the Scriptures. It cannot be proved through primary assumptions which imply or require it, though such mode of proof is often attempted. For instance, it is assumed that a body is necessary to the future life of the soul. In truth, we have no philosophy which warrants any such affirmation; much less, that such body must consist of the very matter of our present body. This matter is not peculiar to our body, but is common to the organic realm, and to the world in which we live and die, and for aught we know any other portion would answer just as well for all the requirements of the future body. It is assumed that character is expressed through the body, and hence that the resurrection body must be the same in order to such expression in the future state. Now, granting all that is assumed respecting the expression of character in the present life, certainly that expression is not from the mere matter of the body, but from its physiological cast, or, more truly, from the inner life of the soul. But the resurrection body shall not have a physiological constitution; and, even if it should, any other matter would answer for the required form just as well as that which composes the body in the present life. Again, it is assumed that the body shares m the deeds of the present life, and therefore should share in the retributions of the future life. In truth, the body has no responsible part in the deeds of the present life. It is only from mental confusion or an utter lack of discrimination that we ever think it has. The body, with all its members, is purely instrumental to the agency of the personal mind, which is the only responsible subject. That we may see the more clearly the utter groundlessness of the present assumption, let us think of the moldered dust of a human body, and then try to think of it as a responsible sharer in the deeds of this life and as rewardable for the same in the future life. The future body may affect the consciousness of the soul, and so far may concern its destiny, but can have no other part therein. Nor could there be any peculiar effect from a body composed of the matter of the former body; the effect would be the very same from a body composed of other matter.

Sentiment joins with assumption in such proof of a literal resurrection. We would see again and know the friends we have loved and lost; hence there must be such a resurrection. The sentiment we deeply respect, but must think the inference utterly invalid. Our point is not against the future recognition, but against the assumed necessity to it. There is no such necessity in the identity of the resurrection body with the substance of the present body. We meet and recognize a friend after a separation of ten or twenty years, in which the whole substance of his body has been changed. It follows that the mere matter of the body has nothing to do with the recognition, the ground of which is in the physiological cast and the outward expression of the inner life. Whatever be the provisions for future recognitions, of which we know nothing, certainly they are just as possible on the ground of other matter as on that of the present body. The reason of these criticisms seems obvious. It is not wise to build any doctrine on fallacious grounds. This is specially true of such a doctrine as the resurrection, respecting which there is a strong tendency to skepticism. The false grounds are sure to be detected, and then the doctrine is cast aside with them. Its true and only ground is in the Scriptures. That the reason for the resurrection is not open to our intelligence cannot disprove it. There may still be a sufficient reason. Indeed, there must be such a reason, if the resurrection of the body be a truth of the Scriptures. Whether it be such a truth must be determined by a study of the appropriate texts. Nor need we study a great many; for if the doctrine cannot be found in a few neither can it in the many.

We first adduce the words of our Lord: “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth” (John 5:28-29). The reflexive reference is specially to verses 21 and 25, wherein he speaks of raising the dead: perhaps in a spiritual manner; very clearly in a literal manner, as in the instance of Lazarus and others. This, however, should cause no surprise in view of the infinitely more stupendous work which he sets forth—the future resurrection of all the dead. The literal sense of this resurrection can hardly be questioned. The subjects of it are in the graves—το■ς μνημε■οις—literally, the burial places of the bodies of the dead. The souls of the dead are not in such places; hence they cannot be the subjects of this resurrection, although it be true that they shall severally resume possession of their bodies. Surely it is in the meaning of these words that the body in which we die shall be the subject of the future resurrection.

We come to the special chapter of the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15). That it treats almost exclusively the resurrection of Christian believers does not in the least affect its meaning respecting the present question. In verses 12-23 the resurrection of the dead is openly set forth and maintained. It is so connected with the resurrection of Christ that the latter is at once the pledge and sample of the former. In all this the literal sense seems obvious. Indeed, it is not apparent how the facts can have any other meaning. In verse 35 objections are anticipated: “But some man will say. How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?” These questions embody two objections to the resurrection: one, against its possibility; the other, against its desirability. That such are the objections seems clear in view of both the standpoint of the objector and the reply of St. Paul. The objector is a Greek, or at least imbued with Greek thought, which denied the possibility of the resurrection. Josephus met this same objection and controverted it against the Greeks.[848] The second objection found an ample source in Greek thought. It is true that the Greek philosophy was not really Manichaean, but equally true that it was deeply imbued with the notion of the evil nature of matter. Hence the Greek could not think the

resurrection of the body a good, but could and did object to it as a thing utterly undesirable. That such are the objections which St. Paul here anticipated will further appear in the manner of his reply.

[848]Discourse on Hades

If the objector mistook the sense of the resurrection it was in place for Paul simply to correct him. This, however, he does not do, but makes answer on the ground of a literal sense. It may be observed that the answer is not to these objections separately, but to the two together, and predominantly to the second—the one with which the literal sense of the resurrection is the more deeply concerned. The defense proceeds on the ground of the plastic nature of matter and the marvelous transformation of which it is susceptible. This is the ruling idea in the reference to vegetation, to the different kinds of flesh, and to bodies celestial and terrestrial. There is the same matter in all these widely varying forms. As matter is thus plastic in the hand of God, the body may be so refashioned in the resurrection as to be a perpetual good. Only in such a view is there either point in the anticipated objection or pertinence in the reply. In precise accordance with the above view, St. Paul sets forth, in shall be the subject in the resurrection: “So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.” Such also is the subject of verses 50-53: “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.” The body in its present state is not fitted for the heavenly state. What then? The mystery is opened. In the resurrection the body shall be changed from its present gross form into a form suited to the heavenly state; and the bodies of those then living shall be changed in like manner. No interpretation of this chapter seems to us possible without a recognition of the body as the subject of the resurrection. The same is true of other words of St. Paul: “For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself” (Php 3:20-21). If the body is not the subject of such transformation this text is utterly inexplicable.

2. Speculative Theories.—By speculative theories we mean such as are inconsistent with the resurrection of the body in any true sense of the term.

We name first the germ theory—of which Samuel Drew, an early Wesleyan of distinction, is the chief representative.[849] The theory assumes the existence of a germ or stamen within the human body, which is not subject to decay or dissolution as the body itself, and which at the final advent shall be expanded into the resurrection body. We have no occasion formally to controvert the theory, though it is not without favorable recognition in some recent works which professedly hold a more orthodox view. The existence of such a germ or stamen is a mere assumption. No searching has ever discovered it. Nor has the theory any support in St. Paul’s reference to the process of vegetation simply in illustration of the marvelous change of which the body is susceptible. It is utterly inconsistent with the central idea of the resurrection as a transformation of the corruptible body into an incorruptible form. The theory avoids the natural difficulties which, seemingly at least, beset this doctrine, but involves more serious ones in the matter of biblical interpretation.

[849]Resurrection of the Human Body. The Swedenborgian theory is of the same class. Professor Bush has maintained it with rare ability, but has not freed it from its purely speculative character. The theory holds that the resurrection occurs at the time of death. There is in man an essence which is of neither the body nor the spirit, but is something between them. This essence, whatever it is, goes forth with the departing spirit and immediately invests it as its future corporeity. Such is the resurrection. “A spiritual body is developed at death. By spiritual, in this connection, we mean refined, subtle, ethereal, sublimated. By the development of a spiritual body we mean the disengagement—the extrication—of that psychical part of our nature with which vital and animal functions are, in the present life, intimately connected. . . . It is a tertium quid—an intermediate something between the cogitative faculty and the gross body.”[850] [850] Bush:Anastasis, p. 78. The theory assumes a tricliotomic anthropology, and must be groundless without it. But such an anthropology is not an established truth; and so long as it is not, such a theory of the resurrection must remain purely hypothetic. If the reality of such a third nature in man be granted there is not the slightest proof that in the event of death it emerges with the spirit and becomes its corporeal investment. Further, if all this were shown to be true it would not answer for the resurrection of the body which the Scriptures set forth. Hence the theory must be dismissed as a mere speculation.

3. The Resurrection Body.—While the body shall be marvelously changed in the resurrection, it shall still be material in substance. The terms “natural body” and “spiritual body” (1 Corinthians 15:44) mean simply different states, not any distinction of essence. In a word, the resurrection is a transformation, not a transubstantiation. The latter would mean a future body of the same essence as the spirit of which it shall be a corporeal investment. The incongruity of such a state of things disproves it. The materiality of the resurrection body is entirely consistent with its immortality. The common tendency of material things to dissolution or death is wholly from their interior constitution or exterior condition, or from both. The constitution and condition may be such that both interior forces and exterior agencies shall be efficaciously operative toward the dissolution or death of the body; but just the opposite is also possible with respect to both. Surely God can so constitute and condition the resurrection body that all interior forces and external influences shall work together for its immortality. So far the resurrection bodies of the righteous and the wicked will be without distinction, the immortality of the body being no more determinative of future destiny than the immortality of the soul. When the Scriptures set forth the wonderful transformation of the body in the resurrection the application is ever and exclusively to the righteous. Much might be said on the nature of this change and the consequent blessedness of the future life, but nothing that could improve the presentation of the Scriptures; and it will suffice that their inspired utterances be given simply by reference (Luke 20:36; 1 Corinthians 15:42-54; Php 3:21).

169. II. Credibility Of The Resurrection.

II. Credibility Of The Resurrection.

1. A Divinely Purposed Futurity.—That God purposes the resurrection of the dead is a truth which is surely grounded in the texts of Scripture which set forth such a resurrection. This fact is so plain that it needs no further treatment; and its meaning for the credibility of the resurrection is manifest. All unconditional purposes of God shall be accomplished. There is ground for a distinction between his conditional and unconditional purposes. The former are not absolute, and therefore may never be effectuated, as the conditions of their effectuation may never be met. But absolute purposes have no such conditions, and therefore must be fulfilled. No such purpose can ever meet any insuperable hinderance. The resurrection was not purposed in any oversight of its difficulties, and nothing can hinder its achievement. Therefore as a divinely purposed futurity it is thoroughly credible.

2. Within the Plan of Redemption.—The resurrection of the dead is as really a part of the Christian economy as the redemption of the world. This appears in its close connection with the resurrection of Christ and the implications of its denial. If the dead rise not, Christ is not risen, neither is there any salvation in him (1 Corinthians 15:12-19). The completion of his mediatorial reign shall be attained only with the resurrection: “For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” (1 Corinthians 15:25-26). These words area part of St. Paul’s formal treatment of the resurrection, and clearly set it forth as an integral part of the Christian economy. As this economy shall not fail of its completion, so shall the dead rise again. On the ground of such facts the resurrection is surely credible in the view of Christian faith. We have said that, so far as we know, other matter than that of our own body would answer as well for the resurrection body. The proposition is equally true conversely. Hence it may please God that the mediatorial triumph of his Son shall be signalized by the resurrection of the body which was made subject to death on account of sin. The thorough inclusion of the resurrection within the economy of redemption is suggestive of this thought.

3. Apparent Difficulties of the Doctrine.—Such difficulties may be elaborately displayed, but a few words will present them in all their real strength. The body crumbles into dust, and the dust may be widely scattered. Some of it may go to the nourishment of vegetation, and through it to the nourishment of animal tissue, and through either or both become incorporated in other human bodies. Further, there are instances of cannibalism, with a like result. Such are the difficulties. They center in two points: the wide dispersion of the particles which composed the living body, and the possibility that in the course of time some may belong to different bodies. The apparent magnitude of these difficulties is far greater than the real, especially if we view them, as we should, in the light of the divine providence. The dispersion of the particles is real only in our own view. However widely scattered or deeply mingled with other matter, they remain as near to the omniscient eye and omnipotent hand of God as if placed in an imperishable urn at the foot of his throne. Nor is there any probability, even on natural grounds, that in any case so much matter

could become common to two bodies as would be necessary to a proper identity of either. When we place the subject in the light of God's providence, whose purpose it is to raise the dead, all difficulties vanish. In referring the possibility of the resurrection to the divine sufficiency we do but follow the Scriptures and the logic of the question. Zeno pronounced the resurrection the hope of worms, and Celsus applauded him as wiser than Jesus. Pliny deemed it impossible, even to the power of God, "revocare defunctos." Philosophers falsely so called find in a fortuitous concursus of incoherent atoms, or in the potentialities of a primordial fire-mist, the original of mind and the harmonies of the universe, but declare the resurrection of the dead an impossibility. They are effectually answered in the words of our Lord: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God" (Matthew 22:29).

170. III. Oneness Of The Resurrection.

III. Oneness Of The Resurrection.

1. Theories of Distinct Resurrections.—There is a premillennial theory, which holds that the martyrs, if not all the shall rise at the inception of the millennium and reign with Christ a thousand years. The ground of the theory lies chiefly in a single text (Revelation 20:4-6). The souls of certain martyrs appeared in the vision of John, and he said these things: “And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.” There is not in the text one definite word about a literal resurrection. The “first resurrection” means the “living and reigning” of the martyrs. But they were souls in a disembodied state; therefore their living and reigning could not mean a literal resurrection. Further, such a meaning requires the premillennial advent and the personal reign of Christ; but, as we have seen, neither is a truth; therefore there is here no literal resurrection of the martyrs at the inception of the millennium. The text is most easily interpreted on the theory of a figurative rising and reigning. The martyrs lived and reigned in the triumph of the cause for which they died. The idea of a resurrection often appears in the Scriptures in a figurative sense, and seems very natural in the intense and bold symbolism of this book. In the hour of his martyrdom John Huss proclaimed the triumph of his cause, and said: “And I, waking from among the dead, and rising, so to speak, from my grave, shall leap with great joy.” It was in the same manner of speech that Leo X. said: “The heretics, Huss and Jerome, are now alive again in the person of Martin Luther.” In glowing vision John saw the triumph of the cause for which these martyrs died, and summoned them into the triumph. This is their living and reigning; and this is their resurrection.[851] [851] Brown:The Second Advent, pp. 218-259.

Another theory holds distinct resurrections of the righteous and the wicked, though narrowly separated in time. This theory is probably quite common in popular Christian thought. It has no support in the texts upon which it mainly rests. We have first this text: “But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming” (1 Corinthians 15:23). There is here no direct reference to the wicked, and hence no distinction between their resurrection and that of the righteous. The only distinction in relation to the resurrection is between Christ and his disciples. Another text is in these words: “And the dead in Christ shall rise first” (1 Thessalonians 4:16). But neither in these words nor in the context is there any reference to the resurrection of the wicked; hence there is no time-distinction between it and that of the righteous. The context makes obvious the real point of distinction. It is between the resurrection of the dead and the ascension of the living to meet the coming Lord. The former shall be first in the order of time, and then all shall ascend together to meet the Lord in the air. There is no proof in the text that the righteous shall rise before the wicked.

2. Proof of the Oneness.—It was before shown that the resurrection and the judgment shall be concomitant with the second advent. This means that all shall rise at the same time, as all shall be judged at the same time. Both shall directly follow the coming of our Lord (Matthew 25:31-46; John

5:28-29; Revelation 20:11-15).

Hanna: The Resurrection of the Dead; Wescott: The Gospel of the Resurrection; Mattison: The Resurrection of the Dead; Landis: The Resurrection of the Body; Brown: The Resurrection of Life; Cook:Doctrine of the Resurrection; Kingsley: The Resurrection of the Dead; Gollum: Resurrection of the Body; Cochran: The Resurrection of the Dead; Drew: Identity and General Resurrection of the Human Body; Bush: Anastasis: or the Resurrection of the Body.

171. Chapter 5: The Judgment.

Chapter 5 The Judgment.

There is in the Scriptures the doctrine of a future, general judgment. Of course a general Judgment must be future, as it must be subsequent to the present life of the race; yet we think it well to treat the subject according to the two views in which the Scriptures present it.

172. I. A Future Judgment.

I. A Future Judgment.

1. Explicit Words of Scripture.—The deeper idea of a future judgment is that of a present probation under a law of moral duty; the special idea, that of a future accounting at the divine judgment-seat for the deeds of the present life. That such is the view of the Scriptures a few appropriate texts will sufficiently show.

“Rejoice, young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.” “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil” (Ecclesiastes 11:9; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14). Present moral duty and future amenability to the divine judgment are plainly the meaning of these texts. Just when we shall so answer is not stated; but the texts can hardly mean an earlier time than the termination of our present life. “For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (Corinthians 5:10). These words are very explicit. There is the same idea of a present probation under a law of duty, and the same fact of a divine judgment-seat at which we shall answer for the deeds of our life. Further, as we read this text in the light of many others which relate to the same subject, it clearly means a judgment subsequent to this life.

Other texts definitely represent the judgment as in a future state. “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom” (2 Timothy 4:1). The dead, as here named, must comprise all who shall have tiled prior to the judgment. Hence there must be a judgment of men in a future state. There are other very similar texts which confirm this view (Acts 10:42; 1 Peter 4:5). Then we have these explicit words: “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Hebrews 9:27). The same truth is in the words of our Lord, wherein it appears that the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, of Tyre and Sidon, and of Nineveh were amenable to a judgment still future (Matthew 10:15; Luke 10:14; Luke 11:32). Already these people have long been in the state of the dead; hence there must be a judgment subsequent to the present life.

2. Judgment after the Resurrection.—There is in many texts the proof of a judgment subsequent to the resurrection; but a few will suffice to make our proposition clear and sure. “For the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation” (John 5:28-29) It is true that the judgment is not formally named in this text, yet the meaning of it is there, as manifest in the rewards rendered to the good and the evil; for judgment must precede such rewards. And this judgment follows the resurrection. “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened,

which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered lip the dead which were in them : and they were judged every man according to their works" (Revelation 20:12-13). Part of this text, if it stood alone, might be limited to disembodied spirits, which, however, would little affect the doctrine of the judgment as a futurity; but the reference to the dead from the sea allows no such limitation. That reference means a resurrection of the subjects of the judgment.

173. II. A General Judgment.

II. A General Judgment.

1. The Scripture Proof.—Whether there shall be a general judgment, one in which all shall be judged at the same time, is a question which only the Scriptures can answer. There are evidences of reason for a future judgment, but not such as furnish a sufficient basis for the doctrine of a general judgment, though sufficient for its defense against such objections as it may encounter. A few appropriate texts will furnish, sufficiently, the Scripture proofs of a general Judgment. Most of the necessary texts are already quite familiar, as they have been used in the presentation of other facts of eschatology; hence we may the more briefly present them here. We begin with the words of our Lord respecting the end of the world (Matthew 25:31-46). Here the facts are: the coming of Christ in his glory, with all the holy angels; his session upon the throne of his glory; the gathering of all nations before him; the separation between the evil and the good; the final rewarding of each class. Surely these are the facts of a general judgment. “Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he “will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead” (Acts 17:31). The judgment of the world in an appointed day of the future must be a general judgment. After asserting the moral responsibility of all men, St. Paul says: “For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; . . . in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel” (Romans 2:12; Romans 2:16). This is the truth of an appointed time in which all shall be judged. In St. John’s sublime vision of the judgment its general character is clearly seen (Revelation 20:11-13). There is the great white throne; and the dead, small and great, are before God; and all are judged according to their works. In no words could a general judgment be more clearly set forth.

It is objected to a general judgment, which must be delayed until the end of the world, that it is inconsistent with an intermediate state under judicial treatment, because the subjects of such a state must be judged prior to its inception. It is also maintained that this objection is the weightier if this state is in the places of final destiny. There is little force in the objection on either ground; indeed, none at all. That we are all the while the subjects of the divine judgment implies no impropriety in a judgment at death; and no more does the latter imply any impropriety in a final judgment after the resurrection. Neither can the places of souls in the intermediate state concern the propriety of such a judgment. The long delay is urged as another objection. There are many delays in the final judgments of human courts, while meantime the subjects are held under judicial treatment; and such delays are often justified by wise reasons. And if comparatively short they may yet be as long in comparison with the narrow sphere of human judicature. Nor can there be any impropriety or wrong in such judicial ministries of the divine wisdom as may precede a final judgment.

2. Manner of the Judgment.—The time of the judgment is designated as a day, but with the idea of a definite period of the future rather than of its duration. The length of the time is not revealed; and we have no means of knowing what it shall be. Nor can we know any thing of the manner of the judgment. It is represented as in the order of a court, but such representation may be largely figurative, so far as the actual manner is concerned, yet with the deepest meaning as to all that constitutes its reality. The manner must be such as will answer the chief end of the judgment—the vindication of God in his moral government. Such a manner, however now hidden from us, must surely be within the resources of his infinite wisdom and power.

174. Chapter 6: Future Punishment.

Chapter 6 Future Punishment.

If we accept the truth of the Scriptures we must be loyal to their teaching on the question of future punishment, as on all others, and none the less so because of its fearful character. On no subject could the perversion of truth be more disastrous. While such perversion may neutralize the practical force of the truth, and induce a false sense of security, it is powerless to avert the doom of sin. Our only safety lies in the acceptance of the salvation in Christ Jesus.

175. I. Rational Proofs.

I. Rational Proofs.

1. Reality of a Moral Government.—The reality of a moral government is a matter of common consent and affirmation. The sense of duty, and of responsibility to a divine Ruler, is deeply wrought into the moral consciousness of the race. This is clearly the doctrine of St. Paul: “For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another” (Romans 2:14-15). Such a moral consciousness of the race means the reality of a moral government to which we are responsible.

2. Under a Law of Equity.—The idea of the divine equity is inseparable from the sense of responsibility. It may often be perverted or obscured, but the principle ever asserts itself. Distributive justice must be impartial. There may not be slight penalties for some and severe penalties for others, except as they may differ in the measure of guilt. We are not here concerned with the question respecting the degree of penalty which sin may deserve, nor with the question whether sin must be punished in the full measure of its desert. Whatever may be the truth in these respects, it must be true that divine punishments are administered according to a law of impartiality. Any true conception of God must constrain the admission of such equity. If there be omissions of this law in the present life there must be punishment in a future life, unless forgiveness is here attained.

3. Present Omissions of the Law.—The meaning here is that in the present life penalties are not inflicted according to a law of exact or impartial justice. This position can hardly be questioned. A little discussion will place its truth in a clear light. Punishment may be inflicted or suffered in three modes: in mind; in body; in estate. We do not here raise the question whether the sufferings endured in these modes are punishments in any strict sense. Our position is simply that if we are punished in the present life it must be in one or more of these modes. It is easy to show that punishments are not so administered according to the penal deserts of men.

There is no such punishment in the mental mode. One man suffers an intenser remorse for the theft of a dime than another for the crime of murder. And what is thus true of two persons is true of the same person in different periods of his life. There cannot be exact justice in cases so widely different. Then there are instances of self-justification, even of complacency, in the commission of heinous crime; and here there can be no punishment in the form of mental suffering. Some men are increasingly wicked through a long course of life; therefore they should be the subjects of an ever-deepening remorse, if they are to be thus punished in the measure of their desert. Such, however, is not the case; for there is no such deepening remorse. Indeed, the result is just the contrary; and it is in the very nature of things that it should be so. In a persistent course of sinning the spiritual vision is darkened and the moral feelings hardened into a state of insensibility. Conscience is seared as with a hot iron, and a state is reached which the Scriptures describe as

“past feeling.” Such being the results of a persistent course of evil doing, there can be no such remorse as a just punishment requires. There are two forms of bodily suffering: one from the infliction of legal penalties; the other from the visitation of God; but in neither is there any strict ministry of justice according to the penal desert.

There are many sins, deeply heinous in the sight of God, for which human laws have no penalty. Again, in many criminals escape detection and punishment. Further, human courts are subject to many disabilities which often prevent an exact rendering of justice. Finally, the penalties of human laws are not graduated according to the demerit of human sins, as we see plainly in their wide variations in different ages and countries. Indeed, they are not based upon the strictly moral demerit of sin, and therefore cannot be the punishment of sin according to its moral desert. Nor are the bodily conditions of men the award of an exact distributive justice. It seems entirely sufficient to state this. Who would assume to determine the moral character of his acquaintances according to the state of their physical health? We do not adjudge men good or bad just as they may be in a healthy or sickly state. Bodily sufferings are not in any proportion to moral character, and therefore cannot be the means whereby sin is justly punished in this life.

There are instances in which wicked men greatly suffer in matters of estate, but there are also many of abiding affluence. Nor are the experiences of good men obviously different in such matters. Surely there is no uniformity of difference. In this respect all things come alike unto all men. As it happens to the evil, so it happens to the good. Who would presume to determine the moral character of men according to their worldly estate? As such estate, whether of good or evil fortune, is no index to the ethical life of men, so the adversities which the wicked suffer in such matters cannot be the punishment of their sins according to the requirements of an impartial justice. Indeed, the present probationary life is not the sphere of distributive justice, in the strict ministries of which men are punished or rewarded according to their ethical life. We are here so related that the righteous often prevent the sufferings which, otherwise, the wicked would endure, while, on the other hand, the wicked cause much suffering to the righteous. In such a state of things there cannot be an impartial administration of justice.

Here, indeed, is the occasion of much doubt respecting a divine providence. Some even deny such a providence. The mental movement in such cases is obvious. It is the conviction of all minds that a divine moral government must be righteous; but some, limiting the view to the present life, and seeing therein no harmony between the moral character of men and their worldly fortunes, either question or openly deny such a government. And it is only on the ground of a future retribution that we can obviate such reasons of doubt or unbelief. Indeed, this life is not the sphere of an exact ethical justice. If it were, no one would suffer more or less than his moral desert; but the actual facts are far different. Often the wicked, even the heinously wicked, flourish in worldly affluence, in health and ease, while piety and charity, patriotism and philanthropy, suffer in penury or under the heel of oppression. The inequality of rewards in the present life, as viewed in relation to moral character, is no new thought. It was present to the minds of ancient men of God, and caused them no little perplexity. Job was thus deeply perplexed (Job 21:7-15); likewise the Psalmist (Psalms 73), and Solomon (Ecclesiastes 8:14), and Jeremiah (Jeremiah 12:1-2). In these passages there is the fullest recognition of the inequalities in the fortunes of the present life, as viewed in relation to moral character; and the only solution of the perplexity arising from such a state of facts is found in the thought of a future retribution.

4. Requirement of Future Punishment.—Such requirement is consequent to the principles and facts above presented. It is true that we are the subjects of a moral government, which must observe a law of equity or of impartial justice, particularly in the punishment of sin. It is equally true that in the present life there are many omissions of such punishment. Hence there must be a future retribution.

176. II. Scripture Proofs.

II. Scripture Proofs.

Some of these proofs are grounded on the facts of eschatology already considered, and may therefore be presented the more briefly. Indeed, the whole argument may be presented in its full strength without much elaboration.

1. Final Neglect of Salvation.—It is a clear truth of the Scriptures that the salvation from sin offered in the Gospel is conditional, and to be attained only on a compliance with its divinely specified terms. There is for us neither forgiveness, nor regeneration, nor sonship, nor final blessedness except on such terms. There is no salvation without repentance for past sins, faith in Christ, and a consecration of the life to his service. Without this salvation we are liable to the penalties of sin as announced in the Scriptures. Hence future punishment must be consequent to a final neglect of salvation. Yet such neglect is a fact on the part of many; there is no acceptance of the salvation in Christ.

2. Fact of Dying in Sin.—There is such a fact. Wicked men die without repentance or forgiveness; sometimes in the very act of sinning. In the light of Scripture it is a fearful thing so to die. “The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death” (Proverbs 14:32). If there is no future punishment why should not the wicked die as calmly as the righteous, and with the same comfort of hope? The contrast between the two in the event of death emphasizes the certainty of punishment hereafter. “Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.” “I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:21; John 8:24). Neither should these words awaken any solicitude nor cause any alarm if there is no future punishment. As we read them in the light of the Gospel they must mean such punishment.

3. Future Happiness only for the Righteous.—We include as righteous all who attain to the Christian life or the state of true believers. In the Scriptures future blessedness is promised to them, and to them only. In no text is there any such promise to the wicked, while in many, such blessedness is expressly denied them. Those who believe in Christ shall be saved, but those who believe not shall perish (John 3:16; John 3:36). The true disciples of Christ shall ultimately be with him; such is his promise to them, but to them only (John 14:1-3). All who through spiritual regeneration become the children of God are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, and shall share in his glory; but there is no such promise to any others (Romans 8:15-18). All who serve him in the spirit of true obedience shall attain to the heavenly life (Hebrews 5:9; Revelation 22:14); and all who wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb shall come to the blessedness of heaven (Revelation 7:14-17); but there is still not a word of such promise to any others. Future blessedness is set forth as peculiar to the righteous; indeed, as exclusively theirs. There is not only no intimation of any participation of the wicked in such blessedness, but such participation is formally denied. All this must mean for them a future state of punishment.

4. Contemporary Doom of the Wicked.—When the righteous receive their future reward the wicked shall meet a penal doom. On this question the Scriptures are explicit and full (The appropriate texts would fill pages; but it will suffice that we give a few by reference: Matthew 7:21-23; Matthew 13:41-43; Matthew 25:46; Luke 13:24-29; Romans 2:6-9). If these texts set forth the same future blessedness for the wicked as for the righteous and promised its bestowment at the same time, then how strong and sure would be the position of the most extreme Universalism! But just the contrary is the truth. When those who have rendered obedience to the will of God shall enter into the heavenly kingdom those who have refused such obedience shall depart accursed. When the children of God shall shine forth as the sun in the glory of his kingdom the children of iniquity shall be cast into hell. When the righteous enter into eternal life the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment.

5. Punishment at the Final Advent.—Out of many texts we select only two for the presentation of this point: “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works” (Matthew 16:27). Of the other text we give the central points. The Son of man shall be revealed from heaven for the infliction of punishment on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints and to be admired in all them that believe (2 Thessalonians 1:6-10).

6. Resurrection to a Penal Doom.—There will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust. This is definitely the doctrine of St. Paul (Acts 24:15); and this means the truth of what we here maintain. The same truth is clearly foreshadowed in these words: “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt” (Daniel 12:2). Then we have the most explicit words of our Lord: “The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation” (John 5:28-29).

7. Final Judgment of Condemnation.—Ample proof of this may be found in our treatment of the judgment; so that a few texts will here suffice. “For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; . . . in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel” (Romans 2:12; Romans 2:16). “For we must all appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5:10). “But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of Judgment and perdition of ungodly men” (2 Peter 3:7).

Here are seven arguments, all thoroughly scriptural in their ground, and severally conclusive of future punishment. In their combination the proof is cumulative in the highest degree.

177. III. Eternity Of Punishment.

III. Eternity Of Punishment.

1. Recoil from the Doctrine.—There is a recoil of the sensibilities from the doctrine of future punishment, especially in respect to the duration of such punishment. This should cause no surprise. Indeed, we might say that it is justified by the divine reluctance to inflict such a doom. This reluctance is expressed in many words of entreaty and compassionate yearning; most of all in the burden of sacrifice which divinity itself has borne, that we might be saved from such a doom. This recoil is easily made the occasion of a plausible appeal against the truth of the doctrine. But that is not a question to be settled by our sensibilities, especially by such as suffer this recoil. Such instinctive feelings have no rectoral function, and, if allowed sway, would be subversive of all government. No human government could survive their dominance. Hence they can have no part in determining the necessary punitive ministries of the divine government, which must rule over all moral beings.

2. Fruitless Endeavor Toward a Rationale.—Many attempts have been made to interpret the doctrine of eternal punishment in the light of reason; that is, to bring it within the grasp of our intelligence. Our own view is that all such attempts are fruitless. We shall notice three of the leading modes in which such interpretation is attempted. The first assumes an infinite demerit of sin; and that it has such demerit on account of the perfections of the being against whom it is committed. Sin is committed against an infinite being, and therefore has infinite demerit. Such is a summary statement of the view. If the principle be true, seemingly, it must equalize all sins, which is neither rational nor scriptural. Further, we may posit another principle: Sin is the deed of a finite being, and therefore can have only finite demerit. And who shall say that the former is any clearer than the latter? In truth, neither has any solution in our reason.

Another interpretation is attempted on the ground of a limitation of the atonement to the present life. As there is no saving grace in a future state, punishment must be eternal. There is, in fact, no new principle in this view. In the absence of atonement there could still be no such punishment, except on the ground of demerit. Hence we are brought back to the very principle on which the former interpretation is attempted; and in this new relation it none the less remains beyond the grasp of our reason. The rationale is often attempted on the ground of an endless sinning. As the future state of the wicked must be one of eternal sinning, so their punishment must be endless. Such is the doctrine. It may seem plausible, but is not above criticism. The doctrine assumes a moral responsibility of the wicked in a state of necessity; for such must be the state of final retribution. There the good is no longer possible, and the evil, such as it may be, is unavoidable. Can there be moral responsibility m such a state? Our reason cannot affirm it, and therefore cannot thus find any rational interpretation of eternal punishment. A fixed state of reward after a state of trial, whether of blessedness or misery, must be constituted in a manner peculiar to itself. Just what it is, or what its relation to moral law, as viewed from the divine side, we have no power of knowing. Hence there is no explanation of eternal punishment in this manner.

Further, this attempted rationale begins with the concession that eternal punishment is not for the sins of this life, and that they do not deserve it. Yet it is an explicit truth of Scripture that such punishment, even in its uttermost duration, is for the sins of this life. There is neither mention nor intimation of any other. Hence the theory surrenders the scriptural ground of the doctrine, and offers instead an inferential basis, which for our reason is g, mere assumption.

3. Purely a Question of Revelation.—If the punishment of sin is eternal it must be consistent with the justice and goodness of God; but for us it is thus consistent only through faith, not in the comprehension of our reason. On the other hand, our reason is equally incompetent to pronounce against eternal punishment. Government in all its human forms is replete with perplexities. The gathered experiences of the ages bring us no solution. A chief perplexity respects the use of penalty as a necessary means of government. If such, then, be the state of facts with us in all the forms of human government, we surely cannot determine what shall be the provisions and ministries of the divine government, the sway of which is over all intelligences. The assumption of any such ability is most pretentious. And yet the man who finds the government of his little boy an utter perplexity can tell you just how God should govern the moral universe. With the narrow limitations of our own knowledge the Scriptures are the only sufficient source of truth respecting the duration of future punishment.

4. Obvious Sense of Scripture.—The principal words employed to express the duration of the doom of sin are α■■ν and α■■νιος. If sometimes used to express simply a very long future, or the utmost duration of the subject to which they are applied, their proper meaning is an endless duration. Such it is in the Scriptures, and such in their application to future punishment.

These are the words by which the Scriptures express the eternal things of God (Romans 1:25; Romans 9:5; Romans 11:36; 2 Corinthians 11:31; Galatians 1:5; Php 4:20; 1 Timothy 1:17; 1 Peter 5:11); of Christ (Luke 1:33; Hebrews 1:8; Hebrews 13:8; 2 Peter 3:18; Revelation 1:18; Revelation 5:13; Revelation 11:15); and of the Holy Spirit (Hebrews 9:14). As used in these references they can mean nothing less than an endless future. The same words are employed for the expression of the future happiness of the righteous (Matthew 19:29; Matthew 25:46; Mark 10:30; John 3:15-16; John 3:36; John 4:14; John 6:51; John 6:58; John 10:28; John 11:26; Romans 2:7; 2 Corinthians 4:17; 2 Corinthians 9:9; 1 John 2:17). No one who accepts the truthfulness of the Scriptures ever thinks of putting any limitation upon the future blessedness which is thus set forth in the use of these words. The solemn truth follows that future punishment is expressed in the use of the same words (Matthew 18:8; Matthew 21:19; Matthew 25:41; Matthew 25:46; Mark 3:29; 2 Thessalonians 1:9; Hebrews 6:2; 2 Peter 2:17; Jude 1:13; Revelation 14:11). In none of these instances is there any intimation of a qualified sense; hence they must here mean a limitless future. This meaning is emphasized, indeed, unalterably fixed, by the association of future happiness and future misery in the same texts. Indeed, while in one we have simply the word life—ζω■ν—as expressive of future happiness, for the expression of future misery we have the words τ■ πυρ τ■ α■■νιον, the latter meaning an eternal duration (Matthew 18:8). In another the same word—α■■νιος—expresses the duration of both the happiness of the righteous and the misery of the lost (Matthew 25:46). If the word means a limitless future in the former application, such must be its meaning in the latter.

Such has been the interpretation of these words through all the Christian centuries, and such the interpretation of other words in application to the same subject. There have been differences respecting the ground of amenability to such punishment; as, for instance, whether we could be so amenable for the sin of Adam, or on the ground of an inherited depravity of nature, or whether only for personal sins, committed with the responsibility of moral freedom. Also there have been differences respecting the nature of the penal doom. The materialistic interpretation of its figurative representations, as held in the earlier centuries, and particularly by the medieval Church, is now discarded and replaced by a more rational and truthful interpretation. But through all these differences and disputations a very remarkable unanimity has remained respecting the duration of such punishment. On this question the best scholarship of to-day is in full accord with the historic doctrine of the Church. This is a significant fact, and the more so because such accordance is not from any predilection or preference, but simply by constraint of the plain sense of Scripture.

Hovey: The State of the Impenitent Dead; George: Annihilation Not of the Bible; McDonald: The Annihilation of the Wicked Scripturally Considered; Underwood: Future Punishment; Anderson: Future Destiny; Vernon: Probation and Punishment; Cochrane: Future Punishment; Farrar: Eternal Hope; Future Probation: A Symposium; Reimensnyder: Doom Eternal; King: Future Retribution; Jackson: The Doctrine of Retribution, Bampton Lectures, 1875.

178. Chapter 7: Future Blessedness.

Chapter 7 Future Blessedness. In Christian thought heaven is inseparably associated with future blessedness; indeed, the terms are often used in the same sense. For the present, however, we may view the former simply as the place of the latter.

179. I. Heaven A Place.

I. Heaven A Place.

1. Sense of Place.—We here use the word place in its most literal sense, and therefore as meaning a material habitation, and as really such as this or any other world. In the view of some, heaven is a state, not a place. On the ground of such a distinction it can have no position nor relation with respect to any thing material or local. It is difficult to form any conception of a state when thus stripped of all qualities and relations. We can think of states of things, but such a state is nothing for our thought ; indeed, nothing in fact.

2. Localism of Spiritual Beings.—The soul has a present material habitation; a fact which cannot be questioned, however mysterious it may be for our thought. Further, the fact shows a capacity in spiritual beings for localization; for the mere form of the body in which the soul now dwells cannot be essential to such localism. Hence there is for us, even irrespective of the resurrection, the capability for a future material habitation. Even God, the infinite Spirit, localizes himself, that finite spirits may have the higher privilege of communion with him. If it be said that this localization is only relative, it may be replied that it is such as answers its purpose; and, further, while we know the localization of finite spirits as a fact, we know nothing of its mode. For our thought the latter is as profound a mystery as the former.

Philosophic thought denies to purely spiritual being all special qualities; still for such thought ubiety is inseparable from the notion of finite spirits. If in social relation, a proper localism is a necessity; and such is eminently the relation of angels and glorified saints.

3. Requirement of the Resurrection.—The resurrection body, however transformed and glorified, will still be material; and it is out of accord with both reason and Scripture, that the glorified saints, with the investment of such bodies, should dwell apart or wander separately in the infinite spaces, each finding his heaven in the solitude of his own consciousness ; and equally out of accord with both, that, if gathered into a heavenly fellowship, they should be afloat in the empty space, without any real world around or beneath them. Finite spirits, with a material investment and dwelling in fellowship, must have a local habitation.

4. Pervasive Sense of Scripture.—The Scriptures ever represent heaven as a place. This is so plain a fact that it hardly needs any illustration. Our Lord represented it as a place or mansion in his Father’s house (John 14:1-3); St. Paul, as a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens (2 Corinthians 5:1). Again, it is the temple of God, the place of his throne and glory (Revelation 7:9-17); and a great city, the holy Jerusalem (Revelation 21:10). No doubt these are figurative representations of heaven; but that does not affect the underlying reality of place.

5. Location of Heaven.—Not a few hold the theory of a mundane location of heaven, and among them are great names. A ground in scripture is claimed tor this view, though we think the texts adduced in its support very far short of conclusive. Proof is sought in the words of St. Paul

respecting the creature—■ κτ■σις—which was made subject to vanity, but waits for a glorious transformation (Romans 8:19-21). There are weighty objections to such a use of the passage. It is, by common consent, a very obscure one; too obscure, indeed, to be made the ground of any particular theory. Further, any exegetical authority for the application of the original word to the physical world is fully balanced by an adverse authority. Finally, even granting such an application, it would not follow that the earth shall be the future home of the saints. In other texts it is shown that, after a dissolution or passing away of the heavens and the earth there shall be new heavens and a new earth (2 Peter 3:10-13; Revelation 21:1-4), but without any proof that the latter shall be a reconstruction of the former; certainly without any that this world shall thus be constituted the future heaven of the righteous. The clear sense of Scripture is against an earthly location of heaven. As Christ approached the time of his departure he spoke to his disciples of his Father's house and its many mansions, and assured them that he was going to prepare a place for them, and that he would come again and receive them unto himself where he is (John 14:1-3). These facts must mean that the future heaven shall be other than this earth, and far away from it. Such meaning is placed beyond question by the verses: "And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee." "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am" (John 17:5; John 11:24). Whither Christ ascended to be glorified with the Father, there shall his disciples be with him, and there is heaven. Surely, then, it cannot have an earthly location. Beyond these facts we know nothing of that location; nor are we concerned to know any thing more. Heaven is what it is in itself and in the elements of blessedness, wholly irrespective of its location.

180. II. Blessedness Of Heaven.

II. Blessedness Of Heaven.

1. Beauty of the Place.—The many orders of sentient existence are furnished with homes according to their gradations. This is the rule from the lowest to the highest; so that, the higher the grade, the larger and better the habitation. Man has his home under the same law; in the same world, indeed, but larger and more richly furnished than that of any lower order, according to his vastly higher endowments. His Edenic home, as God prepared and adorned it for him as the place of his probationary trial, was far more beautiful than his present home. What then must be the future home of the children of God! It is reasonable to think that its beauty and grandeur will correspond with their own glorification. More than this, heaven is the home of the angels and God ; the home of the glorified Son. If, therefore, heaven shall correspond, as it must, with the character of its inhabitants, it must be of inconceivable beauty and grandeur. Revelation portrays it in the use of the finest imagery which the mind can command, but the reality must infinitely transcend all such picturing.

2. Elements of Blessedness.—The holiness of heaven means the absence of all that could mar its beauty or disturb its joy. In the absence of sin this world would still be as the garden of Eden. There will be no sin in heaven; hence, none of the miseries which inevitably spring from its presence, but the pleasures which must ever flow from the perfection of holiness.

Immortality is the heritage of the saints in heaven. “Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection” (Luke 20:36). “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away” (Revelation 21:4). The intellectual life of heaven must infinitely transcend the attainments of the present life. The mental powers will there be free from many present limitations. In the new conditions they must have large development. There is no apparent reason why they should not have a perpetual growth. Certainly they will be capable of a perpetual acquisition of knowledge, and a universe of truth will be open to their research. Many problems, now dark and perplexing, will there be solved. The ceaseless pursuit and acquisition of knowledge through all the realms of truth will be a ceaseless fountain of pleasure.

Heaven will be replete with loving fellowships and holy worship. The imperfections which so often mar our present social life, even in its most spiritual forms, will have no place in those fellowships. There love shall be supreme. Through the headship of Christ saints and angels shall form a happy brotherhood. Yet the saints will have a song and a joy which the angels can share only by the power of sympathy—the song of redemption and the Joy of salvation. Holy love will make all duty a holy delight. The heavenly worship, kindled by the immediate presence and open vision of God and the Lamb, shall be full of holy rapture. In such a life, with powers ever growing and a future ever in hope, the blessedness of heaven will be complete.

Harbaugh: The Heavenly Home; Thompson: The Better Land; Plummer: The Resurrection of the Just and their Condition in a Future State; Spicer: The Spirit Life and its Relations; Hamilton: Beyond the Stars; or, Heaven, its Inhabitants, Occupations, and Life; Bates: The Four Last Things, Death, Judgment, Heaven, Hell; Watts: The World to Come; Pike: Religion and Eternal Life; or, Irreligion and Perpetual Ruin; Taylor: Physical Theory of Another Life; Dick: The Philosophy of a Future State; Welby:Mysteries of Life, Death, and Futurity; Stewart and Tait: The Unseen Universe; or Physical Speculations on a Future State; Oxenham: Catholic Eschatology and Universalism; Strong: The Doctrine of a Future Life.

181. Appendices.

Appendices.

182. I. Inspiration Of The Scriptures.

I.

Inspiration Of The Scriptures. The question of inspiration concerns the agency of the Holy Spirit in the authorship of the Scriptures. What was that agency? The true answer to this question must give us the true doctrine of inspiration. The fact of such an agency we accept on the ground of the Scriptures. In the books of the Old Testament a divine original of the truths set forth is often asserted. Further, both Christ and his apostles witness to the divine authorship of those books. Also, in the New Testament there are both the promise and the open profession of an inspiration of the Holy Spirit. With this statement of the fact Ave proceed with the doctrine. Not a few have attempted a proper distinction between inspiration and revelation; and the question seems to have been regarded as one of perplexity. We must think that such perplexity arises only from a lack of thorough analysis. For the same reason, in many instances, the true distinction has not been made. The true and simple view is, that inspiration is a mode of the divine agency in the communication of religious truth, and that such truth is the product of the inspiration. Now, if we restrict revelation to the literal sense of the term, that is, a disclosure of unknown truths, and as here meaning such truths of religion as we receive only through the Scriptures, the same distinction between inspiration and revelation fully remains; and such is the only true distinction. But there may be a revelation through some other mode of the divine agency, as, for instance, the oral teaching of our Lord; and in such case there must be the same distinction between such agency and revelation as the product.

There is as much need of a proper distinction between inspiration and the Scriptures as between inspiration and revelation. If we restrict revelation to the literal sense of the term, and particularly to religious truths super naturally made known, it is much narrower than the Scriptures, because they contain many things which were naturally known by the sacred writers. But there is no reason to restrict the agency of the Spirit in inspiration to the supernatural truths which the Scriptures contain. When that agency is properly interpreted in its several modes we shall find a place for it, in some mode, in all the contents of the Scriptures. We do not except even the oral teachings of our Lord. The sacred writers needed such help of the Spirit that they might give these lessons to the world in a truthful and authoritative form. And our Lord himself definitely promised them such help for this very service (John 14:26). But as inspiration is thus common to all the Scriptures, there is still the same distinction between such agency and its product.

Whatever the theory of inspiration, it is clearly the sense of the Scriptures that there was a special agency of the Spirit in their authorship. It is thus discriminated from other offices of the Spirit in the illumination and regeneration of men; in the Christian life of believers; in the effective ministry of the Gospel. These offices are directly in the interest of personal salvation, not for the original communication of truth. In inspiration the definite purpose is an authoritative communication of truth from God, whether by the spoken or written word. For the purpose of a revelation there must be an immediate operation of the Spirit in the mind of the mediate agent. The fact is the same

whether the operation is to prepare the mind for the reception of the truth, or for the communication of the truth to the prepared mind, or for its guidance in the publication of the truth. An immediate agency is not peculiar to this office of the Spirit, but is common to all his offices in the work of our personal salvation, whether of conviction, regeneration, assurance, or guidance and help in the Christian life. Such is the fact, whatever the exterior means. There is such an agency of the Spirit in the inspiration of the Scriptures. As the purpose of this inspiration is definite, it must be special to some, not common to the many. The recipients must fulfill a special office in the divine revelation. A consideration of the functions of this office belongs to the question of theories of inspiration. A proper human agency is entirely consistent with the divine agency. An immediate agency of the Spirit is not necessarily absolute, and hence may give place for the agency of the inspired mind in the conscious use of its own faculties.

183. I. Threefold Operation Of The Spirit.

I. Threefold Operation Of The Spirit. In the operations of the human mind a possession of the truth must precede its expression, whether by voice or pen. But truth is not native to the mind, and, as a possession, must in some way be acquired. For a knowledge of many higher truths, however acquired, there must be a mental preparation. There are such requisites for the mediate agency of the human mind in a divine revelation. Whatever its preparation, there is no power for the discovery of the higher truths of Scripture, nor for such an expression of them as shall give them authority and value as a revelation. Hence there must be a threefold operation of the Spirit, answering to the three necessary spheres of the mediate human agency, in order to a divine revelation. If there is not the full requirement for every part and particular of the Scriptures, it is yet real and full for the higher truths of religion. Their publication through a mediate human agency, intelligently active in itself, could not otherwise be achieved. This threefold operation of the Spirit should be more definitely treated in its several facts.

1. Illumination of the Mediate Agent.—The first necessary office of the Spirit is that of mental illumination. Such illumination is a familiar idea of Scripture. As a part of inspiration, the operation may be similar to that of Christ when he opened the minds of his disciples that they might understand the Scriptures (Luke 24:45). They were thus enabled to understand truths previously revealed. In like manner there must be a divine illumination of the mediate agents of revelation for the proper reception and apprehension of its truths. Without such a quickening of their mental powers and clearing of their spiritual vision they must have been without capacity for the higher truths of religion, and hence without ability for their proper publication.

2. Communication of the Truth.—When the mind was thus prepared for the reception of divine truth this truth itself was still to be given. The higher truths of religion are not an immediate cognition even of the illuminated mind, nor within the reach of its own powers. The illumination raises these powers to a higher receptive capacity, but it neither changes the law of their action nor adds any new faculty. Hence there are many truths of Scripture which they could neither originate nor discover. Such truths must be directly communicated in order to their publication. This communication is the office of the Holy Spirit in inspiration. Such was the source of prophetic vision and utterance. The divine Master, just before his departure, promised a mission of the Spirit to his disciples, who should teach them all things, and bring to their remembrance the truths which he had spoken (John 14:26). He also promised that in the exigency of their arraignment before magistrates the Holy Spirit should teach them in the same hour what they should say (Luke 12:11-12). Some of these deliverances have gone into the Scriptures as a part of the divine revelation. These special facts may illustrate the agency of the Spirit in the communication of truth to the agents through whom it should be published.

3. Agency in the Publication.—The truth as thus given is a purely personal possession. Even if a revelation to the recipients it is not such to others, nor can it be until its proper publication. Hence, for the purpose of a revelation there is this third sphere of inspiration. The publication of truth is a

distinct fact from both its reception and possession. The expression of truth concerns the truth itself. It deeply concerns the truths of Scripture that the Holy Spirit should have been co-operative in their expression or publication. There was such an agency (2 Peter 1:21). It was as requisite and as real for the written as for the spoken word. As inspired men were moved and guided in writing the Scriptures, so, and only thus, are they a divine revelation.

4. Inspiration as the Requirement.—There was not a requirement for the same agency of the Spirit respecting all parts of the Scriptures. Even without any distinction as to the importance of some parts as compared with others, there is still a wide distinction as it respects their relation to the minds of the sacred writers. In every book there is more or less which the author could know through the ordinary modes of knowledge, and which also was fully within the command of his own powers. In such case there was no need of either the illuminative or the communicatory office of the Spirit; yet there was need of such an agency as should determine what should go into the Scriptures. While, therefore, there is a place for inspiration in all parts of the Scriptures, the threefold offices of the Spirit were necessary only with respect to their higher truths.

184. II. Erroneous Theories Of Inspiration.

II. Erroneous Theories Of Inspiration. So far, we have treated inspiration mainly as a fact and as to its modes, and the question of theory or doctrine chiefly remains. Preparatory to the direct treatment of this question we notice a few erroneous theories.

1. Inspiration of Genius.—It is only in a qualified sense that of insight and originality, but it is still only a human power. Poetic genius is creative in the sphere of the ideal, but is without any special originative power in the sphere of religious truth. The poets have given us no divine theology. Homer and Virgil rise not above the religious thought of their time. Neither Milton nor Dante lifts us into brighter skies. Plato was a genius in religious as in philosophic thought, but his theology is infinitely below that of John. The higher truths of Scripture could not originate in any inspiration of genius. Were this even possible, they would still lack the certainty and authority necessary to their special religious value.

2. Special Religious Consciousness.—There are instances of a specially intense and clear religious consciousness; but without divine inspiration its capacity is only human. Such a consciousness might be very receptive of inspiration, or of religious truth communicated from without, but could not be specially originative of such truth. The higher truths of Scripture could neither originate in such a mind nor receive from it their necessary certainty and authority.

3. Illumination and Elevation.—In this view the office of inspiration is fulfilled in the spiritual illumination and elevation of certain chosen minds. These terms, however, do not express really distinct offices of the Spirit, though sometimes distinctively used. Such a divine illumination of the mind must quicken its powers and clear its vision; and in this there is spiritual elevation. The same divine operation answers for both. But the defects of the theory are obvious. It answers for the preparation of the mind for the reception of the higher truths of religion, and hence contains so much of a true doctrine. This element we have previously recognized as necessary. But there is no provision for either the communication or the publication of the truth. The mediate agent is left to his own resources, simply with the advantage of a subjective illumination. This is utterly insufficient both for a knowledge of the higher truths of Scripture and for their trustworthy publication.

4. Divine Superintendence.—The idea is of an influence of the Spirit within the minds of the sacred writers which preserved them from serious error in teaching, and also secured through their agency a record of such facts and truths of religion as were important to be known. There is here one element of a true theory of inspiration, as we have previously explained. It might be so construed as to seem sufficient for the whole truth, but does not really admit of such an interpretation. If so intended, there is an unnecessary caution in the use of terms. If the facts of a true and sufficient inspiration are held, it is far better to use terms clearly expressive of the whole truth. This theory is really lower in some of its facts than the one just previously noticed. It makes no provision for the necessary illumination of the mediate agent. Nor does it provide for the supernatural communication of the truth, but leaves him to his own resources of discovery. It is halting and indefinite as to a sufficient divine guidance in the publication of the truth.

5. The Mechanical Theory.—This is the theory of verbal inspiration. The divine agency monergistically determines both the ideas and the words, while the mediate human agency is a mere passive instrument. If the very words are thus mechanically determined, so must the ideas be determined. Such an inspiration must thoroughly dominate the mediate agent and deprive him of all mental self-action. Further, there must be the same determining influence of the Spirit for the whole Bible; the same for the most incidental and familiar facts of history and personal experience as for the profoundest mysteries of revelation; the same for the friendly salutations of Paul as for the deepest and most vital moral and religious truths of his epistles. The theory of a common verbal inspiration is beset with very serious difficulties—enough, indeed, to disprove it. We notice a few. The theory cannot be reconciled with the manifest human element in the structure of the Scriptures. Such an element is pervasive of the whole. The mental cast and culture, the peculiar temper and style of each sacred writer are wrought into his composition. These facts are as real and obvious in the Scriptures as in any purely secular writings. They cannot be explained except on the ground of the proper mental agency of the sacred writers. While divinely inspired they must still have been in the possession and conscious use of their own faculties. With such personal agency they could not have been the subjects of an inspiration which reduced them to the passivity of mere instruments.

There are differences of Scripture statement which the mechanical theory can neither account for nor reconcile with itself. Different writers state the same things with verbal differences. We may instance so definite a thing as the inscription on the cross. There are four statements of its form: “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews” (Matthew 27:37); “The King of the Jews” (Mark 15:26); “This is the King of the Jews” (Luke 23:38); “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews” (John 19:19). The differences are slight, but real. The verbal theory cannot account for them; certainly not on any reasonable ground. Hence, on the acceptance of that theory, we should have to reject at least three of these statements as lacking either in inspiration or in textual integrity; and with the further consequence of entire uncertainty as to which account, if any one, consisted of inspired and true words. Such instances of variation, of which there are many, are quite indifferent to a real and sufficient inspiration, but utterly inexplicable on the verbal theory. The logic of the theory must deny the present and future possession of a divine revelation. It requires for such a revelation the determining inspiration of the very words of Scripture. If this be necessary, then only an exact set of words, and the very words originally inspired, can constitute a revelation. But they are not in our possession. The autographs of the sacred writers no longer exist. The most trustworthy versions and manuscripts are without exact verbal agreement. The most learned in the question are not always agreed as to the true text. Further, the great multitudes of the race must always be dependent upon translations, which cannot be the exact verbal equivalents of the originals. These facts are entirely indifferent to a real and sufficient inspiration; but on the verbal theory they deny us the possession of a revelation.

Nothing can be necessary to a divine revelation which is not necessary to a truthful expression of the divine mind. Neither a common verbal inspiration nor an exact and set of words is so necessary. This is manifest in the fact that the Scriptures, just as other writings, would admit verbal changes without affecting the sense. Facts of Scripture are conclusive against that necessity. Such are the differences in the statements of the same events and truths. Such also is the fact that when Christ and his apostles referred to the Scriptures as the word of God and of divine authority

they often had in view the Septuagint version, which is far from being a literal rendering of the Hebrew. There is this further decisive fact, that their Scripture citations were often from the same version, and without any attempt at exact verbal accuracy.

Still, it need not be questioned that sometimes inspiration was such as to determine the very words of Scripture. Yet it is not important that we be able to identify such instances. The assertion of such importance would concede a superior excellence to such instances of inspiration. We should thus discriminate against the more common mode, and also return to the necessity for an exact set of words, with all its insuperable difficulties.

185. III. The Dynamical Theory.

III. The Dynamical Theory.

1. Sense of the Theory.—There is a supernatural operation of the Spirit within the consciousness and appropriate faculties of the mediate agent, yet not such as reduces him to the office of a mere instrument. He remains self-conscious and personally active in the use of his own faculties. Yet through the agency of the Holy Spirit he is so enlightened and possessed of the truth, and so guided in its expression, that the truth so given forth, whether by the spoken or written word, is from God. Through this agency the true and sufficient authorship of the Scriptures is with the Holy Spirit.

2. Place for the Human Element.—We previously noted this manifest element in the construction of the Scriptures, and also pointed out its irreconcilable contrariety to the theory of a common verbal inspiration. The dynamical theory gives a proper place to this element, yet in a sense entirely consistent with such an inspiration as secures to the Holy Spirit the proper authorship of the Scriptures.

3. Clear of Serious Difficulty.—This theory avoids the insuperable difficulties of a common verbal inspiration, as previously noted. Nor are there others of trying force. Surely there is none in the notion of such an agency of the Spirit as the theory alleges, real and sufficient as it is for the purpose of a divine revelation. If any finite mind is within the reach of an immediate divine influence, the human soul, made in the image of God, must be open to his inspiration. Otherwise, he never has exerted, and never could exert, any direct influence upon a single soul to enlighten and quicken it, to renew and lift it up, to guide and help it in the moral exigencies of life. Then, while through some means God might still speak to the ear or symbolize truth to the eye, he could not by any immediate interior influence open the mind for the reception of truth, or communicate truth to it, or make it the mediate agent of truth to others. Such an implication of divine impotence accords with a denial of the divine personality, but can have no place in a scheme of truth grounded in Christian theism.

4. Sufficient for a Revelation.—The Scriptures are as really a divine revelation on this theory as they could be on that of verbal inspiration. This can be true, and is true, because an exact set of words, dictated by the Spirit, is not necessary either to the truthful expression of the divine mind or to the divine authorship of the Scriptures. The sufficiency of the theory is manifest as we group its facts. Through an interior illumination the Holy Spirit prepared the minds of the mediate agents for the reception of divine truth, and then communicated the necessary truth to them, and finally so directed them as to secure a proper expression of this truth, and also the selection and use of such other truths as might be proper for the Scriptures. These facts meet all the requirements of a divine revelation, and determine the truths so uttered to be in a very profound sense the word of God.

IV. Inspiration And The Scriptures.

1. Fact of Inspiration from the Scriptures.—The divine agency is as really supernatural in inspiration as in a miracle; but, however manifest in the consciousness of the inspired mind, it is not open to the observation of others. Hence, our only direct knowledge of inspiration, as a specific form of the divine agency for the definite purpose of a revelation, is from the Scriptures themselves.

2. Not a Credential of the Sacred Writers.—If we should attempt to prove the inspiration of the Scriptures from their own statements, and then, that they are a divine revelation because inspired, our argument would move in a circle, and hence bring no logical result. Such is a rather common fallacy, and one far more harmful than helpful to the truth.

It is only with such a fallacy that inspiration can be classed as a credential of revelation. The sacred writers must be divinely accredited before their testimony can be received for the fact of their own inspiration. Thus, first of all, inspiration must take its place with other facts and truths of Scripture, and be true to us in common with the others because the sacred writers are divinely accredited witnesses. Hence, inspiration, while fulfilling an important office in revelation, should not be classed as one of their credentials.

3. Verification of Inspiration.—As the fact of inspiration is from the Scriptures, its verification must be in the facts which accredit the sacred writers as divinely commissioned teachers of truth. Prophecy and miracles are their chief credentials. With these, however, we may combine all other facts which accredit their mission and verify their message. Being thus accredited as messengers of truth from God, they are most credible witnesses for the fact of their own inspiration. There is no more reason to question their testimony respecting this fact than respecting others. If we reject this we may reject the others; for all have a common ground of verity. Hence to discard inspiration is really to discard revelation.

4. A Rationally Credible Fact.—On the ground of theism inspiration is rationally possible. If we deny this we must deny all facts of a divine providence. There could be no creation; no control of the laws of nature; no power of influence within the human soul to enlighten, purify, or help it. If God could do any of these things, then could he inspire chosen minds for the purpose of a revelation, and through their agency communicate religious truth. Theism must carry with it this consequence.

Inspiration, while a possible fact, is intrinsically probable. It is the most rational mode of the divine agency for the purpose of a revelation. We see not any other which might replace it and fulfill the same office. Its probability is the same as the probability of a revelation.

5. Value of Inspiration.—The question of a divine agency in the origin of the Scriptures is a vital one. Such an agency must have operated in a mode to secure to itself their proper authorship. Inspiration, as previously set forth, is such a mode. No other is apparent. The power of miracles might still have been given; but this would not answer for the purpose of a revelation through human agency. Miracles fulfill their office simply as the credentials of the messengers of truth. Only inspiration can reveal the divine mind through the agency of the human. Without it the sacred writers would have been left mostly to their own resources. All other supernatural aids would have proved themselves insufficient. The apostles were most highly favored with the oral instruction of the divine Master. But while with him they were dull of apprehension as to the deeper truths of his

lessons; and with the lapse of time they must have been incapable of their proper reproduction and publication. Even they needed the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in its own modes of operation. It was necessary that the Spirit should open their minds for the reception of truth, and lead them into the truth, and bring again, and more fully, to their understanding the lessons of the Master, that they might give the truth to men. It was necessary that other truths should thus be communicated to chosen minds, through whose agency they might take their place in the divine revelation. Through inspiration the accredited messengers of divine truth could fulfill their office and give the truth to the world. Inspiration is thus the divine warrant of truth in the Scriptures. Their divine authorship is in their inspiration; their supreme authority and transcendent value in their divine authorship.

Lee: The Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures; Bannerman: Inspiration, etc.; Garbett: God's Word Written; Jamieson: The Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures; Warrington: The Inspiration of the Scriptures; Wordsworth: On the Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures; Noble: Plenary Inspiration of the Scriptures; Patton: The Inspiration of the Scriptures; Gaussen: Theopneustia; Curtis: The Human Element in the Inspiration of the Scriptures.

186. II. The Angels.

II. The Angels. The original words usually rendered angel mean primarily a messenger, and, more broadly, anything which God employs in the service of his providence. In a more specific sense they mean personal beings of a distinct and definite order. Of such beings we here treat.

187. I. Concerning The Angels.

I. Concerning The Angels.

1. Realities of Existence.—The existence of such an order of beings is rationally probable. By no necessity is man the culmination of God's creative work. Even naturalistic evolution has no right to prescribe for itself any such limitation. If man is the product of purely natural forces, as operative in this world, then in some vastly older and larger world such forces may have evolved a much higher order of beings. Atheistic evolution can oppose nothing to this inference. We, however, view the question from the ground of theism. As we ascend the scale of creative existences from its lowest form up to man, and then look away into the vastness of the heavens which God has set in order, the creation of beings higher than man seems most reasonable. The words of Scripture respecting the angels cannot be reduced to a merely figurative sense, nor to the meaning of mere things in the providential use of God, nor yet to mere forms of his personal energizing. In the clear light of the Scriptures the angels are realities of personal existence. That such was the faith of the Jews in the time of our Lord is above question. The Pharisees represented the common faith, which the Sadducees denied; and on this issue both Christ and his apostles were surely with the Pharisees, and against the Sadducees. Thus in a disputation with the latter, on a question which involved the future existence of man, Christ openly recognized the existence of the angels (Matthew 22:30). On this same question, and with the full statement of the issue, Paul in like manner openly declared himself with the Pharisees against the Sadducees (Acts 23:6-8). Hence on the authority of both Christ and Paul the angels are realities of existence. The rationalistic assumption, that both spoke simply in accord with the popular faith without any implication of its truth, is utterly groundless. It was not the wont of Christ so to speak, and could not have been his manner in this instance. The issue on which he spoke forbids the idea of such a manner. He answers the objection of the Sadducees to the resurrection and a future life by setting forth the new conditions of that life. The objection is void because in the transition we shall become "as the angels of God in heaven." Christ could not have made such use of what he knew to be a popular error. If on this question Paul knew that truth was with the Sadducees, his joining the Pharisees against them was unmanly, dishonest, indeed.

2. Of a Spiritual Nature.—On the authority of the Scriptures, there can be no question of a spiritual nature of angels. Their endowments and activities allow no other view. That they have such a nature has been the common faith of the Church, though there has not been the same unanimity on the question whether they are wholly without corporeity. Their luminous appearance in some instances, together with the difficulty of conceiving the activity of an unbodied spirit, has led some to the opinion that they have a material body, very ethereal in its mode, yet furnishing the condition of their agency. It accords with the Scriptures that angels were not always visible when present, and hence that they possessed no corporeity with self-manifesting quality. Visibility, therefore, was in all instances voluntary. We cannot deny the possibility of such a manifestation without a material corporeity. Their offices in the economies of religion occasionally required their manifestation, and it is easy to think them endowed with such power, however mysterious for our conception. The

activity of an embodied spirit has no peculiar difficulty for our thought. The activity of our own spirit is a familiar fact of consciousness; but if we seek for its mode we shall find it quite as hidden as the agency of an unbodied spirit. The common faith of the Church, that angels are without material corporeity, seems more in accord with the Scriptures.

3. With Personal Endowments.—The collocation of a few appropriate texts will set the personality of angels in a clear light. All that we require is such facts in them as belong to personality in ourselves, or such forms of activity as are possible only with the constituent powers of personality. The angels bless the Lord and fulfill his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word (Psalms 103:20). In such exercises there is an intelligent recognition of God and his claims, of his majesty and love. There is also a response of the religious affections in reverence and praise, and a voluntary self-consecration to the service and worship of God. With such forms of activity there must be intellect, sensibility, and will—that complex of powers which constitutes personality. The angel which announced to the shepherds the advent of our Lord, and the multitude of the heavenly host which quickly Joined him in the joy of the great event, were all personal beings (Luke 2:9-14). The angels which, with intent mind and intense desire, study the mystery of redemption, the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, must have a personal existence (1 Peter 1:12). The joy of the angels over the repentance of a sinner is a personal joy (Luke 15:10). There must be an intelligent recognition of the interests which center in such an event, and also an affectional nature deeply responsive to its blessedness. The angel which ministered to Christ after the temptation in the wilderness, and the angel which strengthened him in the agonies of Gethsemane were personal beings. Any other view robs the facts of their deepest truth. Personal agency cannot be simulated; and beings who uniformly act in a personal manner must be persons.

4. Grade of their Powers.—Our own powers are the only standard with which we can compare the powers of angels. They are like us in personality, and finite like ourselves. They are neither omniscient nor omnipotent, and yet have much knowledge and power. They have a wonderful facility of movement, and large executive efficiencies. The truth of these statements lies in the facts of Scripture respecting the angels. “The wisdom of an angel” is used in an adjective sense for the expression of the highest measure of finite knowledge (2 Samuel 14:17; 2 Samuel 14:20). Angels are greater in power and might than men (2 Peter 2:11). They excel in strength, or are mighty in strength (Psalms 103:20). They are named as the mighty angels of the Lord, or the angels of his power (2 Thessalonians 1:7). The high grade of their powers is also expressed in their designation as thrones and dominions, principalities and powers (Colossians 1:16). Their facility of movement and executive power will fully appear in the treatment of the offices which they fulfill.

5. All Originally Holy.—The position, that all angels were originally holy, requires little more than its simple statement as a fact. Only some form of Manicheism could oppose to it any contradiction. The holiness of the divine Creator determines the primitive holiness of all personal orders. The angels must be included in the characterization of newly created existences as “very good” (Genesis 1:31). They must have been good in their kind, and therefore, as persons morally constituted, must have been holy in their nature. Consistently with this fact, and in further proof of it, evil angels are such only by apostasy.

188. II. The Good Angels.

II. The Good Angels.

1. A Great Multitude.—Of course there are no data for an exact or even approximate enumeration of the holy angels. The statements of Scripture, however, assure us that they are a great multitude. We read of “thousands upon thousands” (Psalms 68:17), and of “thousand thousands,” and “ten thousand times ten thousand” (Daniel 7:10), and of “the voice of many angels round about the throne,” in number “ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands” (Revelation 5:11). These are definite numbers with an indefinite sense, but clearly with the sense of a great multitude.

2. Ever Loyal to God and Duty.—By the goodness of angels we mean more than their primitive holiness. That was simply a quality of their nature, with spontaneous tendencies toward holy activities. Goodness is the creation of such activities. On the ground of a holy nature there is constructed a holy character. The moral activities, with the intensities of thought and affection, are ever in loyalty to God and duty. Such is the meaning of their characterization, often repeated, as “the holy angels.” In all the allotments of duty, as recorded in the Scripture, and whatever the service, there is ever a prompt and hearty fulfillment. They ever keep the commandments of the Lord, and do his pleasure (Psalms 103:20-21). The same truth appears in the petition of our Lord’s Prayer, “Thy will be done in earth, as in heaven” (Matthew 6:10). They worship God with all the intensities of adoring love (Revelation 4:8-11).

3. In Social and Organic Compact.—The angels are in no sense a race, but a company, or companies, each individual being an original creation. Hence the grounds of social affinity arising out of our own race relations are entirely wanting in them. It does not follow that they are without social affinity, for there are other sufficient grounds of such affinity. Our own sensibilities go beyond our race relations and embrace all that is orderly and beautiful. That there is no social result is simply from the lack of rational and sympathetic response in such forms of order and beauty. There is no such hinderance in the relation of angels. There is between them a mutual apprehension of all that is pure and good and lofty, and a reciprocal response of loving sympathy. In this there is ample ground for social compact. Beyond this, God is for them a center of loving union. As all are bound to him in a supreme love, so are they bound to each other in loving fellowship. This accords with the view of the angels in which the Scriptures place them.

Beyond this social life, the angels are in economical compact. There are terms which plainly signify a distinction of orders. Such are the terms thrones, dominions, principalities, powers (Colossians 1:16). There may be higher and lower grades in the scale of being. There is no law which should determine an absolute equality. All the analogies of creation suggest gradations among the angels. However this may be, these terms of distinction do imply organic compact. The angels are the Lord’s hosts (Psalms 148:2). This form of expression occurs with frequent repetition, and contains the idea of a military organization. Then we have the names of Gabriel and Michael, who appear among the angels in matchless greatness, and with the investment of

rectoral functions. Gabriel appears in his greatness to Daniel, with the interpretation of his vision (Daniel 8); and also brings the salutation to Mary (Luke 1:26-28). Michael as a great prince stands up for the people of God (Daniel 12:1); rebukes the devil in the name of the Lord (Jude 1:9); and with his angels fights against the dragon (Revelation 12:7). Thus he appears with princely powers, and in command of a host of angels. The group of facts which we have presented suffices for the proposition that the angels exist in forms of organic compact.

4. Ministry of the Good Angels.—The idea of service or ministry is given in the appellative sense of angel. The representation of the good angels throughout the Scriptures is replete with this idea. Only an elaborate treatment could compass the question of their ministry; and such a discussion would encounter many perplexities. The leading facts, and about all that can be instructive and useful, may be very briefly given. In the history of opinion on this question extreme views often appear. The government of the world is mostly placed in the hands of angels. Nearly all events which specially concern us are the work of their agency. Every man has his own guardian angel. Each nation has a presiding angel, and each planet and star. These views exaggerate the powers and offices of the angels. Natural events are thus accounted supernatural and assigned to an inadequate agency. The Scriptures do not warrant the opinion of such a ministry of angels; the alleged proofs are inconclusive.

It is true, as previously shown, that Michael appeared as a prince in behalf of the Hebrews; but this was in the time of their captivity, and in a crisis of profound interest, and may have been only for this exigency. Hence the opinion of a permanent presidency is without warrant. Advocates of these extreme views go much further. They find in the same book mention of the princes of Persia and Grecia (Daniel 10:20), and infer that they were the presiding angels of these nations, just as Michael was the presiding angel of the Hebrews. If such princes were angels in fact the inference of a permanent presidency would not follow, just as it does not in the instance of Michael. Much less would the inference of a common presidency of angels over nations follow. Further, there is no proof that the princes of Persia and Grecia were angels. Respecting the former, Clarke says: “I think it would go far to make a legend or a precarious tale of this important place to endeavor to maintain that either a good or evil angel is intended here.”[852] As against the above views it should further be noted that both Gabriel and Michael fulfilled offices among the Hebrews, and also in Persia. These facts are inconsistent with the idea of one guardian angel for each nation, and particularly with the idea that the prince of Persia was an angel; for in such a case we must find the angel of the Hebrews in diplomatic intercourse with the angel of Persia. This implication is not in itself credible. It is specially discredited by the fact that the prince of Persia maintained a sharp contention against Gabriel and Michael (Daniel 10:13; Daniel 10:20-21). Surely he could not have been a good angel. Hence all proof that each nation has its guardian angel entirely fails.

[852]Commentary,Daniel 10:13. The alleged proof that each person, or even that, each believer, has his own guardian angel, is far short of conclusive. One of such proofs is the text respecting the little ones whose angels behold the face of the Father in heaven (Matthew 18:10). The sense given by Dr. Hodge is all that the passage will warrant: “It does teach that children have guardian angels; that is, that angels watch over their welfare. But it does not prove that each child, or each believer, has his own guardian angel.”[853] Another text alleged in proof is entirely without force. It is the text respecting the angel which liberated Peter from the prison. When the friends in prayer at the house of Mary, the mother of John, could not dissuade the damsel from her conviction that

Peter was at the gate, they said, “It is his angel” (Acts 12:15). These words do not necessarily mean that Peter had constantly a guardian angel; much less that every believer has. Further, even if such were the sense of the words, it must be noted that they are not the words of inspired persons, and hence are wholly without doctrinal value.

[853]Systematic Theology, vol. i, p. 640.

There still remains much respecting the ministry of the good angels. A glance at their appearances and agency in sacred history may help our view of their offices in the work of providence and in the economies of religion. The angels are the morning stars and sons of God who rejoice over the work of creation (Job 38:7). They often appear in the scenes of patriarchal history as the messengers of God and in the execution of important offices in behalf of his servants. They participated in the publication of the law from Sinai (Galatians 3:19; Hebrews 2:2). They ever wait on the commandments of God in the spirit of obedience (Psalms 103:20-21). They predicted and celebrated the birth of Christ (Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:11); they ministered to him in his temptation and sufferings (Matthew 4:11; Luke 22:43); and they announced his resurrection and ascension (Matthew 28:2; John 20:13; Acts 1:10-11). They are still ministering spirits to believers (Hebrews 1:14); they delivered Peter from prison; they watch over children (Matthew 18:10); they bear the souls of the departed to Abraham’s bosom (Luke 16:22); they are to attend Christ at his second coming, and gather his people into his kingdom (Matthew 13:39; Matthew 16:27; Matthew 24:31). Such are the general statements of the Scriptures on this subject, and with these we should be content. We know that they are the messengers of God; that they are now and ever have been employed in executing his commissions, but further than this nothing is positively revealed.”[854]
[854] Hodge:Systematic Theology, vol. i, pp. 639, 640.

189. III. The Evil Angels.

III. The Evil Angels.

1. Evil by Apostasy.—As previously pointed out, all personal and morally constituted existences are originally created in holiness; that is, with a moral nature in harmony with their moral relations, and spontaneously responsive to the requirements of moral duty. This accords with all the relative facts of Scripture, and is guaranteed by the holiness and goodness of the Creator. How could such persons sin? This question is sure to arise. It is not clear of perplexity, yet not wholly in the dark. The same question arose in connection with the fall of man. It is specially in that view that it is not wholly in the dark. The original constitution of man, even with subjective holiness, left him open to temptation through his sensibilities, and therefore with the possibility of sinning. For any light on the question respecting the apostasy of angels we require the supposition of a constitutional susceptibility to temptation in them. The supposition is not unreasonable, although the mode of such susceptibility in them is hidden from us, while it is quite open in the case of man. The existence of evil angels carries with it the fact of apostasy. That there are evil angels is one of the clear truths of Scripture. With equal clearness the Scriptures account their evil character to an original apostasy. They are described as the angels that sinned, and also as the angels who kept not their first estate or principality, but left their own habitation (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6). These facts constitute an apostasy of angels. “When this apostasy occurred we know not. Nor is the number made known. It was the quaint opinion of Anselm that the number of the fallen angels was exactly replaced by the number of the elect out of the human race; but there is no light upon the question in this fanciful view.

2. The Evil One.—The existence of a chief apostate angel is equally a truth of the Scriptures. Various names are assigned him: Devil—calumniator, slanderer, accuser; Satan—the Adversary; Prince of darkness, Beelzebub, Deceiver, Serpent, Dragon, with still other terms expressive of his evil nature and work. This chief apostate is also frequently called ■ πονηρ■ς—the Evil One (Matthew 13:19; Ephesians 6:16; 1 John 2:13; 1 John 3:12; 1 John 5:18). There is no other name which better expresses his inner nature, none in which all his evil traits more completely center. On the ground of Scripture the existence of the devil, with other apostate spirits, must be admitted. The words of Christ and his apostles, in which this truth lies, cannot be explained away on the principle of accommodation to the common Jewish faith on this question. “Nor can it be said that Jesus and his apostles merely left men in their belief, not thinking it worth while to undeceive them, and trusting that in time they would of themselves discover their mistake. On the contrary, our Lord and his followers very decidedly and strongly confirm the doctrine by numerous express declarations. For instance, our Lord, in his explanation of ‘the parable of the tares and the wheat,’ says expressly that the enemy who sows the tares is the devil. And again, in explaining that portion of the parable of the sower, in which it is said that the birds devoured the seed that fell on the trodden way-side, he says, ‘Then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts,’ etc. And there are very many other passages in which our Lord and his apostles do not merely leave uncontradicted, or merely assent to, what is said by others as to this point, or merely

allude to it incidentally, but go out of their way, as it were, to assert the doctrine most distinctly, and earnestly dwell on it. (Respecting “the very many other passages,” the author cites a number, which we give by reference: John 8:44; 1 Timothy 3:6; 2 Timothy 2:26; Hebrews 2:14; 1 Peter 5:8; 1 John 3:8; Revelation 20:2.) If, therefore, the belief in evil spirits is altogether a vulgar error, it certainly is not an error which Jesus and his apostles merely neglected to correct, or which they merely connived at, but which they decidedly inculcated.”[855] [855] Whately:Good and Evil Angeles, pp. 65, 66. When Satan fell from his high and holy estate, or by what peculiar form of psychological movement, we know not. It seems plain that it preceded the creation and trial of man, but beyond this all is to us unknown. We have little insight into the sensibilities of spiritual beings without a physical organism like our own. Sensibilities are clearly possible to such beings, and must be actual in their personal constitution—must be, because without them personality itself is impossible. It has been a common opinion that the mental movement of Satan through which he fell was in the form of ambition or pride. This would include an activity of the sensibilities, for there can be neither without them. The ground for this common opinion is in the words of Paul respecting what a bishop should be and should not be: “Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil” (1 Timothy 3:6). These words are interpreted to mean such a condemnation for ambition or pride as the devil himself incurred. This sense does not seem foreign to the words; yet a single text of the kind is hardly sufficient for any doctrinal determination.

3. Demoniacal Possession.—Demoniacs repeatedly appear in the narratives of the New Testament, and with various forms of mental and bodily disease, which are attributed to the agency of evil spirits, mostly named δαιμ■νια. In the case of demoniacs, evil spirits take possession of the subject, and act upon it from within, not from without. The action is upon either body or mind, and often upon both at the same time. In some instances the very center of the personality seems to be seized and held, so that all the action of the subject is attributable to the possessing demon or demons. The results appear in various forms of mental and bodily disease, according to the mode of the demoniacal agency. Many of the specially notable miracles of our Lord and his disciples were wrought in the curing of such cases. We give a few instances by reference, which also will represent the forms of disease resulting from such possession (Matthew 8:28-32; Matthew 9:32-33; Matthew 12:22; Matthew 17:14-18; Mark 1:23-26; Luke 13:11-16; Acts 16:16-18). The reality of demoniacal possession was the common Jewish faith at the time of our Lord. The most rationalistic interpreters of Scripture will not question this fact. If any one thinks such faith distinctively Jewish he greatly mistakes the facts in the case. That faith pervades the theology of the Gentiles, particularly of the Greeks and Romans. In the drift of rationalistic theology objections arose against the doctrine of demoniacal possession. Strenuous attempts were made to displace it and to interpret the Scriptures consistently with its denial. The method of this endeavor was determined by unquestionable facts in the case. One of these facts is that the Jews of the time firmly believed the doctrine; another, that our Lord and his disciples treated the instances of alleged possession precisely as if such possession were a reality. This fact is so open and above question that no advance could be made on the ground of its denial. This endeavor therefore necessarily proceeded upon a principle previously noticed—that of accommodation to the common faith of the people. This faith was a delusion, and our Lord and his disciples knew that it was a delusion, but did not think it important to correct it. Time would make the correction; therefore they treated these cases just as though they were instances of real possession.

Such an interpretation is irreconcilable with the facts concerned, and must be at the sacrifice of the integrity and trustworthiness of our Lord and his apostles and evangelists as religious teachers. The truth of this proposition must appear in the light of the facts. In one instance the subjects of Christ's healing represent various forms of disease—divers disease and torments, cases of lunacy and palsy, and with the rest demoniacs (Matthew 4:24). If there was no reality in the demoniacal cases why should such distinction be made and perpetuated in the Gospel? How could this be honestly done? Our Lord himself makes a like distinction in his charge to his apostles: "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons" (Matthew 10:8). And this goes into the sacred record. The seventy evangelists return from their mission, "saying. Lord, even the demons are subject unto us through thy name" (Luke 10:17). The answer of Christ responds to the truth of their words. If the demons existed only in imagination why this mutual recognition of them as realities? The demons possess personal qualities and exercise personal agency. They know Jesus as the Son of God and the Messiah (Mark 1:24; Luke 4:41). There is interlocution between Christ and these evil spirits, and such as would be impossible with the subject of their possession (Matthew 8:29-32). He commands their action just as though they were personal agents (Mark 1:25; Mark 1:34; Mark 3:11-12; Mark 9:25). Their number emphasizes their meaning respecting the present question. A few instances might not be decisive; but their great number, with their character as above given, is conclusive of demoniacal possession. Our Lord and his disciples could not in all these instances proceed in accommodation to the popular faith, while knowing that faith to be groundless. In many instances there was no reason for such accommodation; not any excuse for it. Nor could that principle justify the narration of such instances in the gospels in the same manner as if cases of real demoniacal possession.

Two instances are regarded as specially decisive of this issue: the temptation of our Lord in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11) and the case of the Gadarene (Luke 8:26-36). In the former the devil is the immediate agent in the temptation, but not in the mode of possession; for he had no such power over the Christ. But while differing in these respects the case equally proves the existence of an evil spirit, operative in the mode of personal agency. In the case of the Gadarene the agency of the evil spirits is operative not only in the madman, but also in the herd of swine. These instances cannot be referred to superstition, or a lawless imagination, or a diseased brain. "The possession of the herd of swine by the demons, and the temptation of the Son of God, are the two cases which—I observed—preclude all such explanation, and which were doubtless recorded, partly, for that very purpose. Whatever effects may be produced in menby a diseased imagination, the brute animals, in the one case, were as much below that influence as, in the other case, the Son of God was above it."[856] [856] Whately:Good and Evil Angels, pp. 127, 128.

If a real agency of evil spirits is denied, the miracles of Christ in the cure of demoniacs lose their deepest meaning. Indeed, they are not only minified, but brought into uncertainty by the elimination of this vital element. There is nothing clearer in the narratives than the demoniacal agency, and if we deny that we may deny the whole account. In every case their profound significance for the power of Christ over the powers of evil against which we must contend is entirely lost.

There is perplexity for thought in the idea of demoniacal possession. This is readily conceded: but the denial of such possession involves still greater perplexity respecting the interpretation of Scripture and the trustworthiness of Christ and his disciples as religious teachers. The existence of

the devil and his angels, as an evil power, is clearly the sense of Scripture. From the beginning that power has ever been active for the moral ruin of man. The mission of Christ for the redemption of the race required the overthrow of this power. This was a leading purpose of his incarnation and death (Hebrews 2:14-15). These evil spirits well knew this purpose, and naturally were stimulated to the utmost stretch of energy against its achievement. It may be that instances of demoniacal possession were temporarily permitted, that the power of Christ over this power of evil might be signalized. The reality of such instances at that time is no proof of present instances. The rational inference is that they began and ceased with the special occasion of their permission. There is no evidence that those possessed of evil spirits were themselves monsters of wickedness; nor were they personally demonized by this possession. Yet it was to them a grievous affliction, and must take its place with other instances which Providence permits, for sufficient reasons to the divine mind, however hidden from our own. We have some explanation in the purpose of this permission as above stated, just as the sore affliction of the family which Jesus loved has some explanation in its gracious purpose (John 11:4-5; John 11:15). As through this affliction the Father and the Son were glorified, and the faith of the disciples most fully assured, so through this permission of demoniacal possession the power of Christ over the powers of evil was specially signalized. The seventy returned from their mission, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven” (Luke 10:17-18). Further, in replying to the accusation, that he was an agent of Beelzebub, he said with emphasis, “But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you” (Matthew 12:38). With the reality of demoniacal possession these miracles of Christ reveal his transcendent power and assure us of his triumph over all the powers of evil.[857] [857] Whately:Good and Evil Angels, pp. 112-116

There has been a strong reaction from the rationalistic drift of German thinking which denied the existence of evil spirits. Dorner gives this testimony: “Therefore also the most noteworthy theologians after Schleiermacher have not agreed with him upon this point. Even Lucke and Eomang are not opposed to the supposition of fallen evil spirits, although they reject the possibility of an absolutely evil person or an absolutely evil kingdom. Nitzsch, Twesten, Eothe, Julius Muller, Tholuck, Lange, Martensen, as well as Thomasius, Hoffman, Kahnis, Philippi, and Luthardt, avow that not merely is sin found in humanity, but that a kingdom of evil spirits with a head over them is also to be inculcated. Romang rightly satirizes the fond enlightenment which takes much credit to itself for being above this representation.”[858] [858] System of Christian Doctrine, vol. iii, p. 96.

4. Work of the Devil and his Angels.—In the words of our Lord we have the phrase, “the devil and his angels” (Matthew 25:41). In this realm of evil the devil is chief and evil spirits are under his leadership, and execute his commands. In this sense they are his angels. There may also be an implicit reference to the original apostasy on the supposition that these subordinate spirits followed the devil in his revolt from God. The formula implies an organic union of evil spirits. There are other forms of expression which give the same sense. The devil is the prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2:3). There are principalities and powers of evil, rulers of the darkness of this world, spiritual wickedness in high places, evil spirits, in distinction from men, against which we must contend (Ephesians 6:12; Colossians 1:13; Colossians 2:15). The idea of a realm of evil spirits, with the headship of the devil, runs through these forms of expression. The work of the devil and his angels is such as their evil nature prompts—within the limit of their power, or of the divine

permission. They are not free from the divine restraint. It follows that what may be possible to them at one time is not so at another. Demoniacal possession may still be possible to their own powers, but not possible under the divine restraint. There are other modes in which evil spirits may work evil. They are actuated by a common impulse of hatred against God and man. This appears in the whole history of their agency. A central purpose, springing from their malignance, is to compass the moral ruin of the race. Their method is to lead man into sin and to counterwork the means of his salvation. This appears in the temptation of Eve (Genesis 3:1-6); in the temptation of our Lord in the wilderness 9Matthew 4:1-11); in the seduction of Judas into his work of betrayal (Luke 22:3-4); in the power of darkness, which may well signify the rulers of the darkness, and their rage against our Lord in the hour providentially permitted to his murderers (Luke 22:53; Ephesians 6:13); in the sowing of tares among the good seed (Matthew 13:39); in catching away the word of the kingdom before it can become profitable (Matthew 13:19). The mode of this evil agency in its enticements to sin, and in counterworking the gracious means of our salvation, is hidden from our insight. It has no coercive power over us; for even the devil, if resisted, shall flee from us (James 4:7). Such as are taken captive at his will give the consent of their own will, and may still recover themselves out of his snare (2 Timothy 2:26.). The agency of evil spirits must, for any practical result, in some way act upon such forms of our sensibility as shall, when thus quickened into activity, withstand the good or become an enticement to the evil. Herein lies the mystery of the question. Have they immediate access to our sensibilities, or must they act through some means. Just as any one of us must act in moving the sensibilities of another? We have no unqualified answer to this question. However, this evil agency is not incredible because its mode is a mystery. We know the means by which one man moves the sensibilities of another; but when we go below the means to inquire in what mode the effect is produced we are quite as much in the dark as in any inquiry respecting the mode in which evil spirits act upon our sensibilities.

5. Final Overthrow.—The beginning of the Gospel was in the promise of a seed which should bruise the head of the serpent (Genesis 3:15). This promise, so veiled at the time, has unfolded into the fullness of the Gospel. The mission of the Son of God, as thus foreshadowed, was for the purpose of destroying the devil and his works (Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 3:8). For the accomplishment of this purpose he is invested with all authority and power; and all enemies shall be put under his feet (Psalms 110:1; 1 Corinthians 15:2). So shall he suppress the devil and his angels as a power of evil.

Wesley: On Good and Evil Angels, Sermons, lxxvi, lxxvii; Dunn: The Angels of God; Duke: The Holy Angels; Whateley: Concerning Good and Evil Angels; Clayton: Angelology; Matson: Satanology.

190. III. Arminian Treatment Of Original Sin.

III.

Arminian Treatment Of Original Sin.

We have attempted the right treatment of this subject in our Anthropology. The present view is historical; the aim, to show how it has usually been treated. The facts which appear in this review must be its justification.

191. I. The Question In Arminianism.

I. The Question In Arminianism.

1. A Common Adamic Sin.—By a common Adamic sin we mean a sin of the race through a participation in the sin of Adam; that the guilt of his sin is native to every soul. This view is far more common in Arminian theology than that of a sin of the corrupt nature with which we are born.

After a definite statement of the personal sin of Adam and Eve, and of its penal consequences to themselves, Arminius proceeds: “The whole of this sin, however, is not peculiar to our first parents, but is common to the entire race and to all their posterity, who, at the time when this sin was committed, were in their loins, and who have since descended from them by the natural mode of propagation, according to the primitive benediction. For in Adam ‘all have sinned’ (Romans 5:12). Wherefore, whatever punishment was brought down upon our first parents has likewise pervaded and yet pursues all their posterity. So that all men ‘are by nature the children of wrath’ (Ephesians 2:3), obnoxious to condemnation and to temporal as well as eternal death; they are also devoid of that original righteousness and true holiness (Romans 5:12; Romans 5:18-19). With these evils they would remain oppressed forever unless they were liberated by Christ Jesus; to whom be glory forever.”[859] This is the doctrine of native guilt and damnableness through a participation in the sin of Adam. The sense of the passage is clear in its own terms, and clear beyond question when read in the light of what immediately precedes respecting the sin of Adam and its judicial consequences to himself. In this view we are all sharers in the guilt of Adam’s personal sin, and this guilt is the judicial ground, not only of the corruption of nature or spiritual death in which we are born, but also of our native amenability to the penalty of temporal and eternal death. There is in all this no recognition of any demerit of the common depravity or corruption of nature in which we are born, but rather its exclusion; for as this depravity is itself held to be a penal infliction it could not with any consistency be admitted to contain the desert of punishment. The ground of participation in the sin of our progenitors is not formally stated, but is informally indicated in the account made of our being in their loins at the time of their sinning. This is the realistic ground in distinction from the representative.

[859]Writings, vol. i, p. 486.

There are numerous passages from the hand of Wesley which express the same form or sense of original sin that we have found in the words of Arminius. In replying to an argument of Taylor against original sin, that only Adam and Eve could be justly punishable for their sin, Wesley says: “If no other was justly punishable, then no other was punished for that transgression. But all were punished for that transgression, namely, with death. Therefore, all were justly punished for it.”[860] He then cites with full approval the following words of Dr. Jennings: “And, since it is so plain that all men are actually punished for Adam’s sin, it must needs follow that they ‘all sinned in Adam. By one man’s disobedience many were made sinners.’ They were so constituted sinners by Adam’s sinning as to become liable to the punishment threatened to his transgression.”[861] In replying to another argument of Taylor that “no just constitution can punish the innocent,” Wesley says: “This

is undoubtedly true; therefore God does not look upon infants as innocent, but as involved in the guilt of Adam's sin; otherwise death, the punishment denounced against that sin, could not be inflicted upon them."[862] These citations clearly express the view of Wesley that we all share the guilt of Adam's sin and are justly amenable to its punishment. There is no indication of the ground on which he based this common Adamic sin, or whether the realistic or the representative.

[860]Works, vol. v, p. 526 [861]Ibid., p. 535.

[862]Ibid., p. 577. On this question Fletcher is in accord with Arminius and Wesley. He holds the common guilt of the race through a participation in the sin of Adam. This appears in his doctrine of infant justification through the grace of the atonement. This grace is universal and the justification unconditional. But the justification is the cancellation of sin in the sense of demerit or guilt, and therefore implies such form of native sin. Our native sinfulness in the distinctly ethical sense of demerit, as held by Fletcher, is more than an implication thus reached; it is openly expressed and traced to its ground in the sin of Adam. In view of the greatness of Christ in comparison with Adam he argues thus : '' It follows that as Adam brought a general condemnation and a universal seed of death upon all infants, so Christ brings upon them a general justification and a universal seed of life. . . . And if Adam's original sin was atoned for and forgiven him, as the Calvinists, I think, generally grant, does it not follow that, although all infants are by nature children of wrath, yet through the redemption of Christ they are in a state of favor or justification? For how could God damn to all eternity any of Adam's children for a sin which Christ expiated—a sin which was forgiven almost six thousand years ago to Adam, who committed it in person? The force of this observation would strike our Calvinist brethren if they considered that we were not less in Adam's loins when God gave his Son to Adam in the grand, original gospel promise, than when Eve prevailed on him to eat of the forbidden fruit. . . . Thus, if we all received an unspeakable injury by being seminally in Adam when he fell, according to the first covenant, we all received also an unspeakable blessing by being in his loins when God spiritually raised him up and placed him upon gospel ground."[863] For the present we are concerned with Fletcher's view of our native sinfulness, and not with his doctrine of a universal justification any further than it may serve to explain the former. That we all share the guilt of Adam's sin, the sin which he personally committed, is the clear sense of the passage cited. It is implied in the nature of the infant justification maintained, and appears in the forms of plain statement. Fletcher sets forth the same doctrine in citations from the articles, homilies, and liturgy of the Church of England.[864] The ground of the common guilt of Adam's sin, in this view of Fletcher, is the realistic in distinction from the representative. There is no intimation of a sin of our nature in the sense of demerit or guilt.

[863]Works, vol. i, p. 284.

[864]Ibid., vol. iii, pp. 255-257.

Watson is still our own most honored name in systematic theology, and his view of the native sinfulness of the race must not be overlooked. In his anthropology and in his discussion of the doctrinal issues between Calvinism and Arminianism he had special occasion for the treatment of this question. The discussion required the adjustment of his doctrine of native sinfulness to the Arminian system, and also its defense against Calvinistic implications. The attempt was not shunned; and whatever Arminians may think of its success, it is no special surprise that from the Calvinistic side it is viewed as conceding the ground of election and reprobation. On the typical

relation of Adam to Christ, as set forth by Paul, Watson says: “The same apostle also adopts the phrases, ‘the first Adam’ and ‘the second Adam,’ which mode of speaking can only be explained on the ground that as sin and death descended from one, so righteousness and life flow from the other; and that what Christ is to all his spiritual seed, that Adam is to all his natural descendants.”[865] This must mean the penal subjection of the race to spiritual, physical, and eternal death on account of the sin of Adam. Not only the terms of the passage, but its connection and the ruling idea of the discussion surely determine this sense. On the institution of the Edenic probation with Adam and Eve, Watson says: “The circumstances of the case infallibly show that, in the whole transaction, they stood before their Maker as public persons and as the legal representatives of their descendants, though in so many words they are not invested with these titles.”[866] [865] Theological Institutes, vol. ii, p. 52.

[866]Ibid., p. 53. This is simply the Calvinistic doctrine of the legal oneness of the race with Adam on the principle of representation and the just amenability of every one to the full penalty of his sin. Exceptions are taken to the Calvinistic doctrine in two points: “It asserts, indeed, the imputation of the actual commission of Adam’s sin to his descendants, which is false in fact; makes us stand chargeable with the full latitude of his transgression and all its attendant circumstances; and constitutes us, separate from all actual voluntary offense, equally guilty with him, all which are repugnant equally to our consciousness and to the equity of the case.”[867] The representative theory in Calvinism no longer holds the imputation of Adam’s sinful deed to his posterity, and whatever point this part of Watson’s criticism might have against the realistic theory, or even against the representative theory as held when he wrote, it has no force against the latter as now held. In its present form it is not the sin of Adam as an act of personal transgression, but the guilt of his sin as an amenability to its full penalty that is imputed to his offspring. The representative character of Adam, which Mr. Watson accepts, carries with it this imputation; and against this he has no reserved ground of objection. In any case of imputation the guilt of sin is the vital fact, because it constitutes the amenability to punishment. The personal deed of Adam is quite indifferent to the imputation of its guilt as a universal amenability to the full penalty which he incurred. If the economy of representation in the Adamic probation is true in fact and valid in principle, then in the vital fact of guilt we do “stand chargeable with the full latitude of his transgression,” and, “separate from all actual voluntary offense, equally guilty with him,” which fact itself, and without any imputation of Adam’s personal deed, seems to us “repugnant equally to our consciousness and to the equity of the case.”

[867]Ibid. With the repudiation of an extreme, and now obsolete, form of imputation, Mr. Watson still adheres to the economy of Adamic representation in all that properly belongs to it. He holds it as presented in the interpretation of Dr. Watts.[868] In this interpretation it is doctrinally one with the present Calvinistic theory of Adamic representation. In the primitive probation Adam represented the race, and on the ground of that representation the penalty of his sin falls upon them as upon himself. Watson goes into detail, and points out the three forms of death which are thus penally consequent to the imputation of Adam’s sin: physical, spiritual, and eternal death. He does not pause even at the last. “The third consequence is eternal death, separation from God, and endless banishment from his glory in a future state. This follows from both the above premises—from the federal character of Adam, and from the eternal life given by Christ being opposed by the apostle to the death derived from Adam.”[869] Thus all are subject to the full

penalty of Adam's sin. Infants are thus subject: "The fact of their being born liable to death, a part of the penalty, is sufficient to show that they were born under the whole malediction."[870] The discussion of this point is thus concluded: "Having thus established the import of the death threatened as the penalty of Adam's transgression to include corporal, moral, or spiritual and eternal death, and showed that the sentence included also the whole of his posterity, our next step is," etc.[871] This is the doctrine of a common native condemnation and damnableness through a participation in the sin of Adam as legal representative of the race in the primitive probation. There is no recognition of any realistic oneness of the race with Adam, nor of a sin of our nature in the sense of punitive desert.

[868]Theological Institutes, vol. ii, pp. 53-55.

[869]Ibid., p. 55.

[870]Ibid., p. 58.

[871]Ibid., p. 61. In Dr. Pope's discussion of original sin there is the sense of a common hereditary guilt or condemnation in consequence of the Adamic connection of the race, "Hereditary guilt is not expressly stated in the form of a proposition: the phrase is of later than scriptural origin. But when St. Paul establishes the connection between sin and death as its comprehensive penalty he teaches that the condemnation of the first sin reigns over all mankind as in some sense one with Adam."[872] In the elaboration of this summary statement of doctrine the same sense is repeatedly expressed. The words of Paul in Romans 5:12, are interpreted as "asserting that in divine imputation all, in some sense, sinned originally in Adam. . . . They sinned in Adam, though not guilty of the act of his sin: this, then, is hereditary condemnation on those who were not personal transgressors and on them all."[873] [872] Pope:Christian Theology, vol. ii, p. 48.

[873]Ibid. The above citations, to which many of like meaning might be added, clearly assert a universal guilt and condemnation through a participation in the sin of Adam, but are quite indefinite as to the mode of that participation. It is true that in the denial of any sharing of the race in his sinful deed the higher realism, such as Shedd maintains, is logically excluded; but beyond this there is all the indefiniteness which lies in the words, " that in divine imputation all, in some sense, sinned originally in Adam." Yet a question so prominent in doctrinal anthropology could not be omitted by such a writer as Dr. Pope, and in several places his views are given. We cannot think him entirely self-consistent, for, as we understand his terms, his theory of the Adamic connection of the race in the Edenic probation is sometimes the realistic, and sometimes the representative. The fundamental difference of these theories, as we have elsewhere shown, precludes consistency in the holding of both. "The nature is condemned, and yet it is universally redeemed. However difficult it may be, we must receive the fact of a human nature, abstracted from the persons who inherit it, lost and marred in Adam and found or retrieved in Christ."[874] "The sin of Adam was expiated as representing the sin of the race as such, or of human nature, or of mankind: a realistic conception which was not borrowed from philosophic realism, and which no nominalism can ever really dislodge from the New Testament."[875] The ruling ideas of these citations belong to the realistic mode of the Adamic connection of the race as the ground of native sinfulness; nor can they be interpreted consistently with any other theory. "Original sin sprang from the federal constitution of the race: one in the unity of the unlimited many."[876] This is clearly and definitely the representative mode of a common Adamic guilt. In the use and meaning of terms, as

clearly seen in the history of doctrinal anthropology, the federal constitution of the race means that Adam was divinely constituted the legal representative of his offspring, and that on this ground all are justly involved in the guilt and punishment of his sin.

[874]Ibid., p. 58.

[875]Wesley Memorial Volume, art. “Methodist Doctrine,” by Dr. Pope, pp. 177, 178. Cited in Summer’sTheology, vol. ii, p. 43.

[876]Pope:Christian Theology, vol. ii, p. 62. In addition to these irreconcilable modes of a common Adamic guilt. Dr. Pope holds the intrinsic sinfulness of the corruption of nature with which we are born. Against the Romish doctrine, that concupiscence in the baptized is not of the nature of sin, he controversially says: “As if baptism could make that which is essentially sinful cease to be such; as if the perversion of the will, which constitutes us formally sinners as soon as we feel and assent to its operation, were not in itself sinful. . . . The current Romanist doctrine denies that men are born into the world with anything subjective in them of the strict nature of sin. . . . In virtue of this principle the true doctrine is opposed also to every account of sin which insists that it cannot be reckoned such by a righteous God save when the will actively consents; and that none can be held responsible for any state of soul or action of life which is not the result of the posture of the W’ ill at the time. There is an offending character behind the offending will.”[877] Both the controversial issues of these passages and the principles which they assert must mean a sinfulness of the common native depravity in the sense of punitive desert. That Dr. Pope holds this doctrine he has placed beyond question in declaring that “Methodism accepts the article of the English Church”—the ninth, which he immediately cites.[878] We are not just now concerned with the historical accuracy of this statement, but simply with Dr. Pope’s own view. After the characterization of the common native corruption derived from Adam, the article declares: “Therefore in every person born into the world, it deserveth God’s wrath and damnation.” The whole article, with these words in it, is cited with manifest personal approval.

[877]Christian Theology, vol. ii, pp. 83, 84.

[878]Ibid., p. 80.

We thus find in Pope the maintenance of three distinct grounds of a common native sinfulness and damnableness. On the ground of a real oneness with Adam, and also on the ground of a representative oneness, we share the guilt and deserve the penalty of his sin. The third ground is given in the intrinsic sinfulness of the depravity of nature inherited from Adam. These views can neither be reconciled with each other nor with the determining principles of Arminianism. In the work of Dr. Summers both the realistic and representative modes of a common Adamic sin are rejected and dismissed as unworthy of disputation.[879] One is a little surprised at this summary method, in view of the prominence of these theories in doctrinal anthropology, and especially in view of the fact that both, as we have seen in recent citations, are accepted by leading Arminian theologians. Elsewhere the representative economy is accepted. On the Adamic relation of the race as the source of original or birth sin Summers says: “The human species is viewed as a solidarity, and it is represented by its head, commonly called its ‘federal head,’ because the covenant of life and death was made with him for himself and posterity.”[880] No Calvinistic advocate of the representative theory and the immediate imputation of Adam’s sin to his offspring

could take any exception to such an expression of his doctrine. As read and interpreted in the light of historical anthropology it means, and must mean, the immediate imputation of the guilt of Adam's sin to the race on the principle of representation.

[879]Systematic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 36, 37.

[880]Ibid., p. 45.

2. A Common Justification in Christ.—Arminians interpret the doctrine of original or birth sin, not merely from the Adamic connection of the race, but also from its connection with the universal atonement. A common native damnableness is in itself too thoroughly Augustinian for any consistent place in the Arminian system. Hence the Arminian theologian who assumes to find such universal sinfulness in the Adamic connection of the race is sure to supplement his doctrine with the balancing or canceling grace of a free justification in Christ. In this mode it is attempted to reconcile the doctrine of native sinfulness or demerit with the fundamental principles of Arminianism, and also to void the Calvinistic assumption that it fully concedes the ground of election and reprobation. For the present we are concerned merely with the facts in the case, and not with the logical validity of the method.

Arminius defends the doctrine of his friend Borrius, that original sin will condemn no one, and that all who die in infancy are saved; that there is no future penal doom except for actual sin.[881] This is a great change of view from that of Arminius, previously set forth, that all so shared in the guilt of Adam's sin as to be amenable to the penalty of eternal death. What is the ground of this change? The grace of a universal atonement which freely cancels the guilt of Adamic sin: "Because God has taken the whole human race into the grace of reconciliation, and has entered into a covenant of grace with Adam, and with the whole of his posterity in him."

[881]Writings, vol. i, pp. 317-321. The citation of all that Fletcher has said on this question would require much space. Referring to a prior discussion, he says: "From Romans 5:18, I proved the justification of infants: 'As by the offense of Adam (says the apostle) judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of Christ the free gift came upon all men to justification of life.' In support of this justification, which comes upon all men in their infancy, I now advance the following arguments."[882] We have no occasion to cite these arguments, as our present aim is simply to present the doctrine of Fletcher on the question of a free justification in Christ which covers the inheritance of Adamic sin. Such a doctrine he clearly maintains. The justification cancels the guilt of original sin in the case of all infants.

[882]Works, vol. i, pp. 283, 284.

We have previously shown that Watson maintained a strong doctrine of original sin ; that the sin of Adam as representative of the race brought upon all an amenability to the threefold penalty of spiritual, physical, and eternal death. As an Arminian, however, he could not abide by this doctrine as a whole and unqualified account of man's moral state. In itself the doctrine means, not only that we are all born with the desert of God's wrath and damnation, but that all who die in infancy might forever suffer the penal doom of sin. Of course Watson repudiates the possibility of such a consequence. With other Arminians he supplements the Adamic connection of the race with its relation to the grace of a universal atonement. We must not view "the legal part of the whole transaction which affected our first parents and their posterity separately from the evangelical

provision of mercy which was concurrent with it, and which included, in like manner, both them and their whole race. . . . As the question relates to the moral government of God, if one part of the transaction before us is intimately and inseparably connected with another and collateral procedure, it cannot certainly be viewed in its true light but in that connection. The redemption of man by Christ was certainly not an after-thought brought in upon man's apostasy, it was aprovision, and when man fell he found justice hand in hand with mercy."[883] It is on the ground of this redemption as a part of the divine economy that Mr. Watson defends the common Adamic sinfulness against the accusation of injustice and wrong. Any validity of such defense must assume that the grace of the common redemption very materially limits or modifies the common native sinfulness. This assumption is made, and the gracious relief is set forth. The mode of this relief is not completely at one with Fletcher's view. Watson does not agree with him in the actual justification of infants. "As to infants, they are not, indeed, born justified and regenerate; so that to say that original sin is taken away, as to infants, by Christ, is not the correct view of the case, for the reason before given; but they are all born under the 'free gift,' the effects of the 'righteousness' of one, which extended to 'all men;' and this free gift is bestowed on them in order to justification of life, the adjudging of the condemned to live."[884] This provision is such that all who die in infancy must unconditionally share its grace in their salvation. This view is strongly maintained in connection with the passage just cited. In the case of adults, the blessings of grace freely offered in Christ more than balance the evil consequences of Adam's sin. "In all this it is impossible to impeach the equity of the divine procedure, since no man suffers any loss or injury ultimately by the sin of Adam, but by his own willful obstinacy—the 'abounding of grace' by Christ having placed before all men, upon their believing, not merely compensation for the loss and injury sustained by Adam, but infinitely higher blessings, both in kind and degree, than were forfeited in him."[885] Such is the theodicy which Watson attempts.

[883]Watson:Theological Institutes, vol. ii, p. 56.

[884]Theological Institutes, vol. ii, p. 59.

[885]Ibid., p. 57.

Dr. Pope maintains a free justification in Christ which fully covers the Adamic sin of the race. "The condemnation resting upon the race as such is removed by the virtue of the one oblation beginning with the beginning of sin. The nature of man received the atonement once for all; God in Christ is reconciled to the race of Adam; and no child of mankind is condemned eternally for the original offense, that is, for the fact of his being born into a condemned lineage."[886] Summers maintains the same doctrine. "If a decree of condemnation has been issued against original sin, irresponsibly derived from the first Adam, likewise a decree of justification has issued from the same court, whose benefits are unconditionally bestowed through the second Adam."[887] [886] Christian Theology, vol. ii, p. 59.

[887]Systematic Theology, vol. ii, p. 39. By the editor.

We previously showed that all these authors maintained the sinfulness of the race, in the sense of penal desert, on the ground of its Adamic connection. In the citations under the present head they equally maintain a free and actual justification in Christ—a justification which cancels the guilt of original sin. The result is, doctrinally, a complete freedom from the original condemnation, whether

on the ground of a participation in the sin of Adam or of the corruption of nature derived from him. A qualifying exception should he made in the case of Watson. He does not hold the actual justification from the guilt of original sin, but a provisional justification in a universal atonement, which is made “in order to” a universal justification. While this justification must become unconditionally actual in the case of all who die in infancy, it is only conditionally available on the part of such as reach the responsibilities of probation: this is the special view of Watson. It follows, and is openly maintained, that no one can suffer final condemnation simply on the ground of Adamic sin.[888] [888] Theological Institutes, vol. ii, pp. 399, 400.

3. Denial of Concession to Calvinism.—On the ground of original sin as a just amenability to the divine judgment and wrath, God may graciously elect a part to salvation in Christ, and without any injustice to the rest leave them to the penal doom which their sin justly deserves. This often-uttered principle of Calvinism is well expressed in these words : “ Cum omnes homines in Adamo peccaverint, et rei sint facti maledictionis et mortis aeternae, Deus nemiui fecisset injuriam, si universum genus humanum in peccato et raaledictione relinquere, ac propter peccatum damnare voluisset.”[889] If on the ground of original sin all men justly deserve the doom of eternal perdition, then in the election of grace God might freely choose a part to salvation in Christ, without any injustice or wrong in the reprobation or pretention of the rest, who are thereby merely delivered over to the doom which they deserve. On this ground and in this manner Calvinism assumes that the doctrine of original sin which Arminianism maintains fully concedes the ground of election and reprobation.[890] [889] Canons of the Synod of Dort, Predestination.

[890]Rice:God Sovereign and Man Free, pp. 96-106.

Arminians who hold the strongest doctrine of original sin must dispute this concession—must, whether consistently or not. This is uniformly done. It would be easy to fill much space with citations in point, but a few will suffice. It will readily be seen that the ground on which the Calvinistic assumption is denied is the universality of the redemption in Christ. “It is an easy and plausible thing to say, in the usual loose and general way of stating the sublapsarian doctrine, that the whole race having fallen in Adam, and become justly liable to eternal death, God might, without any impeachment of his justice, in the exercise of his sovereign grace, appoint some to life and salvation by Christ, and leave the others to their deserved punishment. But this is a false view of the case, built upon the false assumption that the whole race were personally and individually, in consequence of Adam’s fall, absolutely liable to eternal death. That very fact, which is the foundation of the whole scheme, is easy to be refuted on the clearest authority of Scripture; while not a passage can be adduced, we may boldly affirm, which sanctions any such doctrine.”[891] We shall see in another place the method of Watson’s refutation of the Calvinistic position. “The Arminian doctrine in its purest and best form avoided the error of the previous theories, retaining their truth. It held the Adamic unity of the race: ‘in Adam all have sinned,’ and ‘all men are by nature the children of wrath,’ But it maintained also, ‘That the most gracious God has provided for all a remedy for that general evil which was delivered to us from Adam, free and gratuitous in his beloved Son Jesus Christ, as it were a new and another Adam. So that the baneful error of those is plainly apparent who are accustomed to found upon that original sin the decree of absolute reprobation invented by themselves.’”[892] The inner citation is from the Apology of the Remonstrants, and thus gives the earliest Arminian view of this question, which clearly receives the approval of Dr. Pope. “Methodism clearly perceives that to admit that mankind are actually

born into the world justly under condemnation is to grant the foundation of the whole Calvinistic scheme. Granted natal desert of damnation, there can be no valid objection to the sovereign election of a few out of the reprobate mass, or to limited atonement, irresistible grace, and final perseverance to secure the present and eternal salvation of the sovereignly predestinated number. . . . Representative theologians of Methodism from the beginning until now, from Fletcher to Pope, have overthrown this fundamental teaching of Calvinism with the express statement of the Scriptures, setting over against the death-dealing first Adam the life-giving second."[893] [891] Watson:Theological Institutes, vol. ii, pp. 394, 395.

[892]Pope:Christian Theology, vol. ii, pp. 78, 79.

[893]Summers:Systematic Theology, vol. ii, pp. 38, 39. By the editor.

192. II. The Issue With Calvinism.

II. The Issue With Calvinism.

We have seen the position of Calvinism, that original sin constitutes a real and sufficient ground of election and reprobation, and also its assumption, that the Arminian doctrine of original sin fully concedes this ground. We have also seen, in a general view, the manner in which Arminians defend their doctrine against this assumption, and have given their answer in various citations. We have intimated that the method of his defense is open to review, and we take up the topic of the present section for this purpose.

1. Underlying Principle of the Issue.—The principle is, that original sin in the sense of demerit and damnableness is a real and sufficient ground of election and reprobation; or, a little more exactly, that such original sin would clear the divine reprobation of a part of mankind of all injustice and wrong. This position is thoroughly valid. The purely gracious election and salvation of a part could be no injustice to the reprobate, nor could their own reprobation, as they would thereby simply be delivered over to their merited doom. There can be no injustice or wrong in the infliction of deserved penalty. Election and reprobation may still be disputed as facts, as may also the original sin which is claimed to justify the latter; but if such universal sinfulness be a reality, then, so far as justice is concerned, the divine reprobation of a part of mankind may be thoroughly vindicated.

2. Real Point of the Issue.—The real point is, whether the Arminian doctrine of original sin concedes the ground of election and reprobation as maintained in Calvinism; or, more definitely, whether Arminianism holds a form of original sin which, with the gracious election and salvation of a part of mankind, would justify the divine reprobation of the rest. Whatever may be the truth in this case, the fact of such reprobation would still be an open question. As election and reprobation are no logical implication of a sufficient ground in original sin, so the Arminian concession of such a ground could in no sense imply their actuality. Yet the concession of such a ground, or the holding a form of original sin which constitutes such a ground, would go to the dialectic advantage of Calvinism against Arminianism, because it would thoroughly void an important argument against reprobation. The whole argument against its injustice would thus be sacrificed. Whether Arminianism concedes this ground must be determined in view of its doctrine of original sin, together with its doctrine of a common justification through the grace of Christ. We are thus brought to the question of special interest in the present section.

3. Arminian Treatment of the Issue.—We already have the material for the required review. It was given partly in citations from Arminian theologians on original sin, partly in citations on a common infant justification in Christ, and partly in showing how they set forth this justification as the disproof of any ground of election and reprobation in their doctrine of original sin. In the present inquiry we shall need only the ruling ideas presented under those several heads. The doctrine of original sin maintained in the previous citations substantially the Augustinian doctrine. Less stress is laid upon the intrinsic sinfulness and demerit of the common native depravity, though, as we have seen, this form of original sin is repeatedly asserted; but the common sharing in the guilt of Adam’s sin, and

the common amenability to the penalty which he incurred in the three forms of spiritual, physical, and eternal death, receive frequent and unqualified expression. It is at this point that the Calvinist takes up the question and affirms that this doctrine of original sin concedes the ground of election and reprobation. We must say that the Calvinist is right. If through a common sharing in the sin of Adam, or on account of a sinful nature inherited from him, all are justly amenable to the penalty of eternal death, then in the election of grace God may without any injustice or wrong leave a part to their deserved doom. The Arminian replies, that we have as yet but a part of the case; that if there is a universal condemnation through the sin of Adam, there is also a universal justification through the grace of Christ; that the justification cancels the condemnation. Prior citations fully verify this general statement. On the ground of this free justification it is denied that any concession is made to Calvinism in the interest of election and reprobation. This is the uniform Arminian defense, of long standing and often repeated; so that to question its directness or sufficiency may seem rash and offensive. Yet we must think it neither direct nor sufficient; and, more than this, that it leads to doctrinal confusion and contradiction. It does not go to the point of the issue, which is the state of the race simply from its Adamic connection. Here, as seen in previous citations, the doctrine maintained is substantially one with the Calvinistic. Here is where the Calvinist makes his point and claims that the ground of reprobation, so far as justice is concerned, is fully conceded. This is the fact in the case; nor can its polemical fairness be questioned.

If we agree with the Calvinist on the consequence of the Adamic connection of the race, that all are thereby constituted sinners in the sense of punitive desert, there is where we ought to meet the issue—where those who hold the common Adamic sinfulness ought to meet it. Our theologians, as we have seen, refuse to do this, but interpose a common justification in Christ, and on this ground dispute the Calvinistic position. The real issue is thus avoided. There are here three closely connected questions: the consequence of Adam's sin to the race; the manner in which God has actually dealt with the race as involved in that consequence; and the manner in which he might justly have dealt with it. "We have seen the substantial agreement on the first question—that by the sin of Adam all are constituted sinners. There is a wide difference on the second question. With the Calvinist, God dealt with the sinful race in the mode of election and reprobation—redeeming a part of mankind; with the Arminian, in the mode of a universal atonement. On this issue the truth is surely with the Arminian. But this gives him no logical right to shun the third question—the manner in which God might have dealt with the race. The Calvinist asserts that, as by the sin of Adam all men deserve an eternal penal doom, God might justly exclude a part from the grace of redemption. If we hold the Adamic sinfulness in which that position is grounded we must meet the issue at this point. To answer that God has not so dealt with the race is to evade the question; and there is no escape in this mode. The doctrine of a common Adamic sin, with the desert of an eternal penal doom, binds us to its logical implications. To say that God could not justly inflict this penalty on all mankind is to impeach his justice in the common amenability which is maintained. If the universal execution of the penalty would be unjust, the universal sentence of condemnation would be unjust. The imposition of an unjust condemnation is as contrary to the divine equity as the infliction of undeserved punishment. The doctrine maintained in previous citations from Arminian theologians means that the offspring of Adam, simply on account of his sin, and without any personal fault of their own, might justly be doomed to an eternal penal death. It means that, previous to the common justification in Christ, all are under this condemnation, and might justly suffer the infliction of this penal doom. "Calvinists

are now ashamed of consigning infants to the torments of hell: they begin to extend their election to them all."[894] Fletcher said this more than a hundred years ago. Yet Fletcher himself maintained a doctrine of original sin which means the desert of such a doom; and many Arminians in his succession have done the same. If the infliction of such a doom would deeply offend one's sensibilities, why should not the doctrine of its just desert equally offend one's moral reason? If Calvinists are ashamed of the doctrine of infant damnation, it seems quite time that Arminians were ashamed of the doctrine of a universal infant desert of damnation.

[894]Fletcher: Works, vol. i, p. 284. The Arminian doctrine of a universal justification in Christ, so far from disproving this sense of infant guilt, strongly affirms it. It this justification is a reality, as it is uniformly held to be, then the guilt of original sin must also be a reality. In the order of facts the guilt must precede its cancellation. In the previous citations we have seen that both are held to be realities, and that the innocence of childhood is not its natural birthright, but the result of its justification from the guilt of original sin. Thus the one is set over against the other; and each is held to interpret the other. "As by one man's disobedience many were made (or constituted, both in fact and by imputation) sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous. . . . In whatever sense the redemption was an act external to the race and for its benefit, the fall was external to the successive generations of mankind and for their condemnation. Here it is obvious, or ought to be obvious, that the condemnation and the life are correlatives: the judgment is the opposite of the reign in life as the result of abundance of grace." "There are two aspects of Christ's redeeming intervention, one absolutely universal and one particular. As to the former, in whatsoever sense the race of man died in Adam it lives again in Christ."[895] Thus a real justification of the race in Christ means a real condemnation and guilt of the race on account of the sin of Adam ; and, conversely, a real condemnation in Adam means a real justification in Christ as the cancellation of the common Adamic sin. Thus the justification which is held to cancel the common guilt of original sin means the prior reality of this guilt, with its amenability to the penal doom of sin, and that such is the natural state of all infants.

[895]Pope:Christian Theology, vol. ii, pp. 48, 49; vol. iii, p. 435.

4. Doctrinal Confusion and Contradiction.—The Arminian theologians who hold the stronger view of original sin do not adhere to their own doctrine, but depart from it in a manner which involves confusion and contradiction. This appears in their persistent insistence that the universal justification shall be recognized as a part of their doctrine, and in constantly setting forth this justification as the vindication of the divine economy in the universal Adamic guilt and condemnation. But no justly imposed guilt or penalty can need any such vindication; and the constant setting it forth not only betrays serious doubt of the consistency of a common Adamic sin with the divine justice, but really means its inconsistency.

Such are the implications in the maintenance of the position that, without the universal atonement in Christ, God could not have permitted the propagation of the race, and for the reason of its native sinfulness. This is so familiar a fact that references are quite needless. We cite a single instance: "No race unredeemed, and without hope of redemption, could in the universe of a holy God continue to propagate its generations."[896] If the doctrine of original sin be true in the sense in which we have found it maintained, there could be no hinderance in the divine justice to such propagation, because no one would suffer any undeserved penal doom. The denial of the

propagation of the race, except under an economy of universal redemption, is a part of the argument to clear the divine justice of all reason of impeachment in the matter of original sin. There can be no reason for this defense, except with the consent that original sin, with its penalty, is in itself an injustice. This again is a departure from the doctrine maintained, with the result of confusion and contradiction. Such, too, is the implication of another point frequently made : that any evil which we may suffer through the sin of Adam is entirely consistent with the divine justice, if an equal good is conferred or attainable through the redemption in Christ.[897] The principle of compensation is of value in respect to providential suffering, but is irrelevant and valueless in the present question. If the penalties of original sin are in themselves consistent with the divine justice no compensatory provision is needed for their vindication; if inconsistent, no such provision can justify them. Only by a departure from the asserted doctrine of original sin, and with the concession of its injustice, can such a vindication be consistently attempted.

[896]Pope:Christian Theology, vol. ii, p. 296.

[897]Wesley: Works, vol. v, p. 589; Watson:Theological Institutes, vol. ii, pp. 57, 60.

There is an open tendency to drop eternal death from the penalties of original sin, and to limit the common amenability to the two forms of spiritual and physical death. This has actually been done, and in some instances by those who have openly affirmed the common amenability to the penalty of eternal death on account of the sin of Adam. In opposition to that view the point is definitely made that actual personal sinning is the only ground of such penalty.[898] The most serious aspect of the doctrine is thus discarded, but at the cost of consistency, and in some instances with the consequence of self-contradiction.

[898]Wesley: Works, vol. v, pp. 556, 577; Watson:Theological Institutes, vol. ii, pp. 397400; Pope:Christian Theology, vol. ii, p. 59; vol. iii, p. 437; Curry:Fragments, pp. 164, 165. With the two forms of penal death, the principle remains, that all Mau justly be punished for a sin in the commission of which they had no agency, or for a corruption of nature in the origin of which they had no part. This is the real perplexity of the question. Nor is there any rational solution, nor relief even, in the dismission of eternal death as a penalty of Adamic sin. “The force of the reasons brought against imputing Adam’s sin to his posterity (if there be any force in them) lies in this, that Adam and his posterity are not one. But this lies as properly against charging a part of the guilt as the whole. For Adam’s posterity, by not being the same with him, had no more hand in a little of what was done than in the whole. They were as absolutely free from being concerned in that act partly as they were wholly. And there is no reason to be brought why one man’s sin cannot be justly reckoned to another’s account who was not then in being, in the whole of it, but what will as properly lie against its being reckoned to him in any part, so as that he should be subject to any condemnation or punishment on that account. If those reasons are good, all the difference there can be is this, that to bring a great punishment on infants for Adam’s sin is a great act of injustice, and to bring a comparatively small punishment is a smaller act of injustice, but not, that this is not as truly and demonstrably an act of injustice as the other.”[899] This reasoning is conclusive of our own position, and none the less so because Edwards aimed at the support of his own strong doctrine of original sin. “We hold this to be a solid and unanswerable argument; and we hold also that God can no more commit a small act of injustice than a great one. Hence, in the eye ofreason there is no medium between rejecting the whole of the imputation of Adam’s sin, and ceasing to

object against the imputation of the whole of it as inconsistent with the justice and goodness of God. We may arbitrarily wipe out a portion of it in order to relieve our imagination; but this brings no relief to the calm and passionless reason. It may still the wild tumults of emotion, but it cannot silence the voice of the intellect."[900] Watson makes the same point, and really with the same aim as Edwards. Having asserted, and supported by argument, the common amenability to the penalty of eternal death on account of the sin of Adam, he says: "The justice of this is objected to, a point which will be immediately considered; but it is now sufficient to say that if the making the descendants of Adam liable to eternal death, because of his offense, be unjust, the infliction of temporal death is so also, the duration of the punishment making no difference in the simple question of justice. If punishment, whether of loss or of pain, be unjust, its measure and duration may be a greater or a less injustice; but it is unjust in every degree."[901] [899] Edwards: Works, vol. ii, pp. 494, 495.

[900]Bledsoe:Theodicy, p. 260.

[901]Theological Institutes, vol. ii, p. 55. The reasoning in the above citations is thoroughly valid and conclusive. Nor do the Scriptures allow any such distinction between temporal and eternal penalties, or make any exception in case of the latter. But no Arminian can abide by the whole doctrine; for it is contradictory to all the ruling principles of his system. A doctrine which means that an infant of the thousandth °generation from Adam might for his sin be justly doomed to an eternal penal death is too heavy a load for the Arminian faith. Calvinism itself no longer attempts to bear this burden. Indeed, the Arminian retreat is no surprise. Instances appear in previous citations and references. First, in treating original sin simply in view of the Adamic connection of the race, a common amenability to the penalty of eternal death on account of Adam's sin is openly asserted and maintained; then in treating the question in other relations, that amenability is just as openly denied and controverted.

We may instance the case of Mr. Watson; certainly not for the purpose of pointing out his inconsistency as an end, but rather as a means of showing that the doctrine of original sin which he maintained must lead any Arminian into doctrinal confusion and contradiction. We have seen that he asserted, and supported by argument, the common amenability to the penalty of eternal death on account of the sin of Adam. Again we have seen him discarding this position, and asserting that actual personal sinning is the only ground of such amenability. Then, in controverting the doctrine of reprobation in its sublapsarian form, which maintains that, as for the sin of Adam all men are justly amenable to the penalty of eternal death, therefore in the election of grace God might omit a part and justly leave them to their deserved doom, Mr. Watson says: "In whatever light the subject be viewed, no fault, in any right construction, can be chargeable upon the persons so punished, or, as we may rather say, destroyed, since punishment supposes a judicial proceeding, which this act cuts short. For either the reprobates are destroyed for a pure reason of sovereignty, without any reference to their sinfulness, and thus all criminality is left out of the consideration; or they are destroyed for the sin of Adam, to which they were never consenting, or for personal faults resulting from a corruption of nature which they brought into the world with them, and which God wills not to correct, and they have no power to correct themselves. Every received notion of justice is thus violated."[902] That this passage is openly contradictory to the doctrine of original sin maintained by Watson is manifest; yet it is thoroughly Arminian and presents views to which every Arminian must come in maintaining the ruling principles of his own

system against the opposing tenets of Calvinism.

[902]Theological Institutes, vol. ii, p. 342. In the way of further illustration we may instance the case of Fletcher. In moral support of his doctrine of original sin he cites from the Homily on the Nativity: “Thus, in Adam, all men became universally mortal, having in themselves nothing but everlasting damnation of body and soul.” There is nothing in the citation which is not in his own doctrine. Yet as an Arminian he very naturally, and very properly as well, appends a note: “Prejudiced persons, who, instead of considering the entire system of truth, run away with a part detached from the whole, will be offended here, as if our Church (of England) ‘damned every body.’ But the candid reader will easily observe that, instead of dooming any one to destruction, she only declares that the Saviour finds all men in a state of condemnation and misery, where they would eternally remain were it not for the compassionate equity of our gracious God, which does not permit him to sentence to a consciousness of eternal torment any one of his creatures for a sin of which they never were personally guilty, and of which, consequently, they can never have any consciousness.”[903] Yet a common amenability to the penalty of eternal death on account of the sin of Adam is in the doctrine of original sin which Fletcher maintains; in the Homily on the Nativity from which he cites in its moral support; and in the passage just now cited from himself. But in this same passage such common amenability is really denied, and denied on the ground of the divine equity; for equity is still equity, though qualified as compassionate. That the divine equity could not permit the eternal punishment of any one simply on the ground of so alien a sin as Adam’s, must mean that such a doom would be unjust. But if the infliction of such a penalty would be unjust, there could be no just amenability to its infliction, and, therefore, no amenability at all. Thus there is doctrinal confusion and contradiction; a very sure result in any case where it is attempted to carry the Augustinian doctrine of native demerit into the Arminian system.

[903]Works, vol. iii, p. 256.

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