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DOCTRINE

OF

DIVINE EFFICIENCY,

DEFENDED AGAINST CERTAIN

MODERN SPECULATIONS.

BY EDWARD D. GRIFFIN, D. D.

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“Love the Truth and Peace.”—Zech. 8. 19.

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CONTENTS.

	Page
INTRODUCTION	5
CHAPTER I. <i>Dr Fitch's Theory</i>	13
CHAPTER II. <i>Dr Taylor's Theory</i>	43
CHAPTER III. <i>Notice of Two Other Writers</i>	55
CHAPTER IV. <i>Meaning and Origin of Corrupt Nature</i> ...	63
CHAPTER V. <i>Divine Efficiency</i>	73
CHAPTER VI. <i>Importance and Instrumentality of Truth</i> ..	105
CHAPTER VII. <i>Scripture Testimony to Divine Efficiency</i> ..	117
CHAPTER VIII. <i>Sinless Creatures Dependent for Holiness</i> ..	165
CHAPTER IX. <i>God's Power to Prevent Sin</i>	179
CHAPTER X. <i>Alleged Dominion of Motives.—A Distinct Theory</i>	203



INTRODUCTION.

THERE is something in controversy which is calculated to awaken unhallowed passions, even when the object is professedly most remote from personal interest. Religious controversy is therefore in itself an evil, though it is often necessary. This discussion I hope to conduct with good will to my brethren, all of whom I respect, and some of whom are my personal friends. I consider it lawful to examine with freedom the soundness and even the fairness of their arguments, but not to extend my censure beyond the reasoning. I regard our dependence on divine efficiency as one of the sweetest doctrines of the Bible, and know it to be most deeply felt under the special effusions of the Spirit. Take from me my dependence on God, and I must despair. I consider too the honour of raising to spiritual life a world dead in trespasses and sins, as one of the brightest glories of the Godhead; and I have been grieved at my very heart to see this honour taken away. This has been the severest cut of all. These reasons for entering into this discussion will, I hope,

plead my cause with those who may think me in error. Not that I am afraid to speak for God; but I know it to be my duty to speak in a way least offensive to my brethren, and least calculated to grieve the Spirit from our churches by party strife. But I may be permitted to call things by their right names, and intend to be so explicit as to make the theories I am opposing clear to ordinary capacities.

By divine efficiency I mean the effectual power of God immediately applied to the heart to make it holy. This is the meaning which the Calvinistic world have always given to the phrase; and no man has a right to use it in another sense, to set off a contrary doctrine or otherwise. Nor may I be accused of wrongfully charging a denial of divine efficiency, because some may choose to wrap up another doctrine under this name.

There are two theories of modern origin abroad in our country which deny this doctrine, and more or less place the cause of holiness in motives clearly presented by the illuminating Spirit. One of these is understood to have proceeded from New-Haven, and to owe its origin to the Rev. Doctors Taylor and Fitch, Professors of Theology in Yale College. This system plainly denies the power of God fully to control the mind by motives. The other, which is adopted by here and there an individual, ascribes to God an absolute dominion by motives. Both disclaim the self-determining power, on account of the influence allowed to motives: but the New-Haven system as plainly involves the self-determining power as did that of Arminius himself. I shall examine both theories.

but shall direct my chief attention to the former, as occupying more of the public attention and involving errors of a larger size.

Dr Taylor, in treating of consideration and the comparison of different objects of choice, says, "We have already had occasion to say, that to deny the tendency of the acts specified to produce a change of heart, is to maintain the doctrine of the self-determining power of the will."* As though this was a pretended power to act without motives. And a writer on the same side, in a late Periodical, rejects the imputation under a notion that the theory of the self-determining power is, that the will determines the will. Now Pres. Edwards did, *by way of inference*, push his antagonists into this inconsistency, that the will is determined by a previous act of the will, and that therefore there is a volition before the first volition; but no Arminian, I believe, was ever willing to admit into his theory this inconsistency. And Pres. Edwards himself, in his book on the Freedom of the Will,† says, "I shall suppose that the Arminians, when they speak of the will's determining itself, do, by the will, mean the soul willing. I shall take it for granted that when they speak of the will as the determiner, they mean the soul in the exercise of a power of willing.—I shall suppose this to be their meaning because nothing else can be meant without the grossest and plainest absurdity." They meant to say that the man himself chooses, unconstrained by a higher power: but they did not mean to say, (though this was an inference drawn from their arguments,) that he has

* Christian Spectator for 1829: p. 486. † Lon. Ed. 1790: p. 45.

that choice because he first chooses to have that choice; for this would place a volition before the first volition. They maintained that the will was not *compelled* by any thing without; that the soul was free to act or not act, notwithstanding all inducements presented. But they still maintained, (as who will not?) that the mind, though not *forced*, was uniformly *induced* by the stronger motive. The great masters of Arminianism who are quoted by Pres. Edwards in his work on the Will, do this.* Dr Turnbull approvingly quotes another of them as saying, "The will itself, how absolute and incontrollable soever it may be thought, never fails in its obedience to the dictates of the understanding." Mr. Chubb says, "No action can take place without some motive to excite it." "Volition cannot take place without some previous reason or motive to induce it." Dr Whitby says, "To say that—the greatest good proposed, the greatest evil threatened, when equally believed and reflected on, is not sufficient to engage the will to choose the good and refuse the evil, is in effect to say, That which alone doth move the will to choose or to refuse, is not sufficient to engage it so to do; which, being contradictory to itself, must of necessity be false. Be it then so that we naturally have an aversion to the truths proposed in the Gospel; *that* only can make us indisposed to attend to them, but cannot hinder our conviction when we do apprehend them and attend to them.— Be it that there is in us also a renitency to the good we are to choose; *that* only can indispose us to believe it is, and to approve it as, our chiefest good. Be it that we are

* Page 107—118.

prone to the evil that we should decline; *that* only can render it the more difficult for us to believe it is the worst of evils. But yet what we do really believe to be our chiefest good, will still be chosen; and what we apprehend to be the worst of evils, will, whilst we do continue under that conviction, be refused by us. It therefore can be only requisite, in order to these ends, that the good Spirit should so *illumine our understandings*, that we, *attending to and considering* what lies before us, should apprehend and be convinced of our duty; and that the blessings of the Gospel should be so propounded to us, as that we may discern them to be our chiefest good; and the miseries it threateneth, so as we may be convinced that they are the worst of evils; that we may choose the one and refuse the other."

Here is the New-Haven divinity entire. Here is Dr Taylor's constitutional susceptibility to motives, founded in self-love and wrought upon by the good contained in truth. Here is that divine illumination which fastens the wandering attention to truth and lets in upon the mind the full power of motives; which, with the mind's own activity, is enough without divine efficiency. That power of action which requires no other stimulus than motives enforced by divine illumination, is the very self-determining power which Whitby, the prince of Arminians, maintained. And this is maintained in exact form by the gentlemen of New-Haven, though Dr Taylor disclaims the belief because he admits the necessity of motives. And who does not? As relates to divine efficiency and motives and divine illumination, the gentlemen of New-Haven per-

fectly agree with Whitby and Chubb and Turnbull as above quoted. Some of the Arminians of a darker age did indeed suppose that the will could act without motives. But this appendage was not essential to the self-determining power. If the mind moves itself to holiness in view of motives enforced by the illuminating Spirit, without divine efficiency, while it is competent to reject the motives and is not absolutely controlled by them, it possesses the self-determining power. And the New-Haven brethren will not deny that this is their exact creed. In explaining their system therefore I shall unhesitatingly ascribe to them this belief. But whether I am thought to be right in this use of the phrase or not, to prevent all dispute as to the exact imputation I make, I hereby announce once for all, that I mean by the self-determining power, a competency, (in every sense of the word,) to move, in view of motives, without divine efficiency, and a competency to reject the motives.

Even the allegation of our brethren that a change by divine efficiency would be only a *physical* operation, and that no change is *moral* but that which is wrought by motives, is borrowed from the old Arminians.

There are three distinct theories respecting the cause of the holy state or affections of the mind. One is, that it is the power of the Spirit immediately applied to the mind, to give it a holy temper, or, as others say, to make it fall in with the motives presented in divine truth. Another is, that the cause lies in the motives themselves, set clearly before the understanding by the illuminating Spirit. This is that theory which asserts the absolute do-

minion of motives. The third is, that the mind turns itself, without any action of God but that which presents motives ; without any motives but those which the mind is in all respects competent to resist, and which many do finally resist. The cause then certainly lies in the self-determining power. Here is nothing but the illuminating Spirit, the light, and the mind deciding for itself whether to fall in with the motives or not. This is exactly the self-determining power maintained by Whitby, and this is precisely the New-Haven theory.

I suppose Dr Taylor and Dr Fitch to agree in their theory ; but as each has exhibited a different part, I shall examine their writings separately. As Dr Fitch has spread out the system more at large, I shall give him the first place : and as his Review of Dr Fisk's Sermon has been set up by some of the leading advocates of the new doctrines, as a fair exposition of their opinions, I shall attend chiefly to that.



CHAPTER I.

Dr Fitch's Theory, as exhibited in his Review of Dr Fisk's Discourse on Predestination and Election. Christian Spectator, Dec. 1831.

THE theory exhibited in this Review is, one half of the way, pure Arminianism; and the other half, it assumes the high language of Calvinism, with an Arminian meaning two thirds of the way, and for the other third, a Calvinistic meaning wholly at variance with the rest of the system. I will first spread out the theory so plainly that every one can understand it, and secondly, show by copious extracts that it is indeed what I represent.

Dr Fitch says, (putting his thoughts into my own language,) that if God should attempt to make men holy by efficient power, they would not be holy after all, for they would not be moral agents; that all he can do is to throw truth upon their understanding and conscience by his illuminating Spirit, and leave the result to the self-determining power, which is capable of yielding to the motives and capable of resisting any influence which God can bring; that God does the best he can by his Spirit for every individual, and therefore, (if I understand him,) as much for one as another; that he has taken the best measures he

could to keep out sin, and could not succeed any further without destroying the freedom of creatures and rendering them incapable of sinning; that he has taken the best measures he could to recover men from the ruins of the fall, and has done all he could for each individual consistently with the general interest of holiness in our world, and could not succeed with a greater number; that God foresaw that if he gave being to creatures, and brought forward such a system of government and grace, Peter and John, by the self-determining power, would accept his offers, and that Judas would reject them; that this foreseen preponderance of good, (say, two to one,) was the motive which induced God to create and to bring forward such a system of government and grace; that his determination to do all this when he foresaw the result, was itself the predestination of all things, even of sin, and particularly was the election of Peter and John and the rejection of Judas. Thus far the system, (except the *language* of the last proposition,) is pure Arminianism.

At this point he turns short about, and employs the highest Calvinistic language, but with a meaning entirely Arminian. He says that, by the word and Spirit, God *ensures* the regeneration of Peter and John, and, according to an eternal purpose, selects them from the ruins of the apostacy. He presses the doctrine of election in the strongest possible terms. But *how* does God ensure regeneration? and what is the election contended for? Why, he ensures the regeneration of Peter and John by urging upon them motives to which he foresaw that they, by the self-

determining power, would yield. In this way alone he selects them from the ruins of the apostacy ; and his mere determination to do this, was the eternal decree of election. This is no other regeneration or election than any Arminian would agree to if he would consent to use such language. Indeed Dr Fitch plainly tells Dr Fisk, (a consistent and highly respectable Arminian Methodist,) that he ought to believe in the same election if he holds to foreknowledge : and Dr Fisk in his answer tells him that he does, but reproves him for the illusory language in which he has wrapt it up.

Thus two thirds of the last half of the way, viz. through regeneration and election, he uses high Calvinistic language with an Arminian meaning. The other third of the last half of the way, viz. through perseverance, he holds Calvinistic language and supports the Calvinistic theory, but with entire inconsistency with the rest of the system. If God does nothing for Peter but offer motives which the self-determining power is to yield to or reject, there are a million of chances to one that Peter will fall away. Satan fell away from perfect holiness ; Adam fell away from perfect holiness : a million to one that Peter will fall away from imperfect holiness, in a world full of temptations, with all his appetites and former habits set against him, unless he is "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." I beg to know what *makes* it certain that a single Christian will persevere. God's foreknowledge ? That foresees a thing *already certain*, but does not *make* it certain. How comes it then to pass that every regenerated man, from Adam to his youngest

son, perseveres to the end? How came it to pass that God, not as a mere prediction of what the self-determining power would do, but as a promise of what he himself would accomplish in reward of Christ, pledged himself to him that they all should remain steadfast? This doctrine of perseverance can consist with nothing but God's absolute dominion over the mind, either by efficiency or by motives. If this doctrine is true the rest of Dr Fitch's theory falls.

Now then for the proof of these assertions. Dr Fitch says, "We earnestly object to that Antinomian scheme which makes grace terminate solely on dispensing with free agency; by an act of mere omnipotence creating a new heart, and thus leaving none of the elements which constitute the moral certainty of a conversion in the agent himself."* "If Dr Fisk wishes to show that God does not create the volitions of moral agents, he has our hearty consent."† "Dr Fisk maintains, and, we think, truly, that any act of the creature brought into existence *by the mere efficiency* of God, cannot be an accountable act."‡ In that passage, "No man can come to me except the Father—draw him," for *draw* he reads *induce*;§ confining the whole operation to the mere influence of motives. He says approvingly, Dr Fisk "maintains that God is not the sole agent in the universe; that there is an *entire and complete cause* of moral action lying out of him, in the existence of a free agent. Such an agent then, on Dr Fisk's principles, has power to sin *notwithstanding any amount of influence which his Maker can bring upon him*

* 633.

† 599.

‡ 600.

§ 637.

short of destroying his freedom. Does Dr Fisk know, can he prove, that of beings who have thus the power to sin, any moral system could have been formed in which some of these beings would not use that power? Can he prove that *the alternative presented to God in creation was not this; no moral system, or a system in which some of his subjects would abuse the high prerogative of freedom and rebel?*"* This is enough to show his opinion respecting the power of God to control by motives in regeneration. For if by motives God could infallibly bring back the depraved Peter and all other selected sinners, by motives he could in all cases have prevented the fall of spotless spirits.

God's "purpose," continues Dr Fitch, "was to confer on the beings composing his moral kingdom, the power of volition and choice, *and to use the best influence God could use on the whole to secure the holiness and prevent the sin of such beings, who themselves, and not he, were to have immediate power over their volitions.*—And it is still true that he desires their obedience,—and, without hindering the return of any, *uses all the influence he can without sacrificing a greater good, to induce them to return.*"† Now if there is any frankness in these expressions, their meaning must be, that God does as much by his Spirit for one as another; for if he does the best he can for all, he can do no more for a part. If there is any reservation made by such expressions as "on the whole," and "without sacrificing a greater good," nothing at all is said. If Dr Fitch means only that God does the best he can for each

* 604. † 615.

consistently with the highest good of the universe, he says no more than the strongest advocate for efficiency would allow. And such a limitation of a universal proposition, designed to assert God's utmost efforts to recover independent beings, would not be fair. But he goes on. "Whatever *degree* or kind of influence is used with them, to favour their return to him, at any given time,—*is as strongly favourable to their conversion as it can be made amid the obstacles which a world of guilty and rebellious moral agents oppose to God's works of grace.*"— In a note he says, "We do not mean that these influences do not become more powerful at future times, [as knowledge increases, I suppose;] but at each moment God is able to say, What more could have been done to my vineyard that I have not done?"* Then surely he does as much by his Spirit for one as another according to the knowledge they possess: at all events he cannot absolutely control the mind by motives. The writer proceeds. "Human rebellion and wickedness—oppose obstacles to a work of grace in our world, and hindrances to salvation, *which the God of grace cannot wholly overcome*; and—the measures of grace now pursued—overcome those obstacles to a further extent than any other system of measures would do."† He does "every thing to encourage and persuade them to return,—which *he can do amid the obstacles opposed by their sins.*"‡ "He could not effect more as a whole, to recover those who had destroyed themselves."§ God "desires from the heart that all men—comply;—brings all those kinds and all that *degree* of influence—upon each individual, which

* 632.

† 633.

‡ 634.

§ 621.

a system of measures best arranged for the success of *grace in a world of rebellion* allows."* "The purpose of election" brings God into measures "*to gain whom in the methods of his wisdom he can.*"† And yet, (with what consistency let others judge,) he asks, "Why do given sinners repent?—Does God use no influence and means to induce sinners?—Are these influences and means brought to bear alike on all nations and on all individuals?"‡ If not, with what propriety could it be so often said, he does the best he can for all consistently with the general interest of holiness in our world?

According to Dr Fitch, God foresaw, not what he would do, either by efficiency or the absolute control of motives, but what the self-determining power would do if he created such beings and placed them under such a system of government and grace; and that, antecedent, in the order of nature, to any design on his part even to create; for this foresight of what the self-determining power would do if created, was the very motive which induced him to create and to bring forward such a system of government and grace; and this decision to create and to enter on such measures when he foresaw the result, was itself the decree of election,—was itself the predestination of all things, not excepting sin itself. Hear Dr Fitch. "God's foreknowledge of what would be the results of his present works of grace, [results proceeding neither from efficiency nor the absolute control of motives,] *preceded, in the order of nature, the purpose to pursue those works and presented the grounds of that purpose.* [The grounds therefore of

* 635.

† 638.

‡ 631.

creation; for the whole creation was comprehended in the plan of redemption. "All things were created by him, (Christ,) and for him." Thus Peter, when writing to the brethren,—states—that through the calls of the Gospel—the Holy Spirit *induced* them to obey;—and *in this very way, according to the foreknowledge of God, were they chosen to this happy state.*—Thus too Paul—refers to the fact that such persons are 'the called according to his purpose;' and adds, as we should paraphrase the passage, '*For whom he did foreknow, as the people who would be gained to his holy kingdom by his present works of grace, (in which result lay the whole objective motive for undertaking these works,) he did also, by resolving on those works, predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son;*' and by performing those works he calls, justifies, and glorifies. *Foresight then of the good results in sinners redeemed, which the present measures of grace if pursued would secure, is asserted to precede the prospective election of them in the eternal purpose of God, and the accomplished election of them through the influence of the Spirit.* The passages therefore, while they fully maintain a personal election made by God, contradict alone that idea of it which considers the selection of particular individuals as the first thing in the order of nature, and not *as the foreseen result* of God's using with a world of sinners the best means, (including the influence of the Spirit,) for their recovery."* Thus their *prospective* election was only a determination to bring forward such a system of grace and *persuasion*, when it was foreseen who would be persuaded;

* 622, 3.

and their *accomplished* election was only the bringing forward of the system with such foreknowledge. Hear him again. "God, foreseeing with certainty that Adam would freely act in that manner if created and placed on trial, did still determine to create him and place him on trial; and THUS determined that such an event [as the fall] should take place and in just such a manner. This certainly is predestination 'according to the counsel and foreknowledge of God.'"* "In what sense are we to understand the position that" God "purposes the existence of sin? Not necessarily in the sense of his preferring its existence—to its non-existence.—In affirming the doctrine of predestination, we affirm no more necessarily than that God, with the knowledge that these beings would sin in despite of the best measures of providence and government he could take, purposed to create them and pursue those measures, not for the sake of their sin, but for the good which he nevertheless saw it was possible to secure in his moral kingdom. This would be a purpose—to *permit its existence rather than to have no moral system.—Nothing more, touching free agency, is implied in the purpose—than a certainty, foreseen of God, that if he creates and upholds that being, and pursues wise and good measures of providence,—the being will at a given time freely choose in a given manner.*"† "God then, for any thing that has been shown to the contrary, may have predetermined the existence of the sin which now takes place in his kingdom, not for the reason that he prefers sin—to holiness,—but simply for this reason, that he chooses to do the most he can for the good

* 603.

† 612, 13.

of a moral system ; to prevent sin and promote holiness *to the greatest extent possible* in such a kind of system. Sin, where it now occurs, may be regarded by him as an evil, and only an evil, and yet, (*as an evil unavoidable, as to his prevention, in a moral system,*) *it may be reduced to the least possible limits and overruled in the best possible manner.*"*

Dr Fisk " must acknowledge that God might choose to create and place under moral government the present universe of beings,—as one in which he could do *the most possible* to check and restrain sin and redeem from its power.—Now would the resolution to give such good to creatures—be in fact a predetermination of all—events ?"† " Election is resolved simply into a gracious purpose to pursue *the best possible measures for the salvation of sinners ;—which measures are foreseen with certainty to result in the salvation of a particular number only and not the whole.* As to that explanation of the doctrine which denies that God is dealing with free agents who have *the absolute power of choice, and who can resist all measures taken for their welfare,* and which resolves renewing grace into *a simple act of creative omnipotence,* we frankly admit that it does load the doctrine with the charge brought against it."‡ " The purpose of election rightly interpreted then, in our view brings the God of justice and grace into immediate contact with our rebellious world, staying the execution of justice and urging gracious terms of reconciliation on men, on purpose to bring the matter to a speedy issue and to gain whom in the methods of his wisdom he *can.*"§ Thus election is only the decision of God to send the Gospel, with his gracious

* 607. † 604. ‡ 635. § 635.

providence and illuminating Spirit, to do the best they can for the recovery of all men, foreseeing at the same time the results. Again, "God purposed to introduce his measures of grace and to conduct them in the manner he does, foreseeing the exact results they would have in the recovery of fallen men.—What if by these measures of redemption some men, through their free compliance, are taken, and others in their refusal are left?"* "God, with this knowledge of the results, is still willing to go forward with the measures of his grace, and *thus elect* to salvation and harden in sin.—To this influence," [the drawing of God,] the sinner "can yield, and be thus drawn of the Father; *this influence he can resist*, and thus harden his heart against God. *Election involves nothing more as it respects his individual case, except one fact, the CERTAINTY to the divine mind whether the sinner will yield—or—continue to harden his heart till the measures of grace are withdrawn.*"† Thus it seems that some sinners finally turn away from those drawings of the Father mentioned in John 6. 44. Again, "The purpose of election—is a purpose on the part of God to carry forward his works of grace such as they are, in the very manner he does, in foresight of the exact results they will have in *inducing* men to comply."‡ "God, *BY deciding on his present measures of grace, chose from among the lost the heirs of salvation.*"§ "The end is secured by the means. *The purpose of God to employ the means, with a certain knowledge that they would secure the end, is the only proper account of his purposing and fixing the end.*"|| "We would only ask Dr Fisk whether in employing these

* 634. † 637. ‡ 624. § 626. || 624.

means in the manner he does, God did not foresee what individuals would comply and be saved. We ask again, whether *in purposing to employ these means* in the manner he does, God did not purpose that those individuals should comply and thus be saved. And what is this but a personal election to salvation?"*

After quoting a passage from Dr Fisk, asserting the gracious restoration of the lapsed power of the will, he says, "Supposing this scheme to be true in all its parts, and to contain the whole truth on the subject, we would inquire whether in thus placing a world on the footing of moral agency through a gracious restoration of lapsed power, God does not *foresee* who will and who will not abuse this gracious power. If he does not see that any will use it aright, then why does he grant it? If he does this, then he knows who they are individually. *And purposing to dispense his grace to those individuals, he purposes that they shall be saved.* We see not therefore but on his own principles Dr Fisk must either acknowledge the actual salvation of all men, or a personal election in the purpose of God to restore the—lapsed power of the children of Adam."† This was a precious confession, dropt out in an unguarded moment, that the election he had been pleading for was fully consistent with Arminian principles; was what every Arminian ought to believe, and every one else who admits the foreknowledge of God.

After all this, who would have expected to hear, in the next breath, that God actually *selects* the heirs of salvation from the rest of the world by *rendering* their regeneration

certain? And how does he render it certain? Why, by using the means which he foresaw the self-determining power in some would suffer to prevail, in others would defeat. If I invite ten men to my house, do I select five, merely because I foresee that, without any discriminating act on my part, only five will come? But let him speak for himself. "The question is, how comes any man to comply with this condition?—Does not God *secure* that compliance? Does he not *elect* the individuals who shall thus voluntarily obey?"* "His influences—*render certain* the return to God of all who ever do return."† "We have solely one question to try. Is it a fact that God *elects* from the impenitent and unbelieving the individuals who repent and believe?—How come particular persons to be believers? Does God actually in his government *induce* persons to submit and believe? Does he do any thing which he *foresees* will *actually secure* the submission and faith of those very persons who become submissive believers? In other words the question is,—whether God by the dispensations of providence and grace *actually secures* all existing faith. That he does we hold to be a fact, and the great fact involved in what is said in the Scriptures on the subject of election."‡ "We contend that" election "always involves in it another point,—viz. the *purpose* of God which *secures* the repentance and faith of those particular persons."|| Now look here. "Whatever is the degree of influence which he uses with them, it is not in its nature irresistible; but—men as free agents still keep to their guilty choice in resistance to it, or through its operation freely give up their idols and place

* 619.

† 623.

‡ 622.

|| 631, 2.

their hearts on God."* Now, in a fair use of language, does such an influence exerted on Peter *render* Peter's *action* certain, when he is the cause of his own action, and has a sufficiency in himself to refuse to act let his Maker do what he will? Can God's illuminating influence which many resist, but which he *merely foresees* that Peter will allow to prevail, be said to *ensure* Peter's compliance? Suppose Esther had been a prophetess, and had foreseen that her intercession with Ahasuerus would convert him to the cause of the Jews; would it be proper to adopt the high Calvinistic language in the case, and say that she *decreed* the conversion of Ahasuerus, and *ensured* it, and *elected* him to be the saviour of the Jews? And yet such language might be applied to that case as correctly as to this. God's determination to urge motives which he foresees will owe their success to a power in the creature independent of his control, is God decreeing the event! Now with this understanding of the interposition, is it *fair* to apply to it the highest language that the advocates of efficiency have ever employed? It may serve to hide the alien form of the theory and cover it with an orthodox guise; but I appeal to the universe if it is fair.

It is not necessary to make quotations to prove that Dr Fitch holds strongly to the doctrine of perseverance. This will not be denied.

Dr Fisk, in his Reply to this Review,† holds the following language. "If I understand the reviewer—he is—in principle an Arminian.—The reviewer's whole ground of defence—is solely this Arminian explanation of the

* 632. † Christian Advocate, May 11, 1832.

doctrine of predestination. He acknowledges, nay boldly asserts, in a strain of rugged controversy with his brethren who may differ from this view of the subject, that there is no other explanation by which the arguments of the sermon can be avoided; that is, as I understand it, the only way to avoid the arguments against the doctrine of Calvinian predestination, is to give it up and assume the Arminian sentiment.—I cannot approve of the reviewer's use of terms. Though to my understanding he has evidently given the doctrine of predestination, not merely a new dress, but a new character, yet he more than intimates that it is the old doctrine with only a new method of explanation.—And so confident is the reviewer that he still believes in the fact of predestination in the old Calvinistic sense, that in stating his sentiments on this subject, he uses the same forms of expression which Calvinists have used, when their meaning was as distant from his as the two poles from each other.—I feel safer in understanding the reviewer in an Arminian sense, because he and some others take it very ill of me that I have represented them as Calvinists.—By God's foreordaining whatever comes to pass, he only means that God foresaw that sin would certainly take place, and predetermined that he would not hinder it, either by refraining from creating moral agents, or by throwing a restraint upon them that would destroy their free agency; in short, that he would submit to it as an evil unavoidably incident to the best possible system, after doing all that he wisely could to prevent it. This is foreordaining sin! This is predetermining that it should be! I cannot but express my deepest regret that a gentle-

man of the reviewer's standing and learning, should lend his aid and give his sanction to such a perversion of language,—to such a confusion of tongues.—Do the words predestinate,—foreordain,—decree, mean in common language, or even in their radical and critical definition, nothing more than to *permit*,—*not absolutely to hinder*,—*to submit to as an unavoidable but offensive evil*? The reviewer certainly will not pretend to this.—The use of these terms by those who believe as I understand the reviewer to believe, is the more unjustifiable, because they are used by most Calvinistic authors in a different sense. Why then should the reviewer, believing as he does, continue to use them in the symbols of his faith? Different persons might give different answers to such a question. For one I would prefer he should answer it himself.—His mode of explanation—turns the doctrine into Arminianism.—But the sermon was never written to oppose those who hold to the decrees of God in an Arminian sense: Why then does the reviewer complain of the sermon?—It seems that Calvinism, in its proper character, is as obnoxious to the reviewer as to the author of the sermon.—If it is *safer* to attack Calvinism in this indirect way, I will not object.—But I cannot see that it would be safer. An open bold front always ends best.—As I understand the reviewer, from the days of John Calvin down to the present hour, there is on this point, between the great body of Calvinists and himself, almost no likeness except in the use of words. Theirs is one doctrine, his another. Why then—does he hail from that party and hoist their signals; and then, after seeming to get the victory by espousing the very

cause of the assailed, encourage the Calvinists to triumph as if their cause had been successful?"

These remarks of the President of the Wesleyan University of Connecticut, appear to me candid and judicious, and go far towards exposing the unhappy incongruity between the language and the sentiments of this Review.

Since writing the above I have seen, in the Christian Spectator for December 1832, an article from the same pen on the Divine Permission of Sin; referring to several publications by which the Review and the system had been assailed. I shall make a few extracts in confirmation of some of the foregoing remarks and in illustration of others. In the supralapsarian scheme, which Dr F condemns, "it is—assumed," he says, that *God's "direct efficiency—is such that he can rely on that alone to secure any conceivable result whatever.*—Now to affirm that God, in this manner, selects a part for holiness and blessedness, and leaves the rest to sin and misery, is placing the subject on the ground of mere arbitrary will."* "We have begun with very obvious facts, that moral agents have the power of choice, and *that their voluntary conduct is not the result of immediate propulsion or direct creation.*"† God "purposes to conduct his own works, [of creation as well as grace,] in the particular manner he does, in view of the results which will certainly ensue,—and for the sake alone of the good which lies in these results, as being the highest good he can secure."‡ The infralapsarian scheme, which he approves, is this. "God, *foreseeing the conduct which*

* 617.

† 619, Note.

‡ 618.

will *certainly* ensue on the different measures it is possible for him to take with a moral kingdom, purposes to pursue those measures which will secure the best possible result.— *It supposes that there may be obstacles in the nature of a moral kingdom which render it impossible for him to give universal efficacy to any original scheme of moral government or subsequent scheme of redemption.* It supposes therefore that, as the first thing, he decides upon that course of means and measures which he foresees will on the whole most overcome hindrances and carry holiness to the farthest extent possible, considering a whole universe in all ages. *Such a purpose is, by consequence, the purpose of all that conduct in his creatures which is certainly to ensue.* That is, the general purpose to use the power of moral government and redemption in the manner first seen to be the best possible, is, by consequence, the specific election of Gabriel rather than Lucifer, and of Paul rather than Judas.”* Now take from the universe divine efficiency and the absolute dominion of motives, and what did God foresee, but merely how creatures, by the self-determining power, would treat the motives presented in his government, providence, and grace? He foresaw that Peter would yield to them and that Judas would reject them. And seeing this, his very decision to create these beings and to bring forward this system of motives, was itself the election of Peter and the rejection of Judas. As the submission of Peter and the obstinacy of Judas were acts equally independent of him, one was decreed as much as the other, except that no measures were taken to induce

* 617, 18.

Judas to sin. So says the writer. "He foreordains the existence of sin as really as the existence of holiness, and he predestinates to wrath as really as to mercy."*

Dr F denies, not only divine efficiency, but the absolute dominion of motives. "We affirm that the causes in kind which originate sin, *being inseparably inherent in a moral universe, may so accumulate in degree, under every system of providence and government which can be pursued, as to render sure the occurrence of sin.*"† "His purpose is, not only to use the law, but so to carry on his works of creation and providence with a universe, as to secure the highest possible amount of obedience.—*And if he prefers obedience—to—sin, he will do all that is possible to secure obedience in his creatures: and if it is not possible to secure from them all that he prefers, he will secure all that is possible.*"‡

Dr F takes up above fifty pages in proving that God could not have prevented sin. And the bare supposition that he rejected a sinless universe which was possible, for the sake of displaying his glory, seems to fill the writer with horror. And he imagines the angels, on hearing the story, to unite in saying, "Show us a God who, able to advance the holiness of the universe forever and to protect it from all the inroads of sin, does nevertheless, in the choice of his heart respecting a whole universe, actually reject such protection, and prefer to gratify his subjects with a mere exhibition at the expense of the sin and misery of one or many of his subjects; and we shall always see him purposely leading off the holy into sin and preferring

* 618.

† 622.

‡ 653.

their rebellion to obedience:—and in all his conduct towards sinners, from first to last, we shall never see any wisdom, any goodness, any holiness, any justice, any mercy, but the mere caprice that starts aside from all, simply to make an exhibition which throws eternal horror into all our hearts. God on the throne stepping aside from the office of ruler and protector, to assume the mere pageant, and sacrificing to his caprice multitudes of his creation.”* This, I am aware, is said in opposition to the theory that God chose the existence of sin merely to honour himself. But it is bold language. In my lips it would be blasphemy; for I believe that God could have prevented sin, and would, had he not seen it a means of blessing the universe by filling it with his glory. Now who would have thought, after this daring attack upon one of the conceivable motives for permitting sin, that the writer was willing to have it understood that he was not certain whether sin was voluntarily permitted, (that is, could have been prevented,) or not? “We have ventured to assert that a demonstration cannot be obtained from the hands of man either on the side of the affirmative—or—the negative.”† Amidst all these bold and confident arguments against the power of God to prevent sin, he repeatedly stops to tell us that he means no more than that the thing is possible or probable or highly probable: and he actually charges Dr Woods with “injustice” for alleging that Dr Taylor had maintained this point as true, when, (as it is said,) he had only spoken of it as possible.‡ I hope we shall have no more

* 644.

† 648.

‡ 621, Second Note.

books written to bring the world to believe as cardinal truths what the writers themselves deem only possible.

And why on this subject should there be a doubt? God cannot control the mind by efficiency nor yet by motives; for it is confidently alleged that sinners are competent to resist any influence which he can bring to regenerate them. Can he then keep every creature in the universe in all ages right by any *providential* influence? If I understand Dr F, this last is the influence to which he often refers. He says "that God, not only entertains the purpose to treat his subjects according to their character, but also *to regulate, in the best manner possible, all that influence in his kingdom which determines character.* God can vary his own acts in the creation of moral agents and in his providence and government over them, in ways that are endless; and as it is through these acts that he controls and regulates the influence which determines character, he can vary that influence in ways as endless."* "Man—cannot tell what a single change in the present providence of God will certainly effect in the volitions of a single being."† One had spoken of the "series of conditions" in which God places his creatures, and Dr F says, "By conditions we are to understand here precisely that kind and degree of influence which meets each individual at each time he acts."‡ Now will any one pretend that by this providential influence God could have prevented sin, when he could not prevent it by efficiency or by motives? But Dr F's whole system is built upon the assumption that God has employed *all sorts* of influence to the utmost limit

* 616.

† 649.

· ‡ 645, Note.

of his power, to promote the holiness of the universe, and particularly of this world, in all its generations I suppose. Whether he would admit that God can send the Gospel to the heathen, or light to the ignorant in Christendom, faster than he does, I doubt. He may think that all the influence God could have employed could not have sent more than one Noah to the antediluvian world, or more missionaries to the heathen in the early ages or now. In the infinite complication of God's affairs, what particular difficulties may be contemplated as lying in the way, I know not. Dr F introduces another hinderance,—the want of the prayer of faith. “He could with propriety do more for the salvation of men—if more acceptable prayer were offered for the object.—God prefers that men would at all times and in all places offer up acceptable prayer; and—he does all that he can wisely to excite them to the performance of this duty.”* If God cannot make his people pray, it is wonderful that he should bind himself not to do the best he can for the salvation of others, for which he is so anxious, until his backward people have permitted him. If he cannot control them, it would seem wise for him to act without their prayers, and not suspend the salvation of his creatures, and even his own benevolent agency, on the will of his unmanageable children,—whom he can manage to keep Christians, but whom he cannot cause to pray aright.

But whether it is allowed or not that by all sorts of influence God does the best he can for each individual; it is easy to see that, so far as providence is concerned, less is

* 658.

actually done for one than for another. Some are heathen; some are brought up in ignorance in a Christian land; some cannot read; some are blind; some are deaf and dumb; some die young. But it ought not to be overlooked that these providential diversities, especially as they relate to a Gospel land, *do not distinguish the elect from the non-elect*. Among those most favoured with light, many appear to perish in their sins; and from among the ignorant and neglected, many rise up to the Christian character. These then are not the decisive influences to be taken into account in determining whether God does more for the elect than for the non-elect. The question is, does he do more by *his Spirit*?

This question Dr. F studiously avoids answering, though pressed by Dr. Tyler. "That writer, [Dr. Tyler,] inquires, Who made Peter and Judas to differ? We suppose that question, in the mouth of Paul, was applied to a totally different subject from salvation.—Who distinguisheth thee with gifts? But were we to apply it to the subject of salvation, the question as used by Paul would mean, Who saved Peter? not, Who kept Judas in his impenitence? Who saved Peter? God, who interposed and *induced* him to repent: [not, controlled him by motives, but, applied motives which he foresaw Peter would allow to prevail.] But did he not interpose for Judas without success? *We know not how far he may have gone in that particular instance*; but we know that he goes far in favouring salvation in the case of many who perish, and charges on them the very guilt of refusing his grace and hardening their hearts. But says that writer, [Dr. Tyler,] If God did

as much to effect the salvation of the one as the other, how can it be said that Peter was elected in distinction from Judas? [Now he will speak out.] Did as much for Judas as for Peter in the whole work of his salvation? Is that the meaning? But we have never said that, or any thing which implies it. Did as much for Judas as he did for Peter *at the time he repented*? Is that the meaning? [Now surely he will speak out.] *We have not asserted even that.* We have said that what God did for the repentance of Peter was effectual and converting grace; [because *Peter* made it effectual and converting;] and what he did for Judas was ineffectual and resisted grace; [because *Judas* made it ineffectual by resistance;] and that what he did for both, was all that he in wisdom could do toward the object of securing their repentance and interest in salvation. In purposing to do this, we say in intelligible language, that he elected Peter; and that the election was founded, not in mere will and volition, but in a wise regard to the highest good he could effect in his kingdom.— *Whether he did as much for both or not,* he resolved to do the best he could, and as a consequence elected Peter. But how, [Dr Tyler asks,] was Peter elected in distinction from Judas? Why, Peter was elected and Judas was not. What other distinction would you have? Perhaps however Dr Tyler refers to the will of God. [And pray, to what else could he refer?] The question would then read thus: Can God *will* to save Peter in *any sense* in which he does not will to save Judas, if he prefers that both should repent rather than perish, *and does all that he can for the object*? Very well: if that is the meaning we are glad to

come up to the question.”* Well, what does he do? Instead of answering the question directly in a single sentence, he proceeds to erect a guide board, and to write on it the words in 2 Pet. 3. 9, and Rom. 9. 18; and then, for a full page and a half, is calling upon all passengers to examine the guide board. All that I can gather from his explanation is, that the distinction between Peter and Judas was not grounded “on simple will and wont in God;” “that God really preferred,—with his whole heart, that Judas should” “repent rather than neglect repentance and perish;” that “he will go forward with the measures of his own choice among his creatures, rescuing with his mercy, [how, he does not say,] and leaving to hardness whom he will;” and that “he will take this course because he cannot possibly take a better.”† And this is the explicit answer to Dr Tyler’s question, “*How* was Peter elected in distinction from Judas?” The simple answer should have been, that God foresaw that if he created Peter and Judas and placed them under such circumstances, Peter, by the self-determining power, would accept the invitation and Judas would reject it; and the decision to place them in such circumstances, with such a foresight of the event, was itself the election of the one and the rejection of the other. And whether the Spirit did more for one than the other, he ought not to have been pressed to say; for really he did not know: he could not know and should have said so. If any thing less than an effectual control of the will was done for Peter, who can prove from the mere continuance of Judas in sin, that less was done for him?

* 655. † 656, 7.

And surely the Scriptures could not be expected to make a minute distinction between two invitations both of which were susceptible of rejection. But if the Scriptures do make a distinction between this part of the treatment of Peter and of Judas, it only proves that the work upon Peter was efficient, and that Dr F's explanation of regeneration and election is wrong. And yet in this very passage he himself makes the supposition of different degrees of influence. "If" God "places his creatures in those conditions and under that influence which, while they favour the salvation of all in different degrees, will on the whole secure the greatest number possible for him, &c."* I conclude however that the supposition is, of different degrees of *providential* influence. It is to this influence, I suppose, that Dr F must refer when he talks of its limitation by a regard to the public good. "If to secure the obedience of Satan and the repentance of Judas, would involve a departure from that use of influence which on the whole is best, &c."† "There is full ground for the distinction between the preference of God as to what" creatures "do, and his choice as to what he shall do himself in order to secure their obedience."‡ "Nor can we infer at all from this choice of his heart" respecting the salvation of Judas, "that God could go any further on his part than he did to favour the repentance of Judas, with any gain to the cause of redemption on the whole, or at least with any gain to obedience in his whole kingdom."|| Allowing it supposable that the influence of *providence*, to be the best for the whole, cannot be the best for every individual; yet

* 656. † 652, Note. ‡ 654. || 656.

if sin and its punishment and the redemption it has occasioned, have not led to as much good as holiness in its stead would have done, then the good of the universe cannot be impaired by the highest action of the Spirit upon a Judas that is consistent with his moral agency. If there is no advantage to be gained by his remaining a sinner rather than becoming a saint, what possible injury can be done to any or to all by the strongest efforts of the Spirit upon him that are consistent with his freedom? If the Spirit were not omnipresent, his attention to Judas might draw his attention from others, and so diminish their chance. But that is not to be thought of. If the Spirit foresaw that he could not succeed with Judas, and that stronger attempts would only make him worse, *then he did the best he could for Judas.* To say that the Spirit did the best for Judas that he could consistently with the interests of holiness at large, and yet not the best he could absolutely, is certainly to say nothing, so long as you assume that it is better for the universe for each individual to be holy than sinful, and so long as no conceivable injury to others could result from the highest efforts of the Spirit upon Judas. If God really desired the holiness of Judas, all things considered, what public interest then could possibly restrain him from using with him the utmost energies of the Spirit that the laws of moral agency would allow? Who could possibly be injured by the strongest effort, (I may say unlimitedly,) that God could make? for any destruction of his moral agency, as it would have prevented the possibility of his holiness, could not have been an effort to make him holy. Look at the thing on every

side. If the holiness of Judas was better for the universe than his sin, and God, all things considered, did most heartily desire it, then, whatever hindrances might lie in the way of his *providential* influences over him, no injury could arise from the Spirit's doing all he could to make him holy; and he would be sure to do all that.

Shall I now tell you why Dr F is so reluctant to say whether the Spirit did as much for Judas as for Peter? Upon his principles it may be fairly doubted whether he did. I have already said that if the Spirit foresaw that he could not succeed with Judas, and that stronger attempts would only make him worse, then he did the best he could for Judas. This will unriddle the whole mystery. If God foresaw that a greater effort upon Peter would, through the self-determining power, prevail, and that a greater effort upon Judas would only make him worse; then, though by his Spirit he did all he could to any purpose for both, yet it may be presumed that he was encouraged to do, and actually did, more for Peter than for Judas: though upon this principle it must be confessed that he should not have shed upon Judas a ray of light. But this goes upon the supposition that by no exertion of power could he regenerate Judas. And this is denying, not only efficiency, but the absolute control of motives. And then no one will pretend that any thing turned the heart of Peter but the self-determining power.

And if there is no divine efficiency and no control by motives, how comes Dr F to say of our first parents, "They had ability to obey, and the opportunity of *confirming* their own holiness through the trial, and of bless-

ing their posterity;" that is, of *confirming* their posterity?*" If God has no absolute power to keep his creatures from sin, our first parents and their posterity could not have been confirmed by *his* power. By whose then? Angels were confirmed, says Dr F, by the destruction of their brethren and by the wonders of redemption.† By what new *means* would Adam, after a few years, have been confirmed to eternity? The apostacy of his posterity is accounted for, by a writer in the Christian Spectator, by the feebleness of their intellect and the cravings of their appetites in infancy. The creation of male and female in Eden shows that it was the purpose of God to bring them into existence in the present manner had Adam stood. And what but divine efficiency could have kept a race of ignorant infants from being led away by their appetites as at present? In short, what could have confirmed Adam, and all his race ushered in this manner into existence, without either efficient power or the absolute dominion of motives?

Dr Fitch says of Dr Fisk, "He asserts that we found our explanations of foreordination on principles which—he claims to be Arminian. In regard to the proper name to be given to these principles, we shall inquire afterwards."‡ And yet I do not perceive that he fulfilled this promise. And at the close of the Article he takes leave of us in these words: "Ascribe it to whatever *name* you please: no matter; it is intelligible and everlasting truth:" evidently betraying a consciousness that it was the Arminianism charged upon him.

* 635.

† 638.

‡ 619, Note.



CHAPTER II.

Dr Taylor's Theory as exhibited in the Christian Spectator for 1829.

Dr T every where denies divine efficiency, and limits the agency of the Spirit to the mere presentation of motives. Of course he must have the same views of predestination and election, (both of which he strenuously maintains,) that Dr Fitch has expressed. Dr T holds that God can create a being constitutionally qualified to act without being acted upon; that the angels are independent for holiness; that man would need no divine interposition but for his obstinate depravity; that this renders necessary a more urgent pressure of motives by the Spirit, to draw his attention from the world and fix it upon divine truth;*

* Dr T has exactly revived the old Arminian doctrine, that the chief obstruction caused by bad affections lies in their drawing away the *attention* from divine truth; and that nothing is necessary on the part of God but to illumine the understanding by his Spirit. Dr Whitby says, (see Introduction,) "Be it then so that we naturally have an aversion to the truths proposed in the Gospel; *that* only can make us indisposed to *attend* to them.—It therefore can be only requisite—that the good Spirit should so illumine our understandings, that we, *attending* to and *considering* what lies before us, should apprehend and be convinced of our duty." Nothing could more exactly express the views of Dr T.

that the Spirit can effectually arrest the attention of sinners at first, but it depends on them whether that attention shall continue or return to the world; that there is in man a constitutional susceptibility to the good exhibited in divine truth, founded in self-love or the desire of happiness; that consequently there is in the close consideration of truth a tendency to excite the love of truth; that as the Spirit does nothing but fix the attention upon truths most calculated to persuade, consideration only acts in a line with the Spirit, and has the same tendency in the moment of conversion as before; that consideration produces feeling and feeling consideration, while the Spirit, by the clear presentation of truth, promotes both; that without this consideration God cannot regenerate, for rival objects must be compared before God can be preferred to the world; that by these means are excited supreme desires after God, not viewed in the glories of his character, but as the mere deliverer from punishment; that these desires are not selfish, because the supreme affection is detached from the world and fixed on deliverance from future punishment; that selfishness is thus suspended, and becomes weaker in every renewal of its power, until, just at the moment of conversion, it ceases altogether; that the means of regeneration are this consideration and the accompanying efforts to love; that the sinner cannot be said to use the means of regeneration while he is selfish, and never therefore till that last moment when he makes the full and final effort to give his heart to God; that when he has got so far as to desire deliverance from punishment more than the world, (here is an infinite chasm in the

chain,) he is exactly prepared to give his supreme affection to God as soon as the veil which conceals the divine glory is taken away; that he himself penetrates this veil by concentrated attention, and then, by summoning all his powers to love, by one successful effort he rises up to divine affection.

In consistency with these views, Dr T's grand object is to put sinners upon exertion, not merely by urging their obligations, but by telling them that they may succeed and can succeed, and that God may be ready to regenerate them at once. This is all consistent with the plan. For as the exertions which the Spirit merely prompts, and which are actually successful, are made by themselves, and will succeed the sooner the sooner made; and as moral agents may reasonably be exhorted to these efforts, and are put upon them by such excitements; it comports with the system to hold out these encouragements. And if there is no divine efficiency, there is nothing false or dangerous in all this. But if there is divine efficiency, all language which contradicts it encourages a fatal self-dependence, which may feed a false religion but cannot promote the true.

Dr T strongly holds to the doctrine of perseverance.

Now for the proof of all this. Dr T mentions approvingly "the reason commonly assigned for the necessity of a divine influence in regeneration.—This reason is not that truth and motives, viewed in relation to the moral agency of man, *are insufficient to produce a change of heart*, but that when presented to the mind of the sinner, their influence is counteracted by the perverseness of the

heart.”* In the published correspondence between Dr Hawes and Dr T, Dr H says, “The sinner’s dependence, —if I rightly understand your statement of it, is a dependence of *his own creating, growing out of voluntary perverseness of heart.*” Dr T replies: “The necessity of the influence of the holy Spirit in regeneration, results solely from the voluntary perverseness of the sinner’s heart.” The necessity that God should *conquer the rebel*, doubtless is of the sinner’s own creating; but here his very dependence for holiness is made his own fault. It follows that the angels are not dependent for holiness: and *there* is the self-determining power. In this same letter to Dr H, Dr T impliedly asserts what Dr Fitch so openly maintains, that God could not have prevented sin; a point never admitted by any who believe either in divine efficiency or in the absolute dominion of motives. For if God can control one mind he can control all, and then he could have prevented sin. The passage is this. “I do not believe that sin can be proved to be the necessary means of the greatest good, and that as such God prefers it on the whole to holiness in its stead.—But I do believe that holiness as the means of good may be better than sin; that it may be true that God, all things considered, prefers holiness to sin in all instances in which the latter takes place, and therefore sincerely desires that all men should come to repentance, [but cannot make them repent;] though for wise reasons he *permits*, or does not prevent, the existence of sin.” Permits sin! And how could he prevent it? In no way but by refusing to create moral agents. As well

might you talk of my permitting the cholera, because I do not kill off every body that could have it. Why dress up palpable Arminianism in such Calvinistic drapery? Why say in this very letter, "That the eternal purposes of God extend to all actual events, sin not excepted, or that God foreordains whatsoever comes to pass;" when the meaning, as Dr Fitch fully explains it is, that God decreed all the foreseen actions of men in the very resolution to give them being under such circumstances and means? Why should one who has publicly renounced divine efficiency, the very ground work of Calvinism, stand in the midst of Calvinists and say, as in this same letter, "I could wish that" "my views and opinions" "might be satisfactory to all our orthodox brethren. I have no doubt that they will be to very many, and to some who have been alarmed by *groundless* rumours concerning my unsoundness in the faith"? How can he say, "With respect—to what is properly considered the orthodox or Calvinistic system,—as opposed to—the Pelagian and Arminian systems, I suppose there is between the orthodox ministry and myself an entire agreement"? It is impossible for Dr T to mean more by election than Dr Fitch does, (for both equally deny God's absolute dominion over the mind;) and yet he expresses it in this letter in the following high Calvinistic language: "I believe—that all who are renewed by the holy Spirit, are elected or chosen of God from eternity that they should be holy; not on account of foreseen faith or good works, but according to the good pleasure of his will." "I do believe—that when" "the grace of God" "becomes effectual to conversion, *as it infallibly does in*

the case of all the elect, it is unresisted." How "*infallibly does*"? Because all who yield to the motives presented *do* yield, and God foresaw they would. When this is all he *can* mean after denying both divine efficiency and the dominion of motives, why should he say, "I believe—that the renewing grace of God is *special*, in distinction from that which is common and is resisted by the sinful mind, inasmuch as it is that which is designed to secure, and does infallibly secure, the conversion of the sinner"? That is, in these foreseen instances in which the self-determining power yields to motives, God ensures conversion by merely presenting the motives. The doctrine of perseverance he fully sustains in this same letter. "I believe—that all who are renewed by the holy Spirit, will, through his continued influence, persevere in holiness to the end."

Dr T says, "How does the Spirit secure this change? I answer, not by acting *on the truth*.—But how positively?—The question—sets philosophy at defiance." "That the change is through the truth and implies attention to the truth,—the sober, solemn consideration of the objects which truth discloses, prior to the requisite act of the will or heart, will not be doubted by the reader of the sacred volume."* "God, in what he does to restore the sinner to holiness, obliges him to be conscious of the requisite process of thought and feeling, whether he will or not. *The sinner can indeed resist and arrest this progress of thought and feeling*, but cannot prevent its commencement."† "What is the tendency of divine truth to turn the sinner

* Christian Spectator for 1829, p. 17.

† 232.

to holiness, if there be nothing in the nature of his mind which renders him susceptible to the influence of truth? The question then still recurs, how has truth this tendency? We answer, by its solemn appeals of life and death to the principle of self-love, or the natural desire of men for happiness.—Man can never become insensible to happiness, nor to the truth that he sacrifices his own well being as a self-destroyer. *This truth, as it is presented to the mind by the testimony of God,—embodies the sum total of all the moral influence which God uses in his revelation.*”* Nothing but self-interest to be considered! no disinterested regard to God or man! “Every act—of sober consideration employed on the great truth that our supreme good is to be found only in the service of God, when dictated exclusively by self-love, implies, for the time being, the suspended influence of the selfish principle. [How, unless selfishness consists exclusively in the love of the world?] Such suspension however does not necessarily prevent the thoughts and desires of the mind from recurring, as it were instantly, to the objects of selfish affection, nor the affection itself from resuming instantly its accustomed activity and power. Indeed the tendency to this, from the previous habitudes of the mind, is direct and powerful. It is however to be remembered that—there are tendencies opposite to that specified; the tendency of excited self-love to sober consideration, and of this to deepen such excitement. When these tendencies are not successfully counteracted by opposing tendencies; when by the strivings of the Spirit they are perpetuated

* 226.

and increased; then it is that the selfish principle, not only suffers temporary suspension, [selfishness suspended before God is loved!] but grows weaker and weaker in each instance of its returning activity and dominion, until, at some point before the heart fixes on God, the power and influence of this principle wholly cease from the mind. [Selfishness is dead and God not yet loved!]

—Connected with this suspension of the selfish principle, there is yet another state of mind involved in the process we are considering, which demands attention; viz. the *truly sincere* desires of the sinner for acceptance with God.—We do not suppose that the state of mind of which we now speak respects the *inherent excellence* of the objects of holy affection.—What we intend is, that” the sinner “desires acceptance with God,—contemplated *simply under one relation, viz. as the only means of deliverance from punishment.* Nor is this a selfish state of mind, [though self-love is supreme!] but rather a state of mind which is necessarily involved in the mental process of turning from sin to holiness. The supreme affections of his heart being detached from the world, the grand obstacle to his preferring a deliverance from punishment to the only object that can come into competition with it, is removed.—And now, according to the laws of voluntary action, nothing is wanting to lead forth the heart in holy affection to God, but—clear, just, and vivid views of his glories.” Those “glories—are yet veiled.—Still however—he is willing to fix, and does in fact fix, the eye of contemplation on the object of holy affection, and does, with such glimpses of his glories as he may obtain, feel their attractions and summon his

heart to" the love of God. "We now ask, is there no tendency in these acts and states of the sinner's mind to carry the soul forth to God in holy love?—a tendency which, if wholly uncounteracted, would flow out in holy love to God."* "We do not say that the contemplation will result in holy love; but we say that in proportion to its intensity and the vividness of its perceptions, it will make known to human consciousness a tendency to produce love, direct and powerful, and not easily resisted."† "These acts have the same tendency when the sinner is regenerated by the holy Spirit."‡ "When self-love prompts the first act of sober consideration, there is in this act a tendency to augmented feeling, and—this feeling tends to fix contemplation, and this again to deepen feeling; and—thus by mutual action and reaction of thought and feeling, the process, were there no effectual counteracting influence, would go on until it terminated in a change of heart.—Such acts and states therefore have a tendency to such a result. But if they have this tendency according to the constitution of man as a moral agent, and would, if uncounteracted, be followed by a change of heart without grace, then they must have the same tendency when man gives his heart to God through grace."§ "Of all specific voluntary action, the happiness of the agent in some form is the ultimate end."||

"We now ask what acts of the sinner must be denoted by the phrase *using the means of regeneration?*" They are "acts of sober consideration and thoughtfulness which were dictated by a regard to his own well being."¶

* 227—231. † 233. ‡ 234. § 222, 3. || 24. ¶ 217.

“While the selfish principle continues its active influence in the heart,—no meditation on divine truth can properly be considered as a using of these means.”* “Divine truth is never in fact thus used by the sinner until the identical moment when he submits to God.”† There is then, after all, no using of the means of regeneration till the very act which is regeneration itself.

This is on the whole just such a journey as I should expect a supremely selfish man and totally depraved sinner would make in his own strength from sin to holiness. Treading selfishness under his feet with a heart caring for nothing but himself; panting with “*truly sincere desires*—for acceptance with God” while blind to his “excellence” and caring for nothing but to shield himself from punishment; completely detached from the world, and just prepared to give his heart to God as soon as he can obtain “clear, just, and vivid views of his glories,” the precise things that never were seen but by holy eyes; put upon using the means of regeneration when the act cannot possibly precede regeneration itself. If this is the road travelled by the self-determining power, surely “the way of transgressors is hard.” I should hope that this single attempt might discourage the nations from essaying to go in this new path. Surely it is better to “go in the strength of the Lord God;” to “make mention of” his “righteousness, even of” his “only.”

One grand object which Dr T is aiming at is to improve the manner of addressing sinners. “We think the Gospel is not now, as it was by the apostles, brought be-

* 210. † Christian Spectator for 1830, p. 148.

fore the human mind in the character and relations of *a cause which is to produce an immediate effect*.—Every sinner may become, and is authorized to believe that he may become, a Christian on the spot.—No one performs his duty the more for being told it *ought* to be done, while the conviction is also forced on the mind that it *will not* be done. The conviction of the present practicability of duty is indispensable to the present performance of duty.”* This is undoubtedly true of *muscular* efforts; but whether the sinner is more likely to *love God* for being told that he *can*, in a form to encourage his native self-dependence, is another question. He ought to be called upon to repent immediately. His obligations cannot be too forcibly pressed. Every excuse should be wrested from him, and especially the plea of *inability*. He may be told that he deserves eternal fire for delaying a moment. And after he is thus brought under a crushing sense of his obligations and guilt, instead of casting him upon his own resources, I have always found it most expedient to cast him helpless upon the strength and mercy of God. I have told him, But after all these obligations you never will repent unless God breaks that stubborn heart. You will get into the fire if you can: you certainly will if God is not stronger than you. There is no hope for you unless God conquers the rebel at his feet. Such an exhibition of his desperate wickedness and obstinacy, is the best means to make him die to all hope from himself,—to bring him to cast himself dead at his Maker's feet,—to die that he may be made alive. From what I have seen in past revivals, I am ready

* Christian Spectator for 1829, p. 2, 3.

to say of this method, as David said of Goliath's sword, "There is none like that; give it me."

In a pamphlet under the signature of an Edwardean, lately published in Connecticut, it is stated of Dr T; "He says in substance that all sin consists in self-preference.—Consequently sin must be the transgression of a known law.—Consequently—infants, as they are incapable of this self-preference or transgression of a known law, have no moral depravity, and as they are 'born destitute of holiness,' have no moral character."*

* 25.

CHAPTER III.

Notice of Two other Writers.

OUR brethren of this general school insist on putting into *natural ability* a power which works without divine efficiency. One of them says, "Surely the Dr would not suppose that men have natural ability to love God unless they are naturally able to change their temper. Neither would he contend that the mind can change this temper without any action or choice of its own. [A volition before every volition, and so one before the first.]—It may be said without impiety *that almighty power can no more affect the actions or decisions of the mind, than—motives can influence matter.*—There is no way to change the character of the mind—but by motives."

The other writer is the reviewer of Dr Sprague's Lectures on Revivals, and of the Letters in the Appendix, in the Christian Spectator for March 1833. In one of those Letters I had attempted to explain, not, as the reviewer says, "the nature of man's *inability*," (not a word of that,) but the manner in which men who had acted with me had stated the *full natural ability* and obligations of sinners. I will quote the passage. "We have shown them that their obligations rest on their faculties, and are as reasonable and as complete as though the thing required was

merely to walk across the floor; that their faculties constitute a natural ability, that is, a full power to love and serve God IF their hearts were well disposed; [according to the common expression, *You can if you will*;) leaving nothing in the way but a bad heart, for which they are wholly to blame if there is any blame in the universe; that sin can rest no where but in the heart, and that if you drive it beyond the heart you drive it out of existence; that *they alone* create the necessity for God to conquer them, and to decide whether he will conquer them or not; that it is an everlasting blot on creation that God has to speak a second time to induce creatures to love him, much more that he has to constrain them by his conquering power, &c." That *if* was intended to express just what it does in the common phrase, *You can if you will*; namely, to throw all the blame upon the heart: *and it was so explained*. It was intended to wrest from the sinner the plea of inability, by telling him that he would find power enough on hand as soon as he should attempt the work with a right temper. And if you say, this right temper is the very thing to be accomplished; no matter: this form of presenting the subject is calculated to bring it home to the sinner that nothing is in the way but that for which he is wholly to blame. And if any thing, *in the form of motives*, can tend to his conviction and humiliation, it must be this. Lay the question of efficiency aside: we both hold to the use and necessity of *motives*. And when motives of such a tendency are brought forward, let it never again be said, in proof of their inutility and nonsense, that the good temper is the very thing to be accom-

plished, and, what is the power where the temper is wholly dependent on God? This is constantly said, in different forms, by our brethren of this school. The reviewer makes my definition of ability to amount to this, "You have full power to make yourselves new hearts—if they were already new."* No definition of power will satisfy them but that which excludes divine efficiency. My *if*, I allow, belonged rather to familiar than to philosophical language: but the whole paragraph expressed the highest natural ability that ever was or could be held by a believer in divine efficiency,—the highest that ever was dreamt of by the mass of New-England divines. And yet the reviewer, full indeed of courtesy and grace of style and proofs of mind, makes his appeal—but hear him. "We cannot in this connexion pass over a very remarkable passage in Dr Griffin's Letter, App. p. 159, in which *the nature of man's inability* and dependence on the influences of the Spirit, is stated in a manner which we had never expected from the author of the Park-street Lectures. 'Their, [sinners'] faculties constitute a natural ability, that is, *a full power to love and serve God if their hearts were well disposed.*' [Why did his quotation stop there?] Now we ask, is this the 'natural ability' of New-England divines? Is it on the ground of possessing such power merely, that sinners have been exhorted to give God their hearts at once, have been told that they were able to do it and were utterly inexcusable for a moment's delay?—This statement of Dr Griffin is followed by another, which brings him, as far as we can see, directly on the ground of Evangelical

* 38.

Arminians. ‘They, [sinners,] are bound to go forth to their work at once, *but they are not bound to go ALONE* : it is their *privilege* and DUTY to cast themselves *instantly* on the Holy Ghost, and not to take a single step in their own strength.’ App. p. 161. Now it is not possible, we apprehend, to invent any statement more directly contradictory than this to the fundamental principle of New-England Calvinism. That principle is, that man is in himself a free agent, [and who said he was not ?] and not made such by the influence of the Spirit ; that he is bound as a free-agent to go forth at once to the work of obeying God, in the exercise of power conferred in creation and not superinduced by grace, that is, to go ALONE ; that, as a complete moral agent in himself considered, he is bound to obey God *in his own strength*, this being made in the law the very measure of his obedience.—Upon all these points Dr Griffin has explicitly contradicted his brethren and taken sides with their opposers.” In a note he introduces the younger Edwards as saying that a man can remove his moral inability, and has “power to the contrary act in every instance of choice,” and can choose in opposition to what at present is the greatest apparent good.* This is only saying that a sinner, while he hates and while sin appears the most attractive, has power to love. Now if you mean by power a full and proper basis of obligation, I shall be the last to deny that ; for otherwise the sinner could not be bound or blamed or punished. But if you mean by power an ability that works without divine efficiency, I hope I shall be the last to believe that. And I

* 37—40.

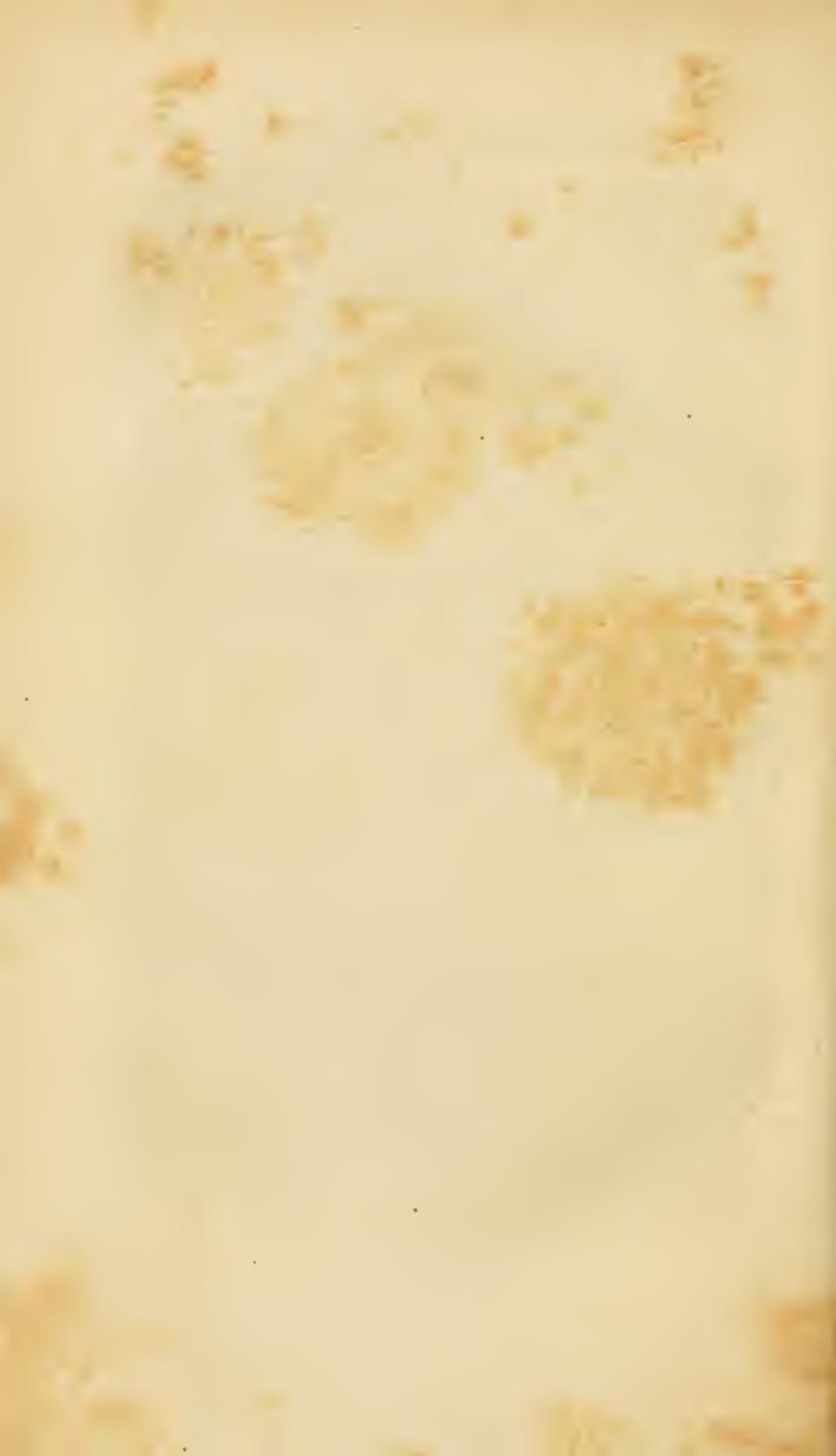
know that the younger Edwards held to no such thing. He was my preceptor in theology, and he taught a very different system. And every body knows that the mass of New-England divines from the beginning have acknowledged no such doctrine.

There is no difference between me and the reviewer about natural ability, except that I place it in the faculties of a mind dependent on God for holiness, and he places it in faculties that move themselves to holy action without divine efficiency. And with this essential departure from the track of New-England divines, he makes this daring appeal to them against their own known doctrines and dialect. I should not have noticed this in a writer with a manner in all other respects worthy of imitation, had I not observed the same thing in many instances of late. It is a common practice with writers of this school to make confident appeals to Edwards and Smalley and Dwight and the New-England divines at large as their coadjutors, when they are as far from these divines as Arminianism is from Calvinism. Is this fair? is this honest? It may serve a purpose, but is it right? It is far from my heart to wish to cast any reflections, but as an humble individual I do entreat that this practice may be discontinued. Let there be no wrapping up of error under orthodox terms. Let none be afraid or ashamed to speak out on either side. There *is* a radical division in our churches, and let it appear. Concealment, for the sake of holding together, will only corrupt the whole mass. Whatever it costs, let every man speak the truth, the whole truth, and leave the event with God.

In regard to going *alone*, my opinion is, that every unregenerate man, without the least delay, ought to cast himself upon the strength of God, like an infant falling into its mother's arms, and to go on in holiness from that moment, saying as he goes, "My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him." Is this language new to the land of the Pilgrims? It has been in it as long as the voice of prayer. Is it a late thing in New-England to caution men against depending on their own strength? It has been the common dialect from the days of Cotton and Hooker. It *must* be the dialect of all who believe in divine efficiency. But this language is no denial of natural ability, as consisting in faculties which are the proper basis of obligation. When we speak of casting ourselves on the strength of God, we do not mean in order to help out our *natural* ability, but to obtain *moral* power. Have not good men in all ages cast themselves on God for moral strength? How was it in the days of David and Isaiah? "It is God that girdeth me with strength and maketh my way perfect." "Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thy heart: wait, I say, on the Lord." "My strength and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever." "Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee." "Surely, (shall one say,) in the Lord have I righteousness and strength." "The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation." "Trust ye in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." And do not Christians cast themselves on God for moral strength every time they pray for sanctification?

And if it is the duty of Christians thus to cast themselves on the strength of God, it is the duty of sinners ; and to this they ought to be exhorted. No believer in divine efficiency will hesitate to utter this injunction. And if you suppress it, you send them forth crippled with self-dependence, and with a religion very different from the true. And then you may talk about preaching up dependence occasionally but not too often ; you may talk about differing from your brethren only on “ the philosophy of religion ;” (all this may serve a purpose ;) but in fact you and they stand at the two poles on one of the two or three most important points that can be disowned without infidelity itself.

We admit that men have a capacity or power to love God without the application of divine efficiency ; otherwise none could be punished. But they never will : and it is not owing to their depravity ; for the same is true of the holy angels. Now if you ask me, what is that power which is never exerted without divine efficiency ? I can only say, that, in the account of the divine mind, it is the proper basis of obligation, and therefore, by the decision of common sense, must be called a power. Your difficulty is to see that a creature may be reasonably bound while dependent for his affections. We think that God has pronounced the compatibility of the two by pronouncing the truth of both. And while we thus believe, we cannot admit your competency to decide against the power on account of the dependence.



CHAPTER IV.

Meaning and Origin of Corrupt Nature.

As I am reasoning with brethren who believe in the *exercise system*, I do not intend to embarrass my argument by connecting it with the *taste scheme*. And to remove prejudices on account of any leaning I may be supposed to have to that plan, as well as to explain my meaning when I refer, as I shall have occasion to do, to the necessity of a new *temper* or new *affections*, (without determining which,) before the sinner will be persuaded by divine truth; I will, in the outset, state what I mean by a moral nature or temper; what I mean also by the corrupt nature common to the race, and in what sense it has been derived from Adam. What I shall say on these subjects, and on the origin of sin, will not, I think, be denied by any who believe that God efficiently produces holiness but not sin.

Self-love consists in the desire of happiness and aversion to misery, or in loving to gratify our personal tastes and feelings. This is essential to a rational and even to a sensitive nature. This had Adam before the fall; but divine efficiency wrought in him supreme love to God, which kept self-love in due subjection. As soon as God withdrew his sanctifying influence, (and that he did sovereignly and not as a punishment,) Adam's self-love became supreme, (there can be no rivals for supreme affection but God and self,) and of course turned to selfishness, and, as soon as God

was presented in his law, to "enmity against God." For all this no positive act was necessary on the part of God but to uphold Adam's rational existence. If Adam does not love his Maker supremely, he must with supreme desire seek the means of his own personal gratification, or cease to have a rational soul. Now that *proneness to gratify himself*, growing out of the absence of love to God and the presence of self-love turned to selfishness; or perhaps I may more properly say, that *combination of inward circumstances* out of which will infallibly arise the exercises of selfishness and enmity against God, constitutes the corrupt nature or temper of which I speak. While his rational existence is continued, and while he does not love God, it must be his *nature* to be selfish, and to hate God when God sets himself against him in his law, as much as it is the nature of the serpent to bite and of the lion to be carnivorous. The difference between the two cases is this. The nature of the serpent and lion depends on their *physical* formation; the nature of Adam, on the absence of love to God which he *ought* to exercise. He is to blame for that state of things,—for that nature or aptitude,—and therefore it is a *moral* nature.* If one *must* love his own happiness in case he is even sentient, then a man who does not love God, must, anterior in the order of nature to his selfishness, have an *infallible aptitude* to selfishness. If

* I know that the word nature, etymologically considered, belongs exclusively to physics; but for want of another term, and prompted by a strong analogy, men have applied it to our *moral* constitution. And while it means this, to say that a change of nature must be a *physical* change, is only a play upon words which involves a serious error.

the soul *must* have desires after something or cease to be, and must be influenced by the greatest apparent good, then a man who loves himself supremely and God not at all, must have a *preparation* within him, (consisting perhaps in the mere relation of things,) to hate God when God comes to be seen arrayed against him in his law.

When God re-produced supreme and habitual love to himself in Adam's heart, that nature or aptitude was changed. It was not the new nature of Adam to seek his own interest supremely and to hate God. Whether God re-produced any thing but exercises, I will not say. If not, the new nature was not a new *existence*, but a new *relation* between the feelings towards self and towards God. That is, self-love no longer ruled, and the feelings towards God were no longer hatred but supreme love. It is the common feeling of mankind, until philosophy calls the thing in question, that there is a temper which is the *foundation* of exercises. I see a man, in a revival of religion, dissolved in tears and tenderness. I tell you, Go to that man six months hence and contradict him, and he will affront you. Why? you ask; he has no such feelings in exercise now. No, I say, but such is his nature. We account for the feelings and passions of men by charging them to a mild or an irascible temper. No one attempts to tell what it is, any more than he attempts to account for the *mental diversities* of different animals, (mere organized *matter* cannot think or desire,) or for the preparation in the sleeping child to love its parent rather than a stranger. I know not that a man actually loves himself all the time; and yet, sleeping or waking, it may constantly be said of him, that self-love

is inseparable from his nature. The thing, whatever it is, presents itself to us in different aspects; sometimes as a proneness or propensity, sometimes as that facility of action, founded on association of ideas, which we call habit, sometimes as a mental appetite to which motives are to be addressed, as an invitation to a feast is addressed to a bodily taste. In the last case I know not but the motives are presented to the mind predisposed by habitual *affections*. One feeling certainly hurries a man into another. Anger or envy will cause him to hate. Offer one who loves gold, a bag of guineas to cross the street, and if no stronger motive urges the other way he will certainly come. A man who loves honour, will be induced to desire, to be grateful, to love, to resent, to be angry, to be sorry, to be glad, according to the relation of events to his ruling passion. A man who loves the world supremely, will flee from a religious meeting to wordly business. Experience shows that the affections and volitions do move in such an order, and hold on in an unbroken course, and we are not conscious of any thing behind them. Pres. Edwards* calls the thing in question a principle. "If grace be—an entirely new kind of principle, then the exercises of it are also entirely a new kind of exercises.—This new spiritual sense, and the new dispositions that attend it, are no new faculties, but are new principles of nature. I use the word principles for want of a word of a more determinate signification. By a principle of nature in this place I mean that *foundation* which is laid in nature,

* Quoted in a Tract entitled, *The Renewal of Sinners the Work of Divine Power*; p. 9.

either old or new, for any particular manner or kind of *exercise* of the faculties of the soul, or a natural *habit* or foundation for action;—so that to exert the faculties in that kind of exercises may be said to be his *nature*.” This definition exactly accords with the one which I have given, unless it makes nature more decidedly an existence, and as such the foundation of exercises. But when he calls it a habit, and makes it consist in statedly exerting the faculties in a particular way, no one can object. He seems at a loss for a definition, but on the whole accords very well with the one which I have given. That definition is, that nature, in the unregenerate, is an aptitude to every selfish exercise, growing out of the fact that self-love, which is inseparable from their existence, has, from the absence of love to God, become supreme; and in the Christian, that it is an aptitude to every holy feeling, arising from the dominant love of God.

The constitution made with Adam was, that if he continued obedient his posterity should be *preserved* holy; that if he transgressed they should be *abandoned* to sin. In consequence of the fall they come into the world without the sanctifying influence of God upon their hearts. The consequence is, that they are left under the dominion of selfishness. How soon they have selfish *exercises*, I cannot tell. That from the first they prefer pleasure to pain, and therefore have self-love and only self-love, is certain; but whether it is selfishness in exercise, when they have no knowledge to direct their affection to another object, or to institute any comparison, I will not determine. But with that self-love which will develop itself in time,

and without any influence which can ever awaken the love of God in their hearts, they have a *preparation* within them for every thing wicked. That preparation is what I mean by their corrupt nature. And it stands in the same relation to the moral properties which will mark their lives, that the carnivorous nature of the young lion does to his future habit of eating flesh.

This depravity, in whatever it consists, subjects infants to condemnation. Of this, natural death is declared to be a standing proof. "As by one man sin entered into the world, *and death by sin*, even so death passed upon all men, *for that all have sinned.*"* In the same chapter the whole race are, over and over again, said to be condemned for Adam's sin, even as believers are justified for Christ's righteousness. By this I understand that the *public* act of Adam, which indicated what their hearts would be as fully as it showed his own, was made the ground of their *public* condemnation. But this public condemnation would not have been pronounced upon them had they not deserved eternal death for their own wicked hearts. One thing is certain. If they are saved by grace, they might have gone to hell by justice. They cannot go to heaven by both. If I lay a purse of gold on your table, it cannot be both a present and the payment of a debt. One idea excludes the other. But all who are saved are saved by grace and by Christ. To this we must adhere or renounce the Bible. Had no Saviour been provided, (and surely God was not bound by justice to provide a Saviour,) the whole race would have been lost. Nor is it the provi-

*Rom. 5. 12.

sion of a Saviour that has brought the race into being in an infant state. The creation of male and female in Eden, shows that it was the purpose of God, at the time the covenant was made with Adam, to bring them into the world just as he now does, whether Adam stood or fell, and whether a Saviour was provided or not. Justice therefore approved of the actual destruction of a whole race that were to be born infants. They meet a condemnation at the threshold of their existence. Their just doom in the cradle is, that first or last they shall sink to perdition. And this doom would have been just had no Saviour been provided. Had no Saviour been provided then, what privilege would it have been for them to live to years of discretion rather than sink to hell from the cradle? It would only have been the privilege of growing up under judicial blindness, to treasure up wrath against the day of wrath. If you deny the justice of bringing them into the world in such a state, why, I ask, is it more unjust in God to withhold his influence the first moment of one's existence, than after one has loved him with all the heart up to the moment of the withdrawment? From the angels who fell and from Adam, he withdrew his influence for no previous fault, but after they had loved him with all the heart up to that moment. That influence he owes to no creature, except where he has promised it, as in the case of the Church and the elect angels; and rational creatures are complete moral agents without it, or sinners could not be punished. And if God can justly leave infants unsanctified and sinful, why may he not justly treat them as sinners. Why do you bring them to Christ in baptism, if they have no need of

cleansing and of a Saviour, and therefore of mercy? It is not infant angels that are to be brought to the baptismal font. A large part of the race die in infancy and go to heaven or hell. If to the latter, (which for certain reasons I hope is not the case,) then they justly perish; if to the former, then they are saved by grace and by Christ, and therefore might justly have been consigned to death.

Now whether they are condemned for a corrupt nature or for sinful exercises, I will not decide. Nor will I attempt to weigh the difference between condemning them for a nature sure to rebel, and condemning them for bad exercises when they have no knowledge of God or of duty. But sure I am that they are not without a moral character till they are old enough to understand God's law. Sure I am that they do not pass in one moment, (for one sin deserves eternal death,) from the neutral state of the lower animals to a desert of everlasting burnings.

If infants cannot be sinners, neither can they be sanctified. What then have become of the unnumbered millions who have died in infancy? Who can believe that the infant Jesus differed in nothing from the infant Judas? But the thing is settled beyond dispute. To Jeremiah it was said, "Before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee."* And lest this should be accounted a mere consecration to the prophetic office, I will bring another. To the father of John the Baptist it was said, "He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb."† And if you say, this was miraculous, still it shows that the thing was possible. And if it is possible for

* Jer. 1. 5.

† Luke 1. 15.

the sanctifying Spirit to act on the infant mind, it is possible for the effects of his absence to be there. And what can these be but some form or other of depravity? And if it is *possible* for infants to be depraved and to be sanctified, who, on account of any difficulties attending the subject, will deny their actual depravity and sanctification, in direct opposition to the plain language of the Bible?



CHAPTER V.

Divine Efficiency.

As I am dealing with the adherents of the exercise system, I shall stand on that ground through my whole argument: or if I have occasion to speak of the previous state of mind which gives effect to motives, I shall call it temper or affections. For the same reason I shall adopt their language in respect to the divisions of the mind. These I believe to be understanding, will, and affections; but to accommodate myself to their dialect, I shall include the last two under the common name of will. At present I shall consider the controversy as existing with those only who hold that the Spirit does as much for one as another, unless he stops short with some on account of the foreseen impossibility of success. For reasons already stated I think I am authorized to consider the writers in the *Christian Spectator* as of this class. Indeed between this theory and that of an absolute control by motives, there can be no middle ground, at least none which any text of Scripture can be pretended to support. And an absolute control by motives is no part of their creed who deny, or even doubt, that God could have prevented sin. But the grand point of difference is on the question of divine efficiency. This they

firmly deny, and this we as decidedly maintain. And we feel that where the most spiritual part of the Church since the Reformation have gone,—the Wattses, the Doddridges, the Edwardses, and the Brainerds, there it is safe for us to go; and that a new track, struck out in opposition to all these, is marked with suspicion and danger. Pres. Edwards says, “Let” the sinner “apply his rational powers to the contemplation of divine things, and let his belief be speculatively correct; still he is in such a state—*that those objects of contemplation will excite no holy affections.*”^{*} David Brainerd, in his account of his conversion, says, “I at once saw that all my contrivances and projects to procure deliverance and salvation for myself, were utterly in vain. I was brought quite to a stand, as finding myself utterly lost. I saw that it was forever impossible for me to do any thing towards helping or delivering myself. I saw that, let me have done what I would, it would no more have tended to my helping myself than what I had done. I had the greatest certainty that my state was forever miserable for all that I could do, and wondered that I had never been sensible of it before.” “It was,” adds the author of the Tract, “when he had thus given up all expectation of relief from his own efforts; when he was brought to see himself lost and helpless; when his former feelings were gone and he had left off all his selfish and resolute endeavours to bring himself into a better state; it was then—that unspeakable divine glory seemed to open to the view of his soul.”[†] This was unlike the present plan of throwing sinners upon their own resources.

^{*} Tract before mentioned; p. 10.

[†] *id.* p. 20.

The real question lies between the Calvinistic doctrine of divine efficiency and the Arminian self-determining power. If the will turns without the immediate agency of God, it is turned none the less by a self-determining power for the contemplation of motives which do not absolutely control. The old Arminians, though they denied, as the writers in the *Christian Spectator* do, that motives exerted an absolute dominion, and some of them talked, inconsistently enough, about the necessity of indifference, did not deny the indispensableness of motives. In that they would have bid defiance to the most familiar consciousness of the human race. But they meant to insist, as these modern writers do, that the will is not a *slave* to motives. If without divine efficiency the will turns in view of motives which it is competent to resist, it is turned by a self-determining power. If all that God does is to lay truth in before the mind in its most affecting aspects and relations, then it is not God, in distinction from discovered truth, that changes the heart. It is either truth, in its own affecting aspects and relations, which does the work, or the mind changes itself in view of motives. There is no escaping from this dilemma. Dr Taylor says, the mind is never changed "without an influence of the holy Spirit *distinct from the natural or simple influence of truth.*" But that influence of the Spirit does no more than lay in truth before the mind, not in false glosses, but in ITS OWN affecting aspects and relations. If the influence of truth thus made conspicuous, is in any sense "distinct from" its "natural or simple influence," yet it is its own unborrowed influence when clearly seen. After the truth is thus made

manifest, God does no more. Either then it is the truth clearly seen which changes the mind by effectual control, or the mind changes itself in view of motives, and that is the self-determining power. The former the gentlemen deny; the latter of course they must maintain. No, they say, it is God that produces the change by an instrument. He sends in the truth as a man thrusts in a sword; and no one would ascribe the execution to the sword, but to the man who wields it. Then the action is on the truth, and not on the mind *otherwise than as the truth affects it*. But Dr Taylor denies that the action is on the truth; and I hope to show in another place that there is no sense or meaning in such a supposition. Further, if the truth, in one instance, is the instrument in the same sense that the sword is in the other, then the mind has no more of the freedom pleaded for than the body when pierced with a sword. The freedom set up consists in a power to be slain by the truth or to repel the truth at pleasure; which would exclude every external agent and every instrument wielded by him. Were a man to present a sword which the body could receive or reject at pleasure, and it chose to receive it and die, *and gave it this effect after the agency of the man had ceased*, (after, in the order of nature,) the man could not be said to have produced that death even by an instrument. But to avoid all dispute about the meaning of the self-determining power, I once more announce, that when I use the phrase, I mean no more than a power that actually turns from sin to God without divine efficiency, in view of motives illumined by the Spirit but not absolutely controlling.

Our brethren start with this assumption, that they can look far enough into the mysteries of nature to see decisively that if God makes me "willing" in the day of his "power," I am not free though I am willing. Now I protest against this assumption, and affirm that no mortal man can look far enough into the secrets of nature to see this to be a fact. I doubt whether Gabriel could, even if it were a fact. I protest also against this bold scrutinizing into the mode of divine operation. This fault is not chargeable upon us. "God said, Let there be light, and there was light." We ask no questions about the mode, and are satisfied to know that he *willed* it to be and it was. "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." We ask no questions about the mode, and are satisfied to know that he *willed* their resurrection and it took place. We are not of those who, after such a report, complain of a "physical change" which destroys freedom. From our own consciousness we know that we are free; and the man who has been regenerated is the last to complain that his liberty is abridged. Our freedom consists in a faculty to will under the dictates of the understanding, and in actual willingness. If we are willing we are free. No higher idea of freedom can be conceived. If it is possible for God to *make* us *willing* by a direct act upon the mind, his efficiency must be consistent with our liberty. This dream of the incompatibility of efficiency with freedom, is one of those errors of judgment which grow out of the casual association of ideas. In other cases where power enforces a thing, we say, the subject is not free. And you transfer that idea to a case where power

only makes us *willing*. If I am willing, I know you cannot look far enough into the secrets of nature to see that I am not free, even though made willing. What more do I want? I have complete faculties and a willing soul. But you say, what are faculties that cannot move unless moved by another? This word *cannot* is constantly used delusively in these discussions. A faculty to move that, physically speaking, cannot move, is a contradiction in terms. It is a faculty which is not a faculty. But there may be faculties to move which, in point of fact, will not move in such a manner but in him in whom they have their being.* By power, as applied to the human mind, we mean nothing more than the proper basis of obligation; and it consists in the faculties of a rational soul; faculties not necessarily independent in their exercises. Rational creatures are bound to love God even though he does not efficiently make them willing; else the wicked could not be punished. We ascribe to them therefore a power irrespectively of the action of God upon them; because it is the dictate of common sense that no one can be bound to do a thing for which he has not natural ability, for instance, to carry that mountain. If you can prove from this obligation that there is no divine efficiency, prove it. But I know that you cannot penetrate far enough into the mysteries of nature to see that it must be so. You must refer the decision to divine revelation, the plain tenour of which we must believe whether it crosses what we call our reason or not. And all revelation is against you, as I hope to show in its proper place. Assuming this at present, we say that

* Acts 17, 23.

rational creatures have a capacity to love God without his efficiency, but thât, as a matter of fact, they never will. Nor does this arise from their perverseness ; for we apply the same assertion to the holy angels. And if we are charged with inconsistency in asserting a power, (meaning only a basis of obligation,) where there is no independence, we take shelter in the utter incapacity of man to decide this question by his own unassisted reason, and appeal confidently to the word of God, which plainly and very often asserts what we affirm. And if that word supports divine efficiency in respect to man, none will doubt that it is true in respect to angels : for those who make our depravity the only occasion for the interposition of the Spirit, and thus limit his operations to men, deny efficiency altogether, and make that interposition a mere matter of moral suasion. If the Bible asserts this dependence in reference to a part, it does in reference to all. On that word we cast ourselves. To the plain and uncontradicted meaning of several hundred texts we submit, whether we can see the consistency of what they assert or not. This we must do in all cases. If the Bible tells us that there are Three in One, we must believe though we cannot comprehend. If it tells us that men and angels are bound to love God, and so have power, without divine efficiency applied, and at the same time informs us that they are not independent, we must believe it all though unable to reconcile the parts. If God is not to be believed when he tells us of those facts, relative to matter or mind, which lie too deep for creature comprehension, he cannot make a credible revelation of necessary truths ; for there are many such truths whose

modes and relations we cannot comprehend. We cannot tell how our will moves the body, how the grass grows, nor even, according to Locke and Stewart, how motion is communicated by impulse. If we are to believe nothing whose modes we cannot comprehend, we must stand universal skeptics in the midst of a world full of wonders, and must constantly reject the testimony of our senses. If it can be proved from the Scriptures that God did hold Judas bound to love him, to whom he never applied his efficient power, and that he did apply that power to Peter, we must believe, whatever difficulties lie in the way, that Judas had natural power, (meaning by power the basis of obligation,) and that Peter was made to differ from him by the immediate operation of the Spirit upon his heart. I believe this because I find it in my Bible: and while it is there, I will lie down upon it and hold it as with the grasp of death, even though as unable to understand it as to understand how God could exist without a beginning or a cause.

Why should liberty be impaired by divine efficiency? It is agreed on all hands that the Christian's new exercises are his own, as much as they possibly can be his own. They are acts, not of God, but of his own mind, as fully as they can be acts of that mind,—as fully as God's acts are acts of his mind. God never created his own mind, nor, as far as we can conceive, his own exercises. All are self-existent, without succession, in one eternal now, inseparable from his self-existent nature. But in the highest possible sense he exercises the feelings he has. And in a sense equally perfect the Christian exercises his feelings. They are the real exercises of his own mind. Mind is

such a peculiar substance that its action can be in the highest possible sense its own while caused by the Author of its being. If we are willing, we as completely exercise that willingness as though we had caused it by an independent power. In regard to its being our own, we go as far as our brethren possibly can. The only point of difference is about the cause : not whether it is entirely our own, but what caused it to be exercised. Our brethren, if they differ from us in any thing but words, must mean that the mind of man not only exercises its own affections in the fullest degree, but *causes itself* to exercise them. If they meant only that the *faculties* cause the exercises, there is a sense in which this is true ; for the essential attributes of mind are necessary to the action of mind. But they seem to have a confused notion that the will, not only exercises such volitions, but *chooses* to exercise them ; placing a volition before every volition, and one before the first ; the very absurdity charged upon the old Arminians by Pres. Edwards. The question is not whether Peter does himself exercise the affections, and exercise them in the highest possible sense in which any being can ; whether it is his own faculties that put them forth. The question is not whether he is willing in the highest sense in which any being can be willing ; whether it is his own hearty willingness. In these points all are agreed. But the sole question is, what *causes* him to exercise such a willingness ? One says it is God, another says it is Peter. And those who adopt the latter opinion, talk about his doing it *spontaneously*,—his doing it because he *chooses* to do it, as if there needed any other consent than the wil-

lingness itself. But they seem to dream of the necessity of a *willingness to be willing*; which again carries us back to that confusion which Pres. Edwards encountered and exposed; namely, the necessity of a volition before every free volition, and therefore one before the first; else the first is not free; and then, as slaves cannot beget a line of freemen, no part of the series is free. If you say, the *mind* must cause the volition, there is a sense in which this is true. If there was no mind there could be no volition. It is the mind itself that wills. But the question still returns, what *causes* the mind to will thus and thus rather than in a contrary way? If you say, the mind *chooses* to do it, *there* again is a volition before every free volition, and one before the first. If you say, the mind has *power* to act in view of motives, I know it well; and so has Judas power to love, but he does not exert that power. Why does Peter exert it? If you say, because he chooses to do it, *there* again is a volition before every free volition. If you say, the cause lies in the self-determining power, the question still returns, why does Peter exert that power and Judas not? If you trace it to a previous volition in Peter, you have need to find the cause of that, and to run back interminably through a chain which at last leaves an effect without a cause. If the cause of that exertion of the self-determining power is not a previous volition, what is it? A capacity to choose? But Judas has this capacity and does not use it: why does Peter use it if the reason is not a previous choice? His capacity cannot be the cause of his using his capacity in this way; for Judas has the same capacity and does not

so use it. What self-determining power can be controlled by capacity, or can exist in capacity, without a previous choice? The very word *self-determination* implies a decision from fixed purpose; and this cannot be made by mere power or capacity without an act of the will. No man, I think, can conceive of a self-determining power which proceeds without purpose or choice. A self-determining mind is a mind that *purposely* determines its own acts: and *there* is a purpose before every purpose, and one before the first. It is in vain to ransack the mind for a self-determining power that does not consist in a capacity to control the volitions *by previous volitions*. If you mean by the self-determining process, that we *choose to choose*, say it: but if you mean any other thing, you must mean only that *the mind itself wills*; and this is as true on our plan as on yours. The willingness could not be more its own if it carried back an agency beyond its own action to cause its own activity. This language exposes the confusion of the whole system. The theory of self-determination assumes that the mind sends back an agency to cause its own activity,—that it acts to cause its own action,—that it acts before it acts,—that its action causes its first action. If the mind originates its own holy action, it either acts before it acts, or, without acting, it originates its action by a mere *power* to act. Certainly the action grows out of a power to *act*; but a power to *originate*, without acting, is quite a different thing. It is not the mind's power to act, but a power, without acting, to *cause itself* to act.

I will not have such a self-determining power in my

system, you say. I always have denied it, and it shall not be fastened upon me. Well then, who does determine the will on your plan? God does not except by motives. Motives have no absolute control. After they have exerted all their force, the will is to decide whether to fall in with them or reject them. In that decision it is not influenced by motives. For after the whole body of motives have done their best, the decision is to be made whether to allow their influence to have any effect. Call that influence *ten degrees*. It must be no more nor less. The whole body of motives are wrapt up in *ten degrees*, and the question is, shall *ten degrees* be rejected or be allowed to prevail? That precise question the mind must decide without the influence of motives. The *ten degrees* are not the pleading attorney, but the prisoner at the bar. He stands to be judged. If he is allowed to speak, the *ten degrees* are changed to eleven. The influence of motives is not working on the judge; that influence is the very thing to be judged. It *has* spent itself, and now the question is, shall that identical influence, without increase or change, be lifted up or cast down? In that decision the will is influenced by nothing out of itself. It is its own determiner. Even the temper and affections are not allowed to interfere. The very thing which the will has to do is to crush and destroy the temper and affections. Self-interest is not allowed to speak. The whole plea which self-interest has put in is mute in the prisoner at the bar. Not a straggling motive from any corner of the universe is left out of the *ten degrees*. Not one can exert an influence on the decision. The very point at issue is, whether

one of them all shall have the least influence or not. In the decision of that question the mind can be determined by nothing but its own despotic will. And if this is not self-determination, tell me what is. Besides, here is a mind claiming to be rational, and highly jealous of its liberty, that constantly acts, in the highest concerns, without motives, and therefore with no more reason than a block.

Every attempt to find in a previous act of the mind the cause of holiness, leads to inconsistency. Some have placed it in a *consent* to fall in with the motives contained in divine truth; others, (with nearly the same meaning,) in a *resolution* to submit to God. Let us consider both.

The mind *consents* to fall in with the motives presented in divine truth, before it does fall in with them and put forth holy affections. That consent cannot be holy, for it is the *cause* of holiness. And being unholy, it cannot be put in motion by holy motives. Such motives may be addressed to reason and conscience; but none except motives adapted to a selfish temper can induce that unholy consent which produces all the holiness in the soul. Motives of a better character must indeed be in readiness to be fallen in with when the mind consents; but that consent, which has the most important bearing of all the operations of the mind, sets aside as useless, (in respect to itself,) all the holy motives of the universe, and yields only to those which are unholy. It will not itself submit to any but bad motives, and yet it compels the mind to yield to all those which are contained in the truths of God.

Take the other view. The advocates of the new doctrine, in their division of the mental powers, comprehend

the heart and will under the common name of will : and, overlooking the immense difficulty of subduing a wicked *heart*, they speak of the operation as being as easy as it is to will. They go upon the principle that the will, (in the vulgar sense of the word, viz. the faculty which forms resolutions,) can control the affections; and they constantly beset awakened sinners to *resolve* to submit. That resolution they consider the cause of all the holy affections : of course it is not itself holy : consequently it cannot be moved by motives adapted to a holy temper. Here then again there is no chance for the operation of any but selfish motives, to awaken that lordly resolution which commands into existence all the holy affections. None but bad motives can act on that wicked emperor who orders the mind into submission to the pure motives of God. He is moved himself by the worst influence, but sends out the best. He is not known by his works; for his works are good and he is evil.

I ask the advocates of the exercise system, what there is before the holy affection that can be called an independent power; I mean, that originates holy exercises without the immediate action of God. How does it work? I am not asking what power *exercises* the affections; that is the mind : but I am inquiring after a power which exhausts its influence before the exercise appears. Is this power exerted through a voluntary act or is it not? If it is, then there is a volition before every volition, and one before the first. If it is not, then I ask, what is that mighty power which produces these wonderful effects without any decision or action? Look at this thing on every side.

Look at it long. Pass not by the question without a distinct answer. The main point turns on this. How does the mind cause its own exercises without any act or decision? What independent cause can act there without an act of the mind? Look at it. What can it be? When you go back beyond volition, you find nothing but mind in an involuntary state: but how can mind in such a state act to *cause* volition in distinction from *exercising* it? The believers in a disposition might think they saw a cause, though not an independent cause. But will you who are so strenuous to exclude every thing from the mind but exercise, say that you have found in it an independent cause of exercise which involves no decision or action? In a thing which has nothing but exercise, what is that mighty cause which produces every thing without exercise? Existing affections, by entertaining motives which call forth similar affections, may in a sense be the cause of the latter; but this is not the case contended for by the advocates of the self-determining power. Besides, there are here no such affections as you wish to produce.

You say, the cause lies in the faculty of the will. But are you sure that this is not using words without a meaning? What is the faculty which, without any decision or act, causes itself to will? Can you look so far as clearly to see that there is any thing in all this but words? Put it in plain and intelligible language and tell me what it is. Get not over this task by covering it up in the tapestry of general terms. I cannot be satisfied till this question is answered. I well know that there is a faculty, and that that faculty is exercised in willing; but when the faculty

has willed, it has done all that we can trace: we cannot find in it an independent cause of that exercise. We can find in it a sort of cause, (as without the faculty the exercise could not exist,) but by no means an independent cause. By the faculty of the will we understand no more than that the mind is so formed that, with or without divine efficiency, it will put forth volitions, as matter cannot. But whether there is or is not divine efficiency, is not decided by the allowed existence of a faculty.

But cannot God, you say, lodge in mind an efficient cause as well as in matter? If you mean by an efficient cause that without which the effect could not be, (the common definition given it,) then mind is an efficient cause; for without mind there could be no perception or thought or affection or volition, or any operation of imagination or memory. But if you mean by an efficient cause, a cause independent for its present power and action, there is not an efficient cause in all the works of God. I am willing to admit also that the attributes of matter, which constitute the laws of nature, are efficient causes. Stewart considers the laws of nature as only the stated modes of divine operation, and denies that any thing intervenes between the divine will and the effect. *But if the attributes of matter do not exist separately from God, matter does not exist; and then we must all go back to Berkleianism.* Stewart denies that efficient causes can exist in matter: but if extension exists separately from God, the extension of a marble rock is the efficient cause of its filling the space to the exclusion of other bodies. Brown, on the other hand, maintains that the laws of nature *are* efficient

causes, but denies that God constantly produces their existence; and says that at the creation he permanently lodged in matter its existence and powers, which continue without his further interposition. But to me this appears as impossible as for God to create a being which for the future shall be self-existent. It seems to suppose that he lodged *self-existence* in matter and its laws, which appears to be a contradiction even in terms. In the middle space between these two philosophers I would take my humble stand, and say, that the attributes or laws of matter are efficient causes, actually intervening between the divine will and the effect, but that they are momentarily supported and made what they are by the power of God.

Now the operations of these laws of matter are uniform and mechanical, without any variations or diversities to be accounted for. In this they essentially differ from the operations of mind. In the latter the diversities are the very things and the only things to be accounted for. That the mind is the efficient cause, in general, of affections and volitions, does not account for the fact that one mind has holy exercises and another sinful. We may account for the sinful by the existence of self-love, (essential to every nature above a block,) turned into selfishness by the absence of love to God, and moved by motives of which the universe is full; but we cannot account for the holy exercises without going back beyond the motives in view of which they were called forth, to that power which caused the mind to fall in with the motives: for before holiness is implanted in the heart, there is nothing answering to self-love in the other case, to which the motives

are adapted. The fact is, that the heart governs the head more than the head the heart. The heart, influencing the judgment respecting the greatest good, controls, in moral matters, the opinions of the understanding ; but the understanding cannot reform a selfish heart.

The mind, though an efficient cause, is not independent. And what do you mean by that? you say. Suppose God does constantly uphold the causal powers of the mind, as he does the causal power of the loadstone, they are still causes existing separately from him, as much as the attributes of matter, (the true physical causes,) exist separately from him. All this is true ; but those mental powers are only what we mean by *faculties*. And in the exercise of the faculties there is a latitude altogether different from the mechanism of the material world. No powers or faculties are causes of such a nature as to account for the difference of moral feeling between Peter and Judas. Those powers act uniformly so far as to attend to and choose the greatest apparent good ; but what that apparent good is, depends less on the faculties than on the state of the heart. In the unregenerate, where supreme self-love predominates, the greatest apparent good is sure to be wrapt up in self-interest, and the powers which God supports are as sure to act under the general control of selfishness : and as no light spread upon other objects can make them dearer to the selfish man than self, no radiations of truth can alter this direction of the powers, until, by an energy wholly distinct from the faculties and from truth, the stubborn heart, in view of truth, is all at once made to transfer its supreme affection to God.

It has been asked on our side, How can our faculties be constantly dependent and their operations forever independent? There is nothing gained by anything delusive or by concealing any part of the truth. I admit therefore that the argument for divine efficiency involved in this question is not logical. The power of the loadstone, though constantly supported by God, is its own power; else the attributes of matter have no existence separate from God, and then matter has no existence. And if that attraction is its own power separately from God, it is, though not an independent, yet an efficient cause, intervening between the divine will and the effect. Can that cause be dependent and its action independent? Its action, though not the immediate action of God, is certainly caused by God. The action of that power mechanically follows from the support of that power; and if the power is not independent, the action is not independent, although the action is its own and not God's. Thus it is with the attributes or laws of matter: is it so with mind? The faculties of the mind are as constantly supported as the attributes of matter; and the exercise of a faculty is not the act of God but the act of the creature. Its support and its exercise are so distinct as to be the acts of entirely different agents. Thus far the two cases are alike. But here arises the mighty difference: there is no such mechanism in the operations of the mental faculty. If there was, its operation must be the same at all times and in all minds. Its support makes it merely a faculty, but does not decide its operations. These are decided by the state of the heart and outward circumstances,—outward

circumstances throwing in motives adapted to the existing temper or affections. We cannot therefore argue from the dependence of the faculties, that the particular form of their exercise is determined by God. The faculties themselves are not the full cause of the diversities of their operations: and therefore to support them is not to support the entire cause, much less to be the cause. There is not a single faculty that has the full cause in itself. The judgments of the intellect and the decisions of the will are both controlled by the heart. And the heart itself is so far dependent on the intellect, that it is always influenced by motives contemplated by that faculty, provided they accord with its own taste. The faculty of the heart can never account for all the diversities of its operations. The attraction of the magnet is a competent and efficient cause of the motion of the steel towards it: but if it had such a latitude of action as sometimes to attract and sometimes to repel the same object, no single power lodged within it could be the cause of this diversity of action. The faculty of the heart cannot account for a man's hating rather than loving or loving rather than hating, and therefore is not the full cause of any specific mode of action. If the movements of this faculty involved the mechanism of material laws, the power would be the full cause of the operation: but as it works in opposite ways, in loving and hating, the cause of this diversity must be sought for beyond the faculty. When therefore you say that God supports the faculty, you do not say that he supports the entire cause of these diversities, much less that he is himself the cause. That he supports the life and faculties of

the wicked, is no proof that he produces all their wicked feelings.

To prove our spontaneity in originating our own holy exercises, an appeal is often made to our consciousness. Never was an appeal less supported. What are we conscious of? Entire willingness in the operations of our own minds. But the question is not about exercising, but about spontaneously causing our own volitions. Now we know that we are willing, but are we conscious of *willing to be willing*? The very question answers itself, and refutes this confident appeal. Whatever are the difficulties of comprehending this subject, I think we can clearly see that the nature of our exercises is the same whether they are divinely caused or not. My thoughts of you and my love to you are what they are, whether originated by God or by myself. We know from consciousness that we have all the workings of a rational soul, and that they are perfectly free by whomsoever caused; we cannot be certain from their nature or freeness, whether they are caused by the simple powers of the mind or by the addition of a foreign impulse. If we were plainly told that God had "wrought all our works in us," we should not feel them to be less our own or less free. If we were told that he had made us "willing in the day of" his "power," we should be no less conscious of being willing and free. A thought is a thought and love is love however caused. We cannot therefore draw from our conscious freedom any argument against the efficiency of God.

But will not these reasonings prove either that God is

the efficient cause of all the volitions of the unregenerate, or that they possess the self-determining power? I think not. Self-love and a submission to the greatest apparent good, are essential to all beings that have life. A worm prefers pleasure to pain, and will turn aside if a coal of fire is laid before it. Otherwise it could not have both the power of perception and of muscular motion. If God sustains the rational existence of natural men, he sustains a nature sure to be influenced by the strongest motive addressed to self-love. Nothing more is necessary on his part than to withhold his sanctifying grace, to convert that self-love into selfishness. It remains in subjection while the love of God rules the heart; but as soon as that superior is withdrawn, the servant, by a mere change of relations, becomes the master; and from its very nature it cannot be a master without being a tyrant and a traitor. No divine power is necessary in all this process but to support the rational existence. And if nature itself, thus supported, works in this way, by the mere preponderance of motives addressed to selfishness, there needs no self-determining power. In supporting nature God supports reason and self-love and the empire of the greatest apparent good; and the sin comes from men's not keeping self-love in subjection by the dominant love of God. This is their own fault. They are bound, even without the application of divine efficiency, to love God supremely, because they have rational souls and are capable of understanding his will. But does no self-determining power act in all the multiform ragings of their selfishness? No: their supreme regard for the gratification of their own pro-

pensities, into which their self-love, (their essential nature,) turns when they neglect the love of God, *must* be roused to all these ragings by the pressure of adapted and sufficiently powerful motives : for to be influenced by motives and to be controlled by the greatest apparent good, are essential to their nature. Let their nature, in all its attributes, be supported by its Author, and they change its operations, not by a self-determining power, but by withholding their love from God. By that single neglect, and not by a self-determining power, they cause the laws of nature, which the God of nature must support, to work rebellion. But though the wicked rage without any application of divine efficiency but to support the harmless laws of nature, not without that efficiency do they turn from supreme enmity to the supreme love of God.

Still God has the absolute control of mind in all its common operations : else how could he govern the world ? Whether he does this by the mere force of motives adapted to the existing temper, or sometimes by a lower sort of efficiency, not however productive of sin, I will not determine. But the fact is incontrovertible. "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord as the rivers of water : he turneth it whithersoever he will." "The preparations of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord." "There are many devices in a man's heart ; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand." "A man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps." "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself : it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." "Man's goings are of the Lord : how can a man

then understand his own way?" "He fashioneth their hearts alike." "In him we live and move and have our being." Are not some of these motions voluntary? Then, besides living in him, we voluntarily move in him. Then somehow he causes our willingness as he does our life. "Who is he that saith and it cometh to pass when the Lord commandeth it not?" "There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the Lord." "Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and behold he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter. So he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it." Then the word of the Lord came to me saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter, saith the Lord? Behold as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in my hand, O house of Israel. At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up and to pull down and to destroy it; if that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them." How many volitions he must control to accomplish all this. "Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the

staff should lift up itself as if it were no wood." "Thou art my battle axe and weapon of war: for with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms."*

A number of cases in the sacred history are referred to in the margin,† in which God controlled the hearts of men in common matters. I will only ask, how could Christians pray for relief in a thousand cases, if they could not confide in his absolute power to control the heart? How otherwise could Jacob have prayed for deliverance from the rage of Esau, or have said about the unknown lord of Egypt, "God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother and Benjamin"? How otherwise could Jehoshaphat have prayed for his assailants to depart from him? or Esther and the Jews for the success of her intercession with Ahasuerus?‡ In some instances where the operation could not perhaps be called sanctification, there seemed to be a direct influence upon the heart. "He made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives." "In Judah the hand of God was to give them one heart to do the commandment of the king and of the princes by the word of the Lord." When "the fathers of

* Ps. 33. 15. Prov. 16. 1, 9. and 19. 21. and 20. 24. and 21. 1, 30. Isai. 10. 15. Jer. 10. 23. and 18. 2—10. and 51. 20. Lam. 3. 37. Acts 17. 23.

† Gen. 32. 6, 11. with ch. 33. 4. Exod. 3. 21. and 11. 3. and 12. 36. and 34. 24. Josh. 2. 24. with Exod. 15. 15. with Ps. 48. 4—6. Judg. 7. 21, 22. and 14. 4. 2 Kin. 24. 2, 3. 2 Chron. 20. 22, 23. and 21. 10. Ez. 1. 1. and 6. 22. and 7. 27. Isai. 10. 5—7. Jer. 51. 11, 12. Hag. 1. 14. John 7. 30. and 8. 20.

‡ Gen. 32. 11. and 43. 14. 2 Chron. 18. 31. Esth. 4. 16.

Judah and Benjamin" went up to Jerusalem, in the days of Cyrus, "to build the house of the Lord," it was "God" who "had raised" their "spirit" to that high emprise. And it was he who, in the days of Darius, "stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel—and the spirit of all the remnant of the people" to the same work.* Even in the motions of sin, (though only permissively, I suppose,) his government is effectual. "He turned their heart to hate his people, to deal subtilly with his servants." God "moved David" to number the people; and in all cases, "whom he will he hardeneth."†

But all these operations are distinguishable from that which produces holiness. These fall within the range of nature, but sanctifying grace is supernatural. The former is ascribed to God; the latter to the holy Spirit, and constitutes his distinctive work as one of the Persons of the Trinity. Take away that supernatural operation which sanctifies, and what is there left of the office work of the Spirit? or how is he made known as one of the Sacred Persons?

The great thing which our brethren oppose is a *direct* operation on the mind, as working, in their view, a "physical change" inconsistent with freedom. But the causing of a *moral* effect is not a physical change. Were a new faculty created, it would indeed be a physical change. If that moral effect is wrought by truth, the power which brings truth into view must be applied directly to the truth or directly to the mind. It cannot be applied to the truth. That would produce a change in truth itself. But truth cannot

* Ps. 106. 46. 2 Chron. 30. 12. Ez. 1. 5. Hag. 1. 14.

† 2 Sam. 24. 1. Ps. 105. 25. Rom. 9. 18.

change. Two and two make four. What change can that truth undergo? The sinner has rebelled against God. What change can take place in that truth? And what is that power which produces no change in the thing to which it is applied? And if the power is applied directly to the mind, to make truth *seen, attended to, felt, and loved*, it is all we ask. And are you sure that the application of power to the understanding and conscience, to make truth *seen, attended to, and felt*, is any more consistent with freedom, than the application of power to the heart to make truth *loved*?

God can doubtless say, Let the mind see truth,—in any degree of clearness,—and it is done; just as Christ willed to appear among his disciples, the doors being shut, and he appeared. If you say, in this case no one can tell on what the power operated, and no one can tell on what the power operates in the other case; yet we can tell on what the *change* takes place. As there are but two subjects concerned,—mind and truth,—the change must be in one or the other or both: but as no change can possibly take place in truth, it must be in the mind alone. And the change by which truth is *first seen*, cannot be wrought *through* the truth, otherwise than as truth is the *object* seen. That the mind first sees it, must be owing to a clearer discernment in the mind itself, not produced by the object. This probably will not be denied. Here then is one direct act upon the mind that does not destroy freedom. In the next two acts, by which truth is *attended to* and *felt*, they will say that the influence is carried on

through the instrumentality of truth; and that I am not disposed to deny. But all this influence produces nothing but awakening and conviction. This is not therefore the act about which we are inquiring. Come then right to the point. Does God, by an influence on the heart, cause it to *love* the truth?

You say, he changes the heart *through the truth*; and you mean that he does not act immediately on the heart, but only presents truth to the clear view of the understanding, and there leaves it. Then it is not God, but illumined truth, seen in *its own* affecting aspects and relations, that works the change, so far as it is wrought by any thing but the mind itself. But as truth does not control the mind, (as is every where asserted,) it is the mind that turns itself under the inducements which truth offers. And that is exactly the self-determining power.

If this is so, God cannot be said to convert men. If he only sends in illumined truth, which Peter, by the self-determining power, loves, he also sends in illumined truth, which Judas, by the self-determining power, hates, and hates in proportion as it is illumined: and except his *aiming* at the effect in the former case and not in the latter, he may be said as truly to cause Judas to hate as to cause Peter to love. He merely presents the object, which in one instance is hated and in the other is loved.

In this theory of the self-determining power, I find nothing but effects without a cause. Here are Peter and Judas, twin minds we will suppose, of exactly the same faculties, tempers, and habits, and urged on by the same

motives: for that is certainly a supposable case.* At ten o'clock they both oppose. At eleven Peter yields and Judas still resists. What has produced this difference? What caused Peter, with his powers and habits and temper, to love, while Judas, with the same powers and habits and temper, continues to hate? The same causes should produce the same effects. You must either say that Peter chose to love, (placing a volition before every volition, and one before the first,) and Judas did not, or you must look for a cause out of Peter. You cannot find it in the motives; for the same pressure of truth, by the supposition, is made upon Judas as upon Peter. In short there is an effect without a cause, unless that cause is found in God. Mind is doubtless the cause of mental exercises in a certain sense, as without mind there could be no exercises, and it is the mind itself that exercises. But when you see two minds of the same stamp, and under the pressure of the same motives, put forth opposite exercises, that difference must have a cause distinct from mind or motives. Or to fix the eye on one, the mighty change from hatred to love in Peter, while Judas remains the same, must have a cause other than the faculties, habits, and temper, which

* In the first chapter it was allowed to be doubtful, on their principles, whether the Spirit pressed motives so far upon Judas as upon Peter, on account of foreseeing that they would not prevail, but would only make him worse. Now, as the present argument is concerned, it matters not whether the Spirit actually applies an equality of motives without success, or sees that they would be without success if applied. The failure of the motives as contemplated by the Spirit, is the same to the argument as an actual failure.

are common ; other than the motives which are common. The only question is about that cause : not whether Peter is *capable* of exercising love without the Spirit ; for Judas is equally capable and does not do it : not whether Peter really puts forth the exercise himself, with all the spontaneity and freedom that mind can possibly have ; for no one doubts of that : but what causes Peter's hatred to change to love when that of Judas remains the same ? If you say, it is the self-determining power, I meet no answer there. Why does the self-determining power act so differently in different men under exactly the same circumstances ? If you say again, Peter *chose* to love and Judas did not, the question still returns, *why* did Peter choose so differently from Judas under precisely the same circumstances ? To say, he chose to choose differently, is only running back through an endless chain, and leaving at last an effect without a cause. If to escape from this difficulty you change the ground and say, the pressure of truth was not the same in both cases ; then you give up your favourite tenet, that God does the best he can for all and each. Or if you say, he foresaw that no further pressure of motives would avail with Judas, then this contemplated failure of equal motives is the same to my argument as an actual failure of equal motives. What ground was there for God to foresee that the same motives would fail with one and prevail with the other ? What was the cause of that foreseen certainty ? But I deny that the mind, in the clearest view of truth, will love without the action of divine efficiency. No where below the heavens is truth more clearly seen than in hell, but no love is there. To

say, it is because the Spirit does not place it before them, is to say, it is because they do not see it with sufficient clearness. But that they see it less clearly than do the saints on earth, (bating their blindness to its glory,) is more than you can prove or I believe. And certainly they see it clearly enough to hate it with eternal rancour. To say, it is because there is no hope, is to say that no man can love God without a bribe. Dr Taylor reckons all love to God to be prompted by self-interest; but the very reason why the mere view of truth will not prevail, is that the love which the truth requires, and which alone can relish the truth, is altogether different from the promptings of self-love and of nature. And while the heart remains supremely selfish, the service of God to which the truth invites, will not appear the greatest good. There must be a direct action of the Spirit upon the heart, conforming it to the holy and benevolent nature of truth, before it will be persuaded by truth to love God.



CHAPTER VI.

Importance and Instrumentality of Truth.

THE intellect, the memory, the heart, the will, cannot act without a subject or object or reason of action. Without truth there is no object, (except error,) for the understanding to consider, the memory to recall, the heart to love, hate, desire, dread, rejoice in or regret, or by which the will can be moved. Except so far as error thrusts itself into the place of truth, truth is the only thing seen or felt, loved, hated, desired, dreaded, rejoiced in, or sorrowed for, and offers the only considerations in view of which the mind acts. It presents all those considerations and objects from which the intellect forms its reasonings, its judgments, its expectations; which the heart regards with delight or aversion, with joy or sorrow, with gratitude, hope, or fear; and from which the will forms all its decisions. In short, truth is the necessary means of all the operations of mind which are not guided by error. Without it there can be no right exercises at all. It is that which the heart enjoys, and without which there can be no holy happiness. It is that which forms all the ennobling furniture which we call knowledge. If knowledge serves any purpose in the exaltation and happiness of

mind, the same purpose is served by truth, for nothing but truth can be known. Without truth there would be no knowledge, no holy happiness, no holy exercises, no truly rational action. Even God glorified is nothing but truth displayed. If it is important that all worlds should be filled with the glory of God, it is important that truth should flood the universe. All the infinitely grand and expensive measures which God has taken to make himself known, are only measures to pour truth upon the eyes of the creation. The only good resulting from the mission, death, and reign of Christ, is involved in truth displayed. What is the law of God, with all its penalties and rewards, but truth presented in the form of knowledge, imposing obligations, and offering motives to obedience? The eternal empire of Jehovah over a universe of moral agents, is sustained by nothing but truth,—is nothing but truth illustrated and applied as motives to obedience, adoration, and praise. Infinite is the value of truth as an instrument of divine government, as a medium of revealing the divine glory; two things which act and react upon each other. The government of God and all the sanctions of his law, and all the discoveries of him in creation, providence, and grace, are no other than glorious truths to feed the understandings and sway the hearts and lives of creatures. If truth is not important in this office, the moral empire of God and all the discoveries of his glory have been in vain. The word of God is nothing but a body of truth: and it may be expected of that revelation that it will not discredit truth by pronouncing it useless in governing and blessing the universe.

That expectation is realized. It seems even to be suggested that there is no salvation where the Gospel does not come. "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?—So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God."* And as it is by faith that *God* purifies the heart,† Christians are said to be "clean through the word."‡ Because the Ephesians believed and trusted in God "after that" they had "heard the word of truth," that word is called "the Gospel of" their "salvation."§ "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."|| If the "ingrafted word" is received with the "meekness" of faith, it "is able to save" the soul.¶ God "called" the Thessalonians "to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth," "by" the "Gospel" which Paul had preached.** To denote that a divine energy attended the word, it is said, "His word was with power." And yet the mere word did no more than when it was said, Be thou made whole. "Our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost." "My speech and my preaching was—in demonstration of the Spirit and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."†† "The preaching of the cross—unto us which are saved,—is the power of God."‡‡ The Agent and the

* Rom. 10. 13—17. John 17. 20 † Acts 15. 9. ‡ John 15. 3.
 § Eph. 1. 13. || 1 Cor. 1. 21. ¶ James 1. 21. ** 2 Thes. 2. 13,
 14. †† Luke 4. 32. 1 Cor. 2. 4, 5. 1 Thes. 1. 5. ‡‡ 1 Cor. 1. 18.

means are sometimes thrown together in a sort of mystical confusion. "I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."* By a figure of speech intended to denote the comparative hardness of different people, it is said that if the Gospel had been carried to others they would have believed; † which cannot mean, even upon the opposite plan, that they would have believed without the Spirit. "For the kingdom of God is not in word but in power." ‡ Ministers, as they plant and water the field, are fellow labourers with him who gives the increase. "Who then is Paul and who is Apollos but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase.—We are labourers together with God." § In conviction, and especially in repentance, truth penetrates the heart like sharp arrows or a drawn sword, or, like fire and a hammer upon a rock, it breaks it in pieces. "Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies, whereby the people fall under thee." "The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." "For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents

* Acts 20. 32. † Ezek. 3. 6. Matt. 11. 21. ‡ 1 Cor. 4. 20.
§ 1 Cor. 3. 5—9.

of the heart." "Is not my word like as a fire—and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?"*

Thus far there is nothing which has the least semblance of opposition to divine efficiency. We come now to a new class of texts. By an easy figure the speaker is so identified with the word spoken, that to him is ascribed the instrumentality of the latter. The word is dropt from view and he is put for the whole. By exactly the same figure the word is so identified with the divine Agent who wields it, that the energy of the Spirit is ascribed to the word. The Spirit is dropt from the account and the word is put for the whole. In both cases the nearest and most visible cause is selected as that on which the imagination most naturally dwells. The perfect sameness of the figure in the two cases however, ought effectually to guard against misconstruction. And even our brethren cannot insist on a literal meaning: for that would entirely exclude the word in one case and the illuminating Spirit in the other.

"Go ye—and disciple all nations." "Delivering thee from—the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God." "And he shall ūrñ the heart of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to their fathers."† Here the eye is filled with the nearest object, and the more remote object is put out of view. Now turn to the other texts which fill the eye with the next nearest object and put out of view the Agent

* Ps. 45. 5. Jer. 23. 29. Heb. 4. 12. Rev. 1. 16. and 2. 12.

† Mal. 4. 6. Mat. 23. 19. Luke 1. 17. Acts 26. 17, 18.

behind the scene. "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." "The word of God is not bound." "So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed;" the Holy Ghost, though enforcing it with miraculous power, being not named. "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it, not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." Compare that however with this: "*He* that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me towards the Gentiles." Again: "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free;" meaning, from sin. "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learnt of the Father, cometh unto me." Every man is in darkness until he is enlightened from above. For "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned." "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." This strong figure by which the Gospel is called spirit and life, cannot exclude the holy Spirit, for he is named in this very sentence as the real quickener. "Not of the letter, [the law,] but of the spirit; [the Gospel, called in the context "the ministration of the Spirit," because accompanied with

larger measures of the Spirit than the law of Moses ;] for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." "Thy word hath quickened me ;" explained by this other clause in the context, "I will never forget thy precepts, for with them *thou* hast quickened me."*

Take another set of texts in which the same thing occurs in relation to both objects. "If any of you do err from the truth and one convert him, let him know that he which converteth the sinner—shall save a soul from death." Here no account is made of the word, but only of the man who utters it. In the next that I shall cite, all account is made of the word and none of the Spirit. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." These forms of expression are analagous to others of every day's occurrence. We say for instance, that Peter and John healed the lame man at the Beautiful gate of the temple, and it is so expressed in the Contents of the chapter ; but Peter said to the wondering multitude, "Why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk ?"†

Thus far, I think, there is nothing that either sets aside the efficient action of the Spirit or explains the mode of his operation. Indeed where the Spirit is not mentioned it behooves our brethren to supply the defect as well as us ; for they, no less than we, hold to the necessity of the Spirit's operation.

* Ps. 119. 50, 93. Isai. 55. 11. John 6. 45, 63. and 8. 32, 34. Acts 19. 20. 1 Cor. 2. 14. 2 Cor. 3. 6, 8. Gal. 2. 8. 1 Thes. 2. 13. 2 Tim. 2. 9.

† Ps. 19. 7. Acts 3. 12. James 5. 19, 20.

We now come to two texts which, taken in any thing like a literal sense, would seem to favour our brethren; but upon that construction they would contradict several hundred texts which hold a different language, as we shall have occasion to see. They speak of the word as the *seed* by which the children are formed in the second birth, and the act of the father as merely introducing that seed. The two passages are these: "Born again, not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, by the word of God." "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." There is a third text which speaks of the seed without explaining the reference, but from the other two we must conclude that the reference is to the word. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God."* I do not say that these are all the texts which thus speak, but I say, they are all that I could find; and I have taken great pains to collect the whole. At present I must believe that these are the only texts which have given countenance to the doctrine which is so triumphantly sounded in every street, that we are *begotten and born again through the word*.

Now for the meaning of these texts. As truth is that in view of which the intellect and heart act, and without which there could be no active life; in other words, as all the exercises of the new man grow, as it were, out of truth; this is spoken of as the seed which is wrought up into the living man. But this is strongly figurative upon every

* James 1. 18. 1 Pet. 1. 23. 1 John 3. 9.

construction. *Truth does not grow up into a Christian.* Every body sees that. And when the language is ascertained to be figurative, we are at full liberty to inquire of other texts how far the figure swells or varies the literal meaning. That it does vary it in some degree is certain; but how far, cannot be settled by the texts themselves, but must be learnt from the general tenour of Scripture and from common sense. We have already seen that truth is introduced to the view of the mind by an action, *not on truth, but on the mind itself.* This is one important variation from the literal import of the figure. Let another *similar* one be supposed, namely, that by an action on the heart God causes it to *love* as well as *see* the truth, and it is all we ask.

There are three other texts which have been brought to support the literal meaning of this figure, which do not apply. Men are said to beget by establishing the figurative relation of father and son. Thus Paul begat his son Onesimus, and he begat the Corinthians "through the Gospel." But this was not *God* begetting; nor does it express *God's* power in regeneration. Not God but Paul is the father in this figure. But even Paul claims to have begotten them "THROUGH THE GOSPEL;" which fully shows that this memorable phrase, in the other cases, can denote only a general instrumentality; for Paul could not *introduce* truth into the mind, as the sticklers for the literal meaning of this figure represent God as doing. If this great moral change is called a new birth, the Gospel, regarded as the means of making the living, active man, may well enough be called the seed; but the

resemblance must not be pressed too far. By another modification of this general figure Paul becomes the *mother*. "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you ;" referring to the agony of prayer for the descent of the Spirit upon them ; which looks like any thing but a generation by the word without the life giving Spirit.

How regeneration is effected by light, and what the meaning is of all those passages which speak of this, may be gathered from a single text. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."* After all then it is a new creation.

In the days of the apostles there was an unction of the Spirit which communicated a knowledge of the truth ; but it was the Spirit of inspiration.†

We have now passed regeneration. When we come to the process of sanctification, we find it to be a law of the new creation that, while the Christian is gazing intently upon God in the glass of his word, the Spirit takes that occasion to transform him progressively into the divine likeness. And by the same figure by which efficiency is ascribed to light, we say that views of God are transforming. "We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as *by the Spirit of the Lord*." "Sanctify them through thy truth ; thy word is truth.—For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified

* 2 Cor. 4. 6. † 1 John 2. 20, 27.

through the truth." But this very prayer for sanctifying influence was made to God. "Christ—loved the Church and gave himself for it, that *he* might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word;" the word being the water in which it is cleansed by the divine Purifier; or literally, the word furnishing the considerations by which the holy affections are called forth by the causal influence of the Spirit of Christ.*

There are several texts which have been thought against us, which have no such bearing. The enjoined action of the creature is so exactly in a line with the action of the Spirit, that the two coincide in bringing forth the exercises of a new heart; one causally, the other actually. On this account both are called by the same name. Thus men are commanded to make to themselves new hearts and to circumcise their hearts; which means only that they must cease to hate and begin to love. If Christians "quench not the Spirit," but co-operate with the Spirit, as they ought to do, they will be "transformed by the renewing of" their "mind;" they will "be renewed in the spirit of" their "mind;" they will "stir up the gift of God which is in" them; they will be partakers "of the afflictions of the Gospel according to the power of God;" they will "be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might;" they will pray "in the Spirit;" they will "be filled with the Spirit;" they will "put off the old man with his deeds, and—put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that *created him*,"—"which after God is created in righteousness and true

* John 17. 17, 19. 2 Cor. 3. 18. Eph. 5. 25, 26.

holiness." And therefore all these things are commanded.*

In some of these instances men seem commanded to do what God does for them,—to be renewed in the spirit of their mind, to be strengthened by his power, to be filled with the Spirit. But upon every plan the action of God and the action of believers are distinct. Except that both actions, as coincident, are sometimes called by the same name, the whole meaning is, that they must avail themselves of the offered aids of the Spirit, and go forward in the line to which he excites them. That is all: and in this there is nothing opposed to the common Calvinistic theory.

I have now gone over all the texts that I could find which speak of the instrumentality of the word in regeneration and sanctification. And allowing for figures of speech, (for the most part slight and natural,) they cast no decisive light on the mode of divine operation, and in their most obvious meaning are easily reconcilable with divine efficiency. Thus far then there is nothing discovered in opposition to this doctrine. We are next to inquire what there is in the Bible which positively supports it.

* Deut. 10. 16. Jer. 4. 4. Ezek. 18. 31, 32. Rom. 12. 2. Eph. 4. 23, 24. and 5. 18. and 6. 10, 18. Col. 3. 9, 10. 1 Thes. 5. 19. 1 Tim. 4. 14. 2 Tim. 1. 6, 8.

CHAPTER VII.

Scripture Testimony to Divine Efficiency.

AFTER all our reasonings on the subject of divine efficiency, our chief dependence must be on the plain testimony of the Bible. We can argue conclusively against the assumption that divine efficiency is inconsistent with freedom; but for positive proof of the doctrine we dare not rely on our own independent reasonings. We cannot look so deep into the secrets of nature. We must "hear what God the Lord will speak:" and if he, in language the most plain and positive, declares the fact, we must cast no doubts upon it from any confidence we may have in our own powers of discernment, or from any apprehension of its inconsistency with moral agency. Now then for the divine testimony.

I. The general language of Scripture represents God to be the Author of holiness, without limiting or qualifying the declaration by a reference to any instrument. The general current of Scripture therefore gives the same evidence of efficiency in the second creation, that the first chapter of Genesis does of efficiency in the first. "God said, Let there be light, and there was light." We ask

no questions about the mode, but simply believe that he willed the existence of light and light was. Exactly the same evidence we have, not from a single chapter, but from the general tenour of Scripture, that God efficiently wills the existence of holiness in the hearts of his people. And the few texts which speak of truth as the object towards which the mind acts, or as the consideration by which it is consciously influenced, do not touch the question, *Who causes the mind to fall in with truth?* This question, which is settled by the general voice of Scripture, receives no opposing answer from a single text.

(1.) I shall begin with a class of texts which, in the simplest form, speak of God as the Author of holiness. "I am the Lord which sanctify you." "God is my strength and power, and he maketh my way perfect." "The Lord our God be with us as he was with our fathers. Let him not leave us nor forsake us; that he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, as he commanded our fathers." "Thou hast heard the desire of the humble; thou wilt prepare their heart." "The Lord will give grace and glory." "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me." "Thou wilt ordain peace for us, for thou also hast wrought all our works in us." "I hid me and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart. I have seen his ways and will heal him. I will lead him also and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners. I create the fruit of the lips: peace, peace to him that is far off and to him that is near, saith the Lord, and I will heal him." "That

they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.” “The heathen shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel.” “He is like a refiner’s fire and like fuller’s soap. And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.” “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.” “Without me ye can do nothing.” “A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven.” “Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.” “Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.” “A certain woman named Lydia,—whose heart the Lord opened.” “Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?” “By the grace of God I am what I am.” “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.” “Thanks be to God which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you.” “When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb,—to reveal his Son in me.” “Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ,—make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight.” “Every good gift and every per-

fect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." "Who—was manifest in these last times for you who *by him* do believe in God."*

(2.) The great account made of the Spirit in the Gospel dispensation, and the work every where ascribed to him.

The office work of the third Person in the Trinity is to sanctify. Take from the Spirit that work, and you wrest from him all employment, and cover him from creatures with an eternal cloud. From the more abundant influences of the Spirit which attend the Gospel, compared with the law of Moses, that is called "the ministration of the Spirit," and even "the spirit." This was a chief good promised to Christ in the covenant of redemption, and through him to the Church in the covenant of grace. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us;—that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.—Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but as of One, And to thy Seed, which is Christ." "The Redeemer shall come to Zion.—This is my covenant with them, saith the Lord: My Spirit that is upon thee and my words which I

* Lev. 20. 8. 2 Sam. 22. 33. 1 Kin. 8. 57, 58. Ps. 10. 17. and 84. 11. and 138. 8. Isai. 26. 12. and 57. 17—19. Ezek. 20. 12. and 37. 28. Mal. 3. 2, 3. Mat. 16. 17. John 3. 27 and 15. 5. Acts 5. 31. and 15. 14. and 16. 14. 1 Cor. 4. 7. and 15. 10. 2 Cor. 3. 5. and 8. 16. Gal. 1. 15, 16. Heb. 13. 20, 21. James 1. 17. 1 Pet. 1. 20, 21.

have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever." "And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh." "And I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son." "I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever.—The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name." "When the Comforter is come—he shall testify of me." "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." "If I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart I will send him unto you." "This spoke he of the Spirit which they that believe on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." In his first interview with the disciples after his resurrection, "he breathed on them and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." "He showed himself alive after his passion;—and being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptised with water, but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."*

* Isai. 59. 20, 21. Joel 2. 28, 29. Zech. 12. 10. John 7. 38, 39. and 14. 16, 17, 26. and 15. 26. and 16. 7, 13. and 20. 22. Acts 1. 3—5. 2 Cor. 3. 6, 8. Gal. 3. 13, 14, 16.

When Christ “ascended on high” he “received gifts for men,—that the Lord God might dwell among them.” The chief of these was the holy Spirit, which he poured out upon his disciples on the day of Pentecost. To show once for all that he had sent down this Agent to dwell with men and stately to attend the Gospel, he imparted to the first disciples the miraculous powers of the Spirit, and thus made a public and convincing display of the connexion of the Spirit with the Gospel and with the Church. For where he bestowed miraculous powers he generally exerted sanctifying grace; and the former operation was such an evidence of the latter, that the apostles considered it a sufficient ground for baptism. Thus Peter at the house of Cornelius: “Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptised, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?” And when he told the story to the synod of Jerusalem, he said, “And God, which knoweth the hearts, bore them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.” This same Peter, standing up on the day of Pentecost, said, “Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.” At another time, “when they had prayed the place was shaken where they were all assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.” On the converts at Samaria the apostles “laid—their hands,—and they received the Holy Ghost.” At Damascus, “Ananias—said, Brother Saul, the Lord—hath sent me that thou mightest

receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost." At a later period still, "the churches [had] rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified, and, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied." At Antioch in Pisidia, "the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost." "The Holy Ghost came on" the disciples of Ephesus "when Paul laid his hands upon them."*

It is remarkable that the sanctifying Spirit is not presented as one standing and offering truth to persuade, but as an effusion, sometimes dissolving, sometimes refreshing or fructifying, sometimes cleansing, sometimes baptising and consecrating. "I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel." "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed and my blessing upon thine offspring." "The palaces shall be forsaken—until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high and the wilderness be a fruitful field." "According to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." "I indeed have baptised you with water, but he shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost." "For by one Spirit are we all baptised into one body,—and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." Sometimes the Spirit is the oil that feeds the perpetual lamps. "And he said unto me, What seest thou? And I said,

* Ps. 68. 18. Acts 2. 1—4, 33. and 4. 31. and 8. 15—17. and 9. 17. 31. and 13. 52. and 15. 8, 9. and 19. 2—6.

I have looked and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps which were upon the top thereof; and two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl and the other upon the left side thereof.— Then he answered and spoke unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, *Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit*, saith the Lord of hosts.”*

This is the general account. Come now to something a little more particular. “Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation and uphold me with thy free Spirit.” “When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.” “Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? Where is he that put his holy Spirit within him?” “According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remaineth among you.” “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him.” “It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing.” “Hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” “For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but they

* Isai. 32. 14, 15. and 44. 3. Ezek. 39. 29. Zech. 4. 2—6. Mar. 1. 8. 1 Cor. 12. 13. Tit. 3. 5, 6.

that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.—For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die; but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.—Ourselves also which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves.—The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 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.” Is this the Spirit merely suggesting truth, and not effectually awakening desires? “My conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost.” “The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.” “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things.” “Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.” “And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by

the Spirit of our God." "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God, who hath also sealed us and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." "Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart." Does this look like mere persuasion? "Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." "He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit." "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." "We, through the Spirit, wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other.—But if ye be led by the Spirit ye are not under law.—The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.—If we live in the Spirit let us also walk in the Spirit." "In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of our inheritance." "Through him we both have an access, by one Spirit, unto the Father." "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." "The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth." "Praying

always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit." "He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit." "Quench not the Spirit." "That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost that dwelleth in us." "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit." "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ happy are ye, for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you." "These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit. But ye, beloved, —praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God."*

(3.) Faith, (the condition of salvation,) and holiness generally, instead of being independent acts of the creature under the persuasions of the Spirit, are the gift of God. "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation." "Every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner and another after that." "When James, Cephas,

* Ps. 51. 11, 12. Isai. 59. 19. and 63. 11. Hag. 2. 5. Luke 11. 13. John 6. 63. Rom. 5. 5. and 8. 5, 6, 13—16, 23, 26, 27 and 9. 1. and 14. 17. and 15. 13. 1 Cor. 2. 14, 15. and 6. 11. 2 Cor. 1. 21, 22. and 3. 3, 17. and 5. 5. and 13. 14. Gal. 4. 6. and 5. 5, 16—18, 22, 23, 25. Eph. 1. 13, 14. and 2. 18. and 4. 30. and 5. 9. and 6. 18. 1 Thes. 4. 8. and 5. 19. 2 Tim. 1. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 22 and 4. 14. Jude 19, 20.

and John—perceived the grace that was given unto me.”

“By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.” “Unto you it is given in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.” “Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.” “By the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain, but I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” “There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.—For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom,—to another faith by the same Spirit.—But all these worketh that one and the self same Spirit.” “Unto every one is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.”*

(4.) God is every where represented, not as our persuader, but as our essential moral strength. “The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation.” “I will love thee, O Lord my strength. The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust.—It is God that girdeth me with strength and maketh my way perfect.” “Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.” “Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thy heart: wait, I say, on the Lord.” “The Lord is my strength and my shield: my heart trusted in him and I am helped.” “Be of good courage and he

* Rom. 12. 3. 1 Cor. 3. 10. and 7. 7. and 12. 6, 8, 9, 11. and 15. 10. Gal. 2. 9. Eph. 2. 8. and 4. 7. Phil. 1. 29. Heb. 12. 2.

shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.”
“I will go in the strength of the Lord God.” “My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.” “Sing aloud unto God our strength.” “Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee.” “The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation.” “My soul melteth for heaviness; strengthen thou me according unto thy word.” “In the day when I cried thou answeredst me and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.” “My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.” “God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation.” “Trust ye in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.” “Let him take hold of my strength that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me.” “He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall; but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength: they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint.” “Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee; yea I will help thee; yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.” “Surely, (shall one say,) in the Lord have I righteousness and strength.” “The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds’ feet, and he will make me to

walk upon my high places." "I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the Lord." "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."*

More indeed is sometimes meant by God's being our strength, than that he imparts moral power. Protection is sometimes implied, and sometimes his general agency in delivering us from eternal death. But the other is the principal idea.

(5.) God foretells holiness, not as the foreseen result of the self-determining power under circumstances arranged by him, but as a thing which he himself would produce. "And they that escape of you shall remember me among the nations whither they shall be carried captives;—and they shall loathe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations; and they shall know that I am the Lord." "I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth.—Then thou shalt remember thy ways and be ashamed.—And I will establish my covenant with thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord; that thou mayst remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame when I am pacified towards thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God." "And there shall ye remember your

* Exod. 15. 2. Ps. 18. 1, 2, 32. and 19. 14. and 27. 14. and 28. 7. and 31. 24. and 62. 5. and 71. 16. and 73. 26. and 81. 1. and 84. 5. and 118. 14. and 119. 28. and 138. 3. Isai. 12. 2. and 26. 4. and 27. 5. and 40. 29—31. and 41. 10. and 45. 24. Hab. 3. 19. Zech. 10. 12. Phil. 4. 13.

ways and all your doings wherein ye have been defiled ; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed. And ye shall know that I am the Lord when I have wrought with you for my name's sake, not according to your wicked ways nor according to your corrupt doings, O house of Israel, saith the Lord God."*

(6.) The people of God, by his directions, have always prayed to him, not to persuade them, but to make them holy. "O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this forever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee. And give unto Solomon my son a perfect heart to keep thy commandments, thy testimonies, and thy statutes." "Quicken us and we will call upon thy name. Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts,—and we shall be saved." "Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?" "Unite my heart to fear thy name." "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." What this means, God himself has told us. "Thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty ; for it was perfect through my comeliness which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God." "O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes.—My soul cleaveth unto the dust ; quicken thou me according to thy word.—I will run in the way of thy commandments when thou shalt enlarge my heart.—Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness. Turn away my eyes

* Ezek. 6. 9, 10. and 16. 60—63. and 20. 43, 44.

from beholding vanity and quicken thou me in thy way.—I have longed after thy precepts, quicken me in thy righteousness.—Let my heart be found in thy statutes, that I be not ashamed.—Quicken me after thy loving kindness, so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth.—I am afflicted very much; quicken me, O Lord, according unto thy word.—Plead my cause and deliver me: quicken me according to thy word.—Consider how I love thy precepts; quicken me, O Lord, according to thy loving kindness.—Quicken me according to thy judgments.—Hear my voice according unto thy loving kindness: O Lord, quicken me according to thy judgment.” “Quicken me, O Lord, for thy name’s sake.” “Incline not my heart to any evil thing.” “Turn thou me and I shall be turned.” “O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years; in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.” “Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” “And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ.” “The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another and towards all men;—to the end he may stablish your hearts unblamable in holiness.” “Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Father,—stablish you in every good word and work.” “The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patient wait-

ing for Christ." "The God of all grace—make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you."*

Thus, under these six divisions, you see how the general tenour of Scripture, in its most simple form, supports the doctrine that God is the Author of holiness, and that, without the slightest allusion to any instrumentality of the word, and with no more reference to the mode of operation than we find in the first chapter of Genesis. Such a flood of testimony cannot be set aside or explained away by a few texts which speak of an instrumentality no wise inconsistent with divine efficiency. But this is only the first head. I proceed to more special testimony.

II. The Spirit, so far from standing without and sending in truth like another pleader, is represented as dwelling in the heart as a habitation or as the seat of empire. "Ye are not in the flesh but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you; he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of

* 1 Chron. 29. 18, 19. Ps. 80. 18, 19. and 85. 6. and 86. 11. and 90. 17. and 119. 5, 25, 32, 36, 37, 40, 80, 88, 107, 149, 154, 156, 159. and 141. 4. and 143. 12, 13. Jer. 31. 18. Ezek. 16. 14. Hab. 3. 2. Eph. 6. 23, Phil. 1. 9—11. 1 Thes. 3. 12, 13. 2 Thes. 2. 16, 17. and 3. 5. 1 Pet. 5. 10.

God, him shall God destroy : for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." " Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you ?" " What agreement hath the temple of God with idols ? for ye are the temple of the living God ; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them." " In whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord ; in whom you also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit." " Christ as a Son over his own house ; whose house are we." " Ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual house." " He that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him and he in him : and hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." " Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.—Hereby know we that we dwell in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.—Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God."*

III. Instead of merely persuading men to be good, God positively declares that he will take away the bad heart and put a good one in its stead. " 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. And I will put my Spirit within you and

* Rom. 8. 9—11. 1 Cor. 3. 16, 17. and 6. 19. 2 Cor. 6. 16. Eph. 2. 21, 22. Heb. 3. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 5. 1 John 3. 24. and 4. 4, 13, 15.

cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.—I will also save you from all your uncleannesses.” “And I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord; and they *shall* be my people and I *will* be their God; for they shall return unto me with their whole heart.”*

And in the most express manner we are told that God's efficiency in giving a good heart does not prevent blame for exercising a bad heart. “I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh and will give them a heart of flesh; that they may walk in my statutes and keep my ordinances and do them: and they *shall* be my people and I *will* be their God. *But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord God.*”†

On the supposition of merely inducing, without an absolute control by motives, the work of God differs from that of Satan only as the motives are different and his skill is greater. Both persuade and do no more. But it is nowhere said that Satan takes away a good heart and gives a bad one; but merely that he puts evil thoughts “into the heart,” as in the case of Judas.‡

IV. God not only claims to make the heart new, but by absolute covenant engages to do it, and even inserts that promise among the essential stipulations of the covenant of grace. “Behold the days come, saith the Lord,

* Jer. 24. 7. Ezek. 36. 25—29. † Ezek. 11. 19—21. ‡ John 13. 2.

that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt: (which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord:) but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts, and *will* be their God and they *shall* be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, Know ye the Lord: for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord.”*

After these covenant stipulations of what God himself would do, shall it be said that every thing is left to the casual decisions of the self-determining power. certain only as they are foreseen by God?

V. This independent potency of the will is flatly contradicted. “Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, *nor of the will of man*, but of God.” “So then *it is not of him that willeth*, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.”†

VI. Nor is this dependence on divine efficiency any discouragement, but the only encouragement we have to hope for success. “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; *for* it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”‡

* Jer. 31. 31–34 † John 1. 13. Rom. 9. 16 ‡ Phil. 2. 12, 13

VII. It ill comports with the theory of persuasion that moral inability is ascribed to the sinner. To say to a man, You have so strong an inclination to go, that you *cannot* stop unless I persuade you, would certainly be a very unusual mode of address. But moral inability is ascribed to the sinner. "A deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil." "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him.—Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me except it were given unto him of my Father."* Dr Fitch says that to draw means here to induce: but as though this parrying interpretation was foreseen, it is added as a parallel expression, "except it were *given unto him* of my Father."

VIII. The opposite theory is, that God merely presents inducements which some yield to and others reject. Now in such an attempt at persuasion how can there be any great exhibition of *power*? This theory then is flatly contradicted by all those texts which speak of regeneration and sanctification as displays of mighty power. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." "That the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost,—through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God." "My preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power ;

* Isai. 44. 20. Jer. 13. 23. John 6. 44, 65.

that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God." "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." "For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me towards the Gentiles." "Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.—Wherefore I desire—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.—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 Jesus Christ—world without end." "That I may know him and the power of his resurrection." "Strengthened with all might according to his glorious power.—Giving thanks unto the Father which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.—Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working which worketh in me mightily." "For our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost.—And ye became followers of us,—having received the word—with joy of the Holy Ghost." "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know—what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ

when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.”* If there was no other text in the Bible against the theory of powerless persuasion, this would be enough. How could a bare suggestion of motives be “the exceeding greatness of his power,” and “according to the working of his mighty power” in the resurrection and exaltation of Christ?

IX. The different names by which this great moral change is called, denote the efficient act of God, and some of them his mighty power.

(1.) It is called the circumcision of the heart; which implies far more than the bare suggestion of motives. It imports the actual excision “of the filth of the flesh.” “The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul.” “In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.”†

(2.) It is called the opening of the eyes of the blind and the unstopping of the ears of the deaf. “The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind.” “In that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness.” “The eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.” “I the Lord have called thee—to

* Ps. 110. 3. Rom. 15. 16—19. 1 Cor. 2. 4, 5. 2 Cor. 4. 7. Gal. 2. 8. Eph. 1. 18—20. and 3. 7, 13, 16, 17, 20. Phil. 3. 10. Col. 1. 11—13, 29. 1 Thes. 1. 5, 6.

† Deut. 30. 6. Col. 2. 11.

open the blind eyes.—And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not.—I will make darkness light before them.—Hear ye deaf and look ye blind that ye may see.”
 “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach—recovering of sight to the blind.”*

To show that he had come to execute this office, our Saviour opened the bodily eyes and ears: and to make the cases more parallel, he opened them by a word: and when he said to the deaf ear, “Ephphatha, that is, Be opened,” who ever dreamt that the word itself produced the effect, or had any more potency than the rod of Moses or the trumpets of Jericho?

(3.) It is called a new birth. If then the first birth is altogether an effect of divine power, so should be the second. And though in the life which commences at the first birth, man is active, yet in that *reception* of life he is passive. The impartation of the living principle is wholly the operation of God. And if the second birth is limited to the causal influence of God in producing the activity of the new life, man is passive here also. If the name is extended to the new exercises, (as it certainly is in those two instances in which the word is called the seed,†) then man is both passive and active in regeneration; passive as he is *acted upon*, and active as he puts forth the new exercises: and he must be acknowledged to be thus far passive by all who hold to divine efficiency. “Which were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.” “Verily, verily I say unto

* Ps. 146. 8. Isai. 29. 18. and 35. 5. and 42. 6, 7, 16, 18. Luke 4. 18. † James 1. 18. 1 Pet. 1. 23.

thee, 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 God. That which is born of 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. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth : so is every one that is born of the Spirit :” a marked reproof of every attempt to explain the mode of operation. “ As then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.” “ Whosoever is born of God overcometh the world.” “ If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doth righteousness is born of him ;” alluding to the son’s inheriting the father’s nature. But if he who is called the father only persuades, as well might you expect that every hearer would partake of the nature of the preacher. “ Love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God.” The same allusion. “ We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not ; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.” Still the same allusion. “ Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God ; and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him.” The same allusion the fourth time. Surely there must be a nearer relation between God and believers than between a teacher and his pupil : a *blood relation*, if I may so say ;

a relation by which the children of God become "partakers of the divine nature."*

(4.) It is called a resurrection. And if the dead do not rise from their graves by a self-determining power, at the voice of mere persuasion, neither do sinners from spiritual death. The dead may rise at a summons, as Lazarus did, and as the dead will do at the last day; but the power is not in the sound, it is in the arm of God. And in a moral change of supreme difficulty, set forth under the figure of a resurrection and ascribed to the mighty power of God, has he no agency but that of mere persuasion? Look at the vision of Ezekiel. "The hand of the Lord was upon me and carried me out in the Spirit—and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones:—and lo they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones, Behold I will cause breath to enter into you and ye shall live.—So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.—Then said he,—Prophesy unto the wind: prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God, Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain

* John 1. 13. and 3. 3—8. Gal. 4. 29. 2 Pet. 1. 4. 1 John 2. 29. and 4. 7. and 5. 1, 4, 18.

that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me ; and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet an exceeding great army. Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel.—Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God,—Ye shall know that I am the Lord when I—shall *put my Spirit in you and ye shall live.*” Did the word of Ezekiel in this case at all limit or conceal the power of God ? Turn now to other passages.

“ As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.—The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.” “ Yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead.”

“ You are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins,—hath he quickened together with him.” “ I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus ;—and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.—This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection : on such the second death hath no power.”

“ You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins.—God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ,—and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”*

* Ezek. 37. 1—14. John 5. 21, 25. Rom. 6. 13. Eph. 2. 1—6. Col. 2. 12, 13. Rev. 20. 4—6.

(5.) It is called a new creation : and it would seem a most extravagant strain of a figure to apply such a name to an act of mere persuasion. Nothing less than the production of a new life, by the same power that produced the first, would seem to warrant such an appellation. "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." "When he seeth his children, the work of my hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name." "That they may see and know and consider and understand together that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the holy One of Israel hath created it." "Behold I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind. But be you glad and rejoice forever in that which I create : for behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing and her people a joy." "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature : old things are past away, behold all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ." "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity,—to make in himself of twain one new man." "That ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteous-

ness and true holiness." "And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new."*

X. The choice of the elect was made, not in view of the foreseen operations of the self-determining power, but by the sovereign will of God decreeing to make them holy; and they are made holy in consequence of that decree. Not as foreseen penitents, but as sinners to be renewed, they were given to Christ in the eternal covenant of redemption, and their salvation was secured to him as his reward: and in consequence of that conveyance and promise of the Father, and as Christ's reward, they are regenerated. That covenant with Christ was, through him as the Head, extended to the Church: and in consequence of those stipulations with Christ and the Church.—as his reward and in virtue of his intercession,—believers are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. This vital connexion of election, regeneration, and perseverance, with each other and with Christ's reward, and with the covenants of redemption and grace, makes them very different things from what they are in the opposite theory. In that theory election is only a decision to bring forward means to which it is foreseen that the self-determining power will yield and will continue to yield. That incipient and continued yielding of the self-determining power, under motives urged by the Spirit, is the whole of regeneration and perseverance. But I shall be able to show that election, regeneration, and perseve-

* Ps. 51. 10. Isai. 29. 23. and 41. 20. and 65. 17, 18. 2 Cor. 4. 6. and 5. 17, 18. Gal. 6. 15. Eph. 2. 10, 15. and 4. 24. Rev. 21. 5.

rance have, on the contrary, the exact forms and relations which I have assigned them.

(I.) 'The choice of the elect was made, not in view of the foreseen operations of the self-determining power, but by the sovereign will of God decreeing to make them holy; and they are made holy in consequence of that decree.

[1.] By the sovereign will of God. "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy." Dr Fitch calls this a "simple *will* and *wont* in God;" a language which certainly has sufficient freedom; though I suppose he means to exclude, what we equally would exclude, a will founded on no good reason. But this wise and absolute sovereignty, whomsoever it may offend, gave joy to the heart of Christ. "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered to me of my Father; and no man knoweth who the Son is but the Father, and who the Father is but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him." "The children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of him that calleth, it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger: as it is written, Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy,

and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will? [His *decretive* will in distinction from his *preceptive*: a distinction which the apostle here brings into view and does not deny, but in the context clearly affirms.] Nay but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour and another unto dishonour?" "What saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Even so then at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace.—What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it and the rest were blinded." "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea and

things which are not, to bring to naught things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence;—that, according as it is written, He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord.”*

But if God only foresaw who would repent if placed in such circumstances, and who would not, his mere decision to place them in such circumstances could not be that sovereign election which is expressed in these passages.

Other texts support election without so distinctly marking its sovereignty. “God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.” “Many are called but few are chosen.” “Ye are a chosen generation,—that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.”†

[2.] Decreeing to make them holy. “We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.” “Ye have not chosen me but I have chosen you, and ordained you that you should go and bring forth fruit and that your fruit should remain.” “That he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory; even us whom he hath called, not of the Jews only but also of the Gentiles. As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people which were not my people.—And—

* Exod. 33. 19. Luke 10. 21, 22. Rom. 9. 11—21. and 11. 4, 5, 7. 1 Cor. 1. 26—29, 31.

† Mat. 20. 16. and 22. 14. 1 Thes. 5. 9. 1 Pet. 2. 9.

in the place where it was said,—Ye are not my people, there shall they be called the children of the living God. Esaias also crieth concerning Israel,—A remnant shall be saved.—Except the Lord of sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma and had been made like unto Gomorrha.” “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, to the praise of the glory of his grace.—In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.” “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them which are the called according to his purpose. 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 predestinated them he also called, and whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified.” “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience.”*

The last two passages speak of foreknowledge : but as the elect were predestined “to be conformed to the image” of Christ, and as that purpose is unfailingly followed by effectual calling and “sanctification of the Spirit,” it is impossible it should be a mere foreknowledge

* John 15. 16. Rom. 8. 28—30. and 9. 23—29. Eph. 1. 4—11. 2 Thes. 2. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 2.

of what the self-determining power would do. Knowledge, whether past or present, is frequently in Scripture put for that favourable regard which exists among acquaintance. "Thou hast said, I know thee by name and thou hast also found grace in my sight.—And the Lord said unto Moses, I will do this thing also ;—for thou hast found grace in my sight and I know thee by name." "Then will I profess unto them, I never knew you." "I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep and am known of mine." "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew." "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."* According to this meaning of knowledge, the foreknowledge in question was nothing but a *special love* exercised from eternity.

[3.] And they are made holy in consequence of that decree. "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." "The hidden wisdom, [the way of salvation,†] which God ordained before the world unto our glory;" but is since revealed, "to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church, [the body of sanctified individuals,] the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."‡

(2.) Not as foreseen penitents, but as sinners to be renewed, the elect were given to Christ in the eternal covenant of redemption, and their salvation was secured to him as his reward.

* Exod. 33. 12, 17. Mat. 7. 23. John 10. 14. Rom. 11. 2. 2 Tim. 2. 19.

† Col. 1. 27. ‡ Acts 13. 48. 1 Cor. 2. 7. Eph. 3. 10, 11.

The tenour of this covenant can be gathered only from the references made to it in the revelation to men, and particularly from the prophetic and historic notices of Christ's reward. "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied.—I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death." "Why do the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed. [Applied to Herod and Pilate and the Roman soldiers and the Jews.*]—Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree. The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." "They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure.—He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass, as showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth.—All nations shall serve him.—His name shall endure forever,—and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed." "I have made a covenant with my Chosen.—My faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him.—He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father.—

* Acts 4. 25—27.

I will make him my First born.—His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven.” “I the Lord—will—give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house.” “I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayst be my salvation unto the end of the earth.—I will—give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; that thou mayst say to the prisoners, Go forth.” “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life.—This commandment have I received of my Father.” “Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” “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.” “Whom he hath appointed heir of all things: who,—when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, being made so much better than the angels as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.—Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity: therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”*

From these quotations it is evident that Christ by cove-

* Ps. 2. 1—8. and 72. 5—8, 11, 17. and 89. 3, 24—29. Isai. 42. 6, 7. and 49. 6—9. and 53. 10—12. John 10. 17, 18. Phil. 2. 8, 9. Heb. 1. 2—4, 9. and 12. 2.

nant was entitled to the reward of a glorious kingdom of holy and happy subjects, and to "see of the travail of his soul" until he should be "satisfied." But light still more decisive beams upon us. The salvation of the elect was expressly promised to Christ in the eternal covenant. "Paul,—an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect;—in hope of eternal life which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." Promised to whom? No man was there to receive the promise: none was there but the Mediator. And so distinct and specific was the assignment, that all their names were written in his book of life. "And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, (whose names were not written in the book of life *from the foundation of the world,*) when they behold the beast." "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life *of the Lamb* slain from the foundation of the world." "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth,—but they which are written *in the Lamb's* book of life." "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." "Clement also, and—other my fellow labourers, whose names are in the book of life." "At that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book."*

(3.) In consequence of that conveyance and promise

* Dan. 12. 1. Phil. 4. 3. Tit. 1. 1, 2. Rev. 13. 8. and 17. 8 and 20. 12. and 21. 27.

of the Father, and as Christ's reward, the elect are regenerated.

In receiving the promises for his posterity, Abraham was a type of Christ. The influence upon his posterity therefore of the covenant made with him, set forth the influence upon the elect of the covenant made with Christ. And what was the influence of the covenant made with Abraham? "The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all the people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you nor choose you because ye were more in number than any people, (for ye were the fewest of all people;) but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers." So it is with those who were given to Christ for a seed. They are regenerated, not for any thing in them, but on account of the eternal covenant with him. "Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us *in Christ Jêsus before the world began.*" And nothing can defeat that purpose. They may be hid in the depths of heathenism; fenced round by the throne and the altar and the school of philosophy; but nothing can obstruct the way of Christ when he comes to recover his own. When Paul had entered the proud and forbidding Corinth, the Lord Jesus said to him in a vision, "Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city." But

Christ's own testimony is the most decisive. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice.—But ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep.—My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.—My Father *which gave them me* is greater than all." "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word."*

(4.) That covenant with Christ was, through him as the Head, extended to the Church: and in consequence of those stipulations with Christ and the Church,—as his reward and in virtue of his intercession,—believers are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

There was a promise to Christ respecting the elect: but as moral agents they were to be treated with directly. And when God came to address himself to them, he gave them while impenitent, as he did the rest of the world, his invitations and conditional promises. But when, in consequence of the covenant with Christ, they are made believers and sons of God, he extends to them, now composing the Church, absolute promises of preserving grace and eternal salvation. I will first show you that God gives these absolute promises to the Church or body of believers; and secondly, that he ensures their perseve-

* Deut. 7. 6—8. John 6. 37. and 10. 16, 26—29. and 17. 6. Acts 18. 9, 10. 2 Tim. 1. 9.

rance as the reward of Christ and in virtue of his intercession.

[I.] God has given to the Church or body of believers absolute promises of preserving grace and eternal salvation. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.—The Lord—forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved forever." "They *shall* be my people and I *will* be their God. And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever.—And I will make an everlasting covenant with them that I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me." "When God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater he swore by himself; saying, surely, blessing, I will bless thee, and multiplying, I will multiply thee. And so after he had patiently endured he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to *show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel*, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast." "Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my Gospel,—be glory through Jesus Christ forever." "To his

own Master he standeth or falleth. Yea he shall be holden up; for God is able to make him stand." "I know whom I have believed; and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,—be—dominion and power." "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and—ye shall abide in him." "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day.—The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom." "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." "I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." "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. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." "The Lord is faith-

ful who shall stablish you and keep you from evil. And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you. And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patient waiting for Christ.”*

[2.] It is as the reward of Christ and in virtue of his intercession that God ensures the perseverance of believers.

First, they are kept in consequence of their election: and as they were elected in Christ, in other words, were given to him as a reward in the eternal covenant, they are kept in consequence of being thus given to him. “As many as were ordained to *eternal life* believed.” Then none believe but those who are elected to eternal life: of course no believer can fall away: and this security arises from their election in Christ. “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that you should go and bring forth fruit, *and that your fruit should remain.*” “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared *for you* from the foundation of the world.” That antecedent purpose and preparation stood inseparably connected with their perseverance to eternal life. “To sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.”†

Secondly, Christ is the Mediator of that better covenant which, in distinction from the covenant of Sinai,

* Ps. 37. 23, 24, 28. Jer. 32. 38—40. Mal. 3. 6. Rom. 14. 4. and 16. 25, 27. 1 Cor. 10. 13. Phil. 1. 6. 1 Thes. 5. 23, 24. 2 Thes. 3. 3—5. 2 Tim. 1. 12. and 4. 8, 18. Heb. 6. 13—19. 1 Pet. 1. 5. Jude 24, 25. 1 John 2. 19, 27.

† Mat. 20. 23. and 25. 34. John 15. 16. Acts 13. 43.

secures the persevering holiness of believers. “But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the Mediator of a better covenant which was established upon better promises.—For finding fault with them he saith, Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their mind and write them in their hearts; and I *will* be to them a God, and they *shall* be to me a people.”*

Thirdly, Christ, having died to redeem his people from all iniquity, did, by one offering, secure their salvation; and God, after calling them to the fellowship of his Son, is bound, in faithfulness to him, to keep them to his everlasting kingdom. “For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified: whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us. For after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their hearts and in their minds will I write them, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more: now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.” “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people zeal-

* Heb. 8. 6—10.

ous of good works." "Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son."*

Hence the whole work is every where said to be done *through Christ* or *in Christ*, and believers are said to have been raised *with Christ*. "God,—when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us *together with Christ*,—and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places *in Christ Jesus*; that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us *through Christ Jesus*.—For we are his workmanship, created *in Christ Jesus* unto good works."†

Fourthly, hence the promise of preserving grace is made to believers as the seed of Christ, or rather is made to Christ for them. "I have made a covenant with my Chosen.—His seed—will I make to endure forever.—If his children forsake my law and walk not in my judgments,—then will I visit their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.—His seed shall endure forever."‡

Fifthly, Christ himself testifies that the perseverance of the saints is owing to their having been given to him. "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all

* 1 Cor. 1. 8, 9. Tit. 2. 14. Heb. 10. 14—18. † Eph. 2. 4—10

‡ Ps. 89. 3, 4, 29—36.

which *he hath given me* I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day." "Ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep.—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 pluck them out of my hand. My Father *which gave them me* is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." "Thou hast given him power over all flesh, *that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.*" "That the saying might be fulfilled which he spoke, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none."*

Sixthly, Christians are kept and saved in consequence of Christ's intercession. A specimen of that intercession may be seen in that wonderful prayer which he offered just before he entered Gethsemane. "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me.—Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are. While I was with them in the world I kept them in thy name. Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition.—I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil.—Sanctify them through thy truth.—For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither

* John 6. 39, 40. and 10. 26—29. and 17. 2. and 18. 9.

pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word : that they all may be one ; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.—And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one even as we are one : I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou— hast loved them as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me.—I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them and I in them.”*

Here then we see the elect given to Christ by solemn covenant, as the reward of his stipulated obedience in the work of redemption, with an absolute engagement that they should be regenerated, kept, and saved. In fulfilment of that covenant we see them actually regenerated and perseveringly sanctified by the power of God, expressly as the reward of Christ and in virtue of his intercession. Thus their incipient and continued sanctification is wrought by the power of God, in fulfilment of a solemn covenant with his Son, and in payment of a debt due to him. Surely that sanctification must be secured either by efficiency or the absolute control of motives. It cannot be left to the casual operation of the self-determining power, under excitements which many resist. And yet the opposite theory represents God as merely foreseeing that the self-determining power would begin and finish the

* John 17. 9—26.

work if he brought forward such means: and his only decision respecting the whole concern was, to bring forward the means. He has nothing to do with decreeing or producing or even occasioning these effects, only as he presents the means with a foreknowledge of the issue. After the means are applied to both classes alike, they themselves produce the only difference which exists between them. And now, when the Bible is filled with such representations as have been produced, does it all end in this, that the Father's decree and covenant with his Son were only to send to both classes alike the means of grace and the illuminating Spirit? Then they were not two classes except in the mere foreknowledge of God.

I have now finished the Scripture testimony to divine efficiency. I by no means suppose that I have found all the texts. Many which I have found have been cast, or will be cast, into other chapters to support related branches of the subject. But in this single chapter near three hundred texts are arrayed in direct support of the main point. Such a current of proof runs not through the Bible in support of any other doctrine, except what relates to the perfections and government of God, the depravity of men, the mediation of Christ, and eternal retributions. Nor could any language be more explicit. And lest one form of expression should be explained away as figurative, numerous forms are used, which go to explain and confirm each other. Nor, when we have spoken of the number of texts, have we said half. The *relations* among the various parts of this great system, which the texts explicitly support, and which cannot stand together if any of them are

changed, are altogether more decisive than the number of texts. In short, if the doctrine of divine efficiency is not revealed in the Bible, I know not in what language it could have been revealed. Nor is there a text in the whole range of revelation which contradicts it.

And after all, will you come forward and say, I can look far enough into the secrets of nature to see that divine efficiency cannot comport with human freedom? Dare you say this in the face of several hundred texts, as explicit as any language can furnish, and supporting relations which are inseparably jointed together? These are the real parties to the question: several hundred texts arrayed against your assumption, and your assumption against several hundred texts. And which ought to prevail, let God and the universe decide.

CHAPTER VIII.

Sinless Creatures Dependent for Holiness.

To me it appears as impossible for God to make a being who shall act independently of him, as to make a being who for the future shall be self-existent. He can make beings whose actions shall be completely their own, so as to deserve praise or blame; because moral good and evil do not lie in *originating* but in *performing*. This notion of communicated independence has been extended even to matter. Boyle and Lord Kames thought it more creditable to the Author of nature to suppose that he made the material universe to go alone; that he gave it powers which remained after he withdrew his hand,—powers which, in their continuance, were caused by him and not caused by him,—caused by him in being given at first as permanent powers, and not made permanent by his continued action. This supposes that God at twelve o'clock could give power to a machine to go alone at one. But if he could make a thing, whether a being or a power, that would exist and act after he had withdrawn, he could make a thing which for the time to come would be self-existent; and yet the self-existence would be communicated. A power derived from God to exist without God!

Brown is of the same school. He has laboured to prove that the material universe, after deriving its existence and laws from the Creator, performs its operations without his further interposition; that God wills its operations only as he formed it with such powers and lets it go on when he could suspend its laws; that no power is necessary for its preservation, power always bearing a relation to some "change." But what can that existence or power be which God does not support? What causes it to be this moment? God causes a thing to exist the first moment, but what caused it to exist the second? Its existence one moment was no cause of its existing another. What causes it then to exist now? God, by a previous act whose effect continues to the present time, but not by a present act. But what makes the effect continue to the present time if God's power is suspended? Is there any thing there to act in the place of God when he is withdrawn? any thing to cause the effect of a former act to continue when the Actor is no longer there? If you say, God *imparted* to the thing permanent existence, that is saying that God *willed* its permanent existence. Now as God's existence is not in succession, but in one eternal now, we must not think of him as willing a thing and afterwards ceasing to will it while the thing itself remains. What he wills he wills in one eternal now. And if at the creation he willed the eternal existence and laws of matter, he never ceases to will the same. And when we get upon the scale of creatures, and measure over successive days and hours and moments, we can say at every instant, God now wills the existence and laws of matter. And that

willing is all we know of his causal power. It was a neglect to notice this mode of God's existence, which led these eminent philosophers to distinguish between the power which gave being to the universe and its laws at first, and the power which continues their existence.

The same reasonings will prove that a created mind could not be made to go alone. Without the application of divine efficiency it may be reasonably bound, and therefore may have that power which is the basis of obligation ; but nothing can make it independent in its operations : for independent action implies independent attributes, and independent attributes imply independent being, and independent being would be communicated self-existence.

If sinless creatures are not dependent on God for holiness, how will you account for the fall of any ? and since some have fallen, what security is there that all will not apostatize ? Let us consider this matter.

I have repeatedly said that the operations of the faculties are controlled by the affections and outward circumstances,—outward circumstances throwing in motives adapted to the existing temper. And motives adapted to the temper and brought into the full view of the understanding, will infallibly draw forth affections agreeing with the state of the heart. For, thus presented to the intellect and thus adapted to the temper, they offer to the mind the greatest apparent good. And that exhibition, even according to Dr. Whitby, the pride of Arminianism, will certainly control the heart or will. These are his words. "To say that—the greatest good proposed, the greatest evil threatened, when equally believed and reflected on, is

not sufficient to engage the will to choose the good and refuse the evil, is in effect to say, that which alone doth move the will to choose or refuse, is not sufficient to engage it so to do ; which, being contradictory to itself, must of necessity be false."* Thus while the heart is right and the mind free, proper motives, set clearly before the understanding, will certainly awaken right affections. And temptations to sin while the heart is right, will instantly be rejected. All these operations are voluntary and free ; yet such is the indissoluble connexion between understanding, motives, and affections. How then can a holy being apostatize ? Not until the heart ceases to be inclined to fall in with the motives which moved it before. That cessation cannot be produced by good motives, and before it takes place bad motives cannot operate. It cannot therefore be the effect of motives. It must result from some influence, or some withdrawment of influence, behind the scene. If it results from a positive influence, God must be the efficient cause of sin ; if it results from the withdrawment of an influence, the influence withdrawn was that which before inclined the heart to holy action : and that is the very efficiency for which we plead. Without resorting to efficiency and its withdrawment, how can we account for the fall of holy beings ? How even on the principle of the self-determining power ? The whole of that power, according to Whitby, consists in an ability to decide whether or not to attend to and believe the truth presented :† but while the heart is right, the mind will certainly give attention and credence to the truth exhibited. A change of heart, or of the causal influence

* See Introduction.

† See Introduction.

which acts upon the heart, must therefore be the first thing in the fall of a holy being. Without this change, no temptation, no delusive speech against the truth of God, thrown in in a moment of inattention, could work this fall. While the heart is overflowing with supreme love to God, no temptation to transgress can gain the ear; and no delusive speech can gain a moment's credence till faith in God has given way. You seek in vain for the origin of this change in *motives* bearing upon a heart warm with the love of God. The heart must first degenerate before the motives can touch it. The cause of all the causes must begin its action here. Dominant love would prevent the evil from beginning in the decay of attention or of faith, or in any obliquity in the views or decisions of the intellect. The habit of love itself, or the propensity to love, must fail, before any thing in the mind or in outward temptations can take hold of the heart to debase it. The first thing to be done is to dry up the fountain of that love, which no mere faculties or motives will ever accomplish. That can be done only by the withdrawment of the influence which produced it. Therefore if God has no efficient influence to withdraw, there is no accounting for the fall of a holy being.

This is exactly the argument by which I attempted to prove that no faculties or motives, without efficient power, will convert supreme enmity into the supreme love of God. The only difference in the two cases is, that inherent self-love will rise up into sin upon the mere withdrawment of divine influence, whereas there is nothing in the totally

depraved sinner to rise up into the love of God without his positive efficiency.

The conclusion to which we come is, that the fall of Adam and of the angels furnishes strong proof that a divine influence was withdrawn which had supported their love. But influence or no influence, they fell. And if they had not been kept by divine efficiency, neither are the inhabitants of heaven now kept. And if some fell, thus unsupported, what can prevent them all from falling? What makes it certain that Gabriel will not apostatize? If you say, God foreknows that he will not, foreknowledge *finds* a thing certain, but does not *make* it certain. How comes it then to be certain that Gabriel will persevere? Dr. Fitch answers, "We who hold to the defectibility of Gabriel and his need of the guards of God for protection and strength, would say, that now the smoke of torment, continually ascending from the everlasting pit,—so fills his heart with fear and reverence; and the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne, with the prints of crucifixion he bore, and the acclamations of the ransomed for their deliverance, so fills his heart with love to the excellence of his Maker; that his holy purpose of serving God is exalted and confirmed beyond all approach of prevailing temptation."* Then God exercises absolute dominion by motives; and then he could have exerted the same over all his creatures and effectually prevented sin. But if he does not exercise absolute dominion by motives, all these new motives arising from the punishment of sin and the work of redemption

* Christian Spectator for 1832. p. 638.

cannot absolutely secure the perseverance of Gabriel, and all heaven may yet apostatize. At any rate we have here offered to us the glorious effects which God has pressed out of sin. According to this statement, the entire influence which supports his moral empire over all heaven, and by a parity of reasoning over the whole universe, to eternity, is educed from the consequences of sin.

But you turn upon me and say, Have you not asserted such a dominion by motives, when you maintained that holy beings, while continuing holy, must be governed by holy motives? *While continuing holy*: that is the very effect to be accounted for. The question is, do motives cause them *to continue inclined to fall in with motives*? This I deny, and ascribe the effect to the power of God. If motives have an absolute dominion, they mould the heart by their own power, whether adapted to its present temper or not. This I have no where asserted but uniformly denied.

There are but three cases in which we have had an opportunity to contemplate the perfectly holy among creatures. One is that of the holy angels and "the spirits of just men made perfect;" the second is that of our first parents; the third is that of the man Christ Jesus. All these cases are in our favour.

It is certain that the angels and glorified saints are confirmed; confirmed after a period of probation, and therefore as a reward; (in the former case as a legal, in the latter as a gracious reward;) and of course confirmed by God. After the exaltation of Christ to be head over "all

principality and power," we read of "the elect angels."⁶ And if angels, as the reward of their obedience during probation, are enrolled among the elect, they must be enrolled by God, who therefore stands pledged to keep them from falling. And how can he effectually keep them from falling, but either by efficient power or the absolute dominion of motives? If these two ways of preservation are given up, the certainty of their perseverance must be abandoned. If our brethren deny the absolute dominion of motives, and admit the confirmation of "the elect angels," they must own that the angels are kept in holiness by the efficient power of God. That glorified saints are also confirmed, is evident from their ordination "to eternal life," and from the winding up of the final scene: "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal."[†] And if they are eternally confirmed as a covenanted recompense, awarded to them by a public and most solemn judicial sentence, then God, in the highest possible degree, is pledged to keep them forever from falling. And if he does not exercise absolute dominion by motives, he must eternally keep them by efficient power.

If you say, the dominion of motives may be absolute in heaven, and nothing but human depravity prevents it on earth; you have no right to say this after denying, or even doubting, the power of God to prevent sin. For if God can by motives exercise such a dominion over spotless beings, he could have prevented spotless beings from falling

⁶ 1 Tim. 5. 21. † Mat. 25. 46 Acts 13. 48.

It is said by our brethren that Adam was not holy when he was first created ; that he was made only with faculties, and became holy at once by the right exercise of them. As I am now standing on the exercise ground, I am willing to allow that he was not holy till he exercised his faculties. But was it under the influence of divine efficiency that he exercised them aright ? If so, then God made him holy at first. And what do we hear ? “ Lo this only have I found, that God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions.” God made man upright. God made Adam upright. Do we want any more ? But let us go to the creation itself. “ And God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness.—So God created man in his own image ; in the image of God created he him : male and female created he them. And God blessed them and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth.” Now I assert that creating them in the image of God, though it included intellect and knowledge, and dominion if you please, was making them holy. Did God bless them before they were holy ? And yet the historian passes from their creation in God’s image to the benediction without an intermediate word. This close connexion implies that their creation in the image of God was itself a preparation for the blessing. And if there could be any doubt, the language of the apostle would remove it. “ Ye have—put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.”* If the new creation in the image of God makes men holy, the first creation in the image of God made Adam holy.

* Gen. 1. 26, 27 Eccl. 7. 29. Col. 3. 9, 10.

In regard to the man Christ Jesus, the Spirit was poured upon him for various purposes; to anoint him to the several offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, and to communicate wisdom and holiness. All these purposes are expressed in a single passage. "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him; the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and *of the fear of the Lord*; and shall make him of quick understanding *in the fear of the Lord*; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge, and reprove with equity.—And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins." Here is the knowledge of the Prophet, the holiness of the Priest, and the power and wisdom of the righteous King and Judge, all communicated by the unction of the Spirit.

1. The Prophet should have both knowledge and the gift of utterance; and both were communicated to Jesus by the Spirit. Christians of that day had an unction which taught them "all things;" and it seems to have been this inspiring Spirit of knowledge that was meant when it was said, "He whom the Father hath sent speaketh the words of God; for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary." "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek."

2. As the Jewish priests, at their consecration, were

washed with water and anointed with oil ; so Christ, when set apart to the priestly office, was baptised by John and anointed by the Holy Ghost, expressly at the age at which by law the priests had been consecrated. To make the sacrifice of this Priest expressive of God's unchangeable resolution to support his law by executing its penalty on future offenders, he must be dear to the Father, and must therefore be rendered dear by a course of filial obedience. Hence that ordination to the priesthood, (which was in fact his introduction to the public character of a Son,) seems to be called his generation. "No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. 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. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." On that occasion therefore the voice from heaven pronounced him the "beloved Son."

3. By the same unction he received the power of a King and the wisdom of a righteous Judge, and was visibly appointed to dominion over a numerous seed, and to the inheritance as "the First born among many brethren." "With my holy oil have I anointed him.—He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father.—I will make him my First born.—His seed also will I make to endure forever and his throne as the days of heaven." The very unction which he received when he came up out of Jordan, gave him power to redeem his subjects by baptising them with the Holy Ghost, and power to cast out devils and to work all his miracles. "He that sent me to baptise with water,

the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptiseth with the Holy Ghost." "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power; who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil." He "cast out devils" "by the Spirit of God." From God also he received the wisdom and integrity of a righteous Judge. "Give—thy righteousness unto the King's Son. He shall judge thy people with righteousness and thy poor with judgment."

4. Means and the Spirit were both necessary to make that human being holy and to keep him holy. To begin with means. "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good." His habits of virtue were confirmed like those of another man. "Though he were a Son yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered: and being made perfect, [by these confirming trials of his love and obedience,] he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." He needed the Spirit too. "The Lord God—wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth my ear to hear as the learned. *The Lord God hath opened my ear and I was not rebellious*, neither turned away back. [To open the ear was a well known figure, denoting, to render obedient.] I gave my back to the smiters and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting." "Be not thou far from me, O Lord: O my strength, haste thee to help me." "My God shall be my strength." Of that

wondrous stranger of Nazareth it was said, "And the child grew and waxed strong in spirit, [in the margin, "by the Spirit,"] filled with wisdom, *and the grace of God was upon him.*" During the period of his youth, "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man." And when he came to make that offering about which the Spirit of prophesy had said, "The Lord God hath opened my ear and I was not rebellious," did he go alone? did the man achieve it all in his own independent strength? No, it was the Spirit that made his life so pure that his offering was without a spot. "Who, *through the eternal Spirit*, offered himself without spot to God."*

As the affections of that holy man were thus indubitably influenced by the Spirit, the only question is, whether the influence was efficient or merely by motives. According to our brethren, the only thing which renders the Spirit necessary for men, is bad affections; and the chief obstruction to the empire of truth arising from bad affections, lies in their going after other objects and holding the *attention* from the truth: to which they add the power of *habit*; which, from the associations existing, not only among our ideas, but, according to Reid and Stewart, among all the operations of the mind, and from the increasing facility with which these associations are formed and all these operations are carried on, renders the exercise of holy or sin-

* Num. 4. 47. Ps. 22. 19. and 72. 1, 2. and 89. 20—29. Isai. 7. 14, 15. and 11. 1—4. and 49. 5. and 50. 4—6. and 61. 1. Mat. 3. 16, 17. and 12. 28. Luke 2. 40, 52. and 3. 23. John 1. 33. and 3. 34. Acts. 10. 38. Rom. 8. 29. Heb. 5. 4—9 and 9. 14. 1 John 2 20, 27

ful affections more and more easy and certain. They hold that truth throws so attractive a light upon reason and self-love, that if the *attention* can be fastened to it, the mind will be likely to yield to its influence; at any rate, that the Spirit can do no more than to present truth in so clear and affecting a light as to arrest the roving attention and fasten it to spiritual objects. Now certainly Jesus had no such rambling attention which needed to be brought back to divine things. That only operation which our brethren ascribe to the Spirit, and which depravity alone renders necessary, could not have been wrought in this instance. If the sanctifying Spirit moved upon that mind, it must have been in a way and for a purpose wholly out of the scope of their plan. The single fact therefore that the sanctifying Spirit moved upon Jesus, wholly breaks up their theory, and forever settles the point that the office of the Spirit is not merely to fix the attention of a fallen creature upon truth, but to move even the holy by effectual power.

CHAPTER IX.

God's Power to Prevent Sin.

IF God can control the mind either by efficiency or by motives, he can prevent sin : for if he can control one mind he can control all minds. If then you deny that he could have prevented sin, you deny both his efficiency and the absolute dominion of motives. The writers in the *Christian Spectator* must therefore be ranked among the deniers of both ways of control, because they deny God's power to prevent sin. For although now and then they qualify the denial by saying that the inability is only possible or probable or highly probable ; yet men of their character would not fill the world with arguments in support of a point, of such unequalled solemnity, about which they had a serious doubt. Besides, all their theories respecting regeneration and sanctification and election and predestination and moral agency, fall at once if God has such an absolute control over the mind as is implied in a power to prevent sin. They say the mind turns itself in view of motives, and often resists all the inducements which God can bring. They make election and predestination to consist in a mere determination to bring forward such creatures and means, with a foresight of the decisions of the self-deter-

mining power. They deny that moral agency can consist with any mode of absolute control. All these theories flatly contradict God's power to prevent sin. If then I prove that God could have prevented sin, it sweeps away their whole system respecting predestination and election and regeneration and sanctification and moral agency.

One thing must be distinctly noted in the outset. If God could not have prevented sin in all worlds and ages, he cannot prevent sin in any world or age, or in any creature at any time, except by preventing the particular occasion and temptation. If God could not have prevented sin in the universe, he cannot prevent believers from fatally falling; he cannot prevent Gabriel and Paul from sinking at once into devils, and heaven from turning into a hell. And were he to create new races to fill the vacant seats, they might turn to devils as fast as he created them, in spite of any thing that he could do short of destroying their moral agency. He is liable to be defeated in all his designs, and to be as miserable as he is benevolent. This is infinitely the gloomiest idea that was ever thrown upon the world. It is gloomier than hell itself. For this involves only the destruction of a part, but that involves the wretchedness of God and his whole creation. And how awfully gloomy as it respects the prospects of individual believers. You have no security that you shall stand an hour. And even if you get to heaven, you have no certainty of remaining there a day. All is doubt and sepulchral gloom. And where is the glory of God? where the transcendent glory of raising to spiritual life a world dead in trespasses and

sins? where the glory of swaying an undivided sceptre, and doing his whole pleasure “in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth”?

I know of but two things which can be said to avoid these fearful consequences. One is, that God foresaw from the beginning that the saints on earth and the present and future inhabitants of heaven would not apostatize; the other is, that they are unchangeably kept by a view of the punishments of sin and the work of redemption. As to the first, God’s foreseeing a thing to be certain does not make it certain, but implies that it is already certain. If you say, God would not create any who he foresaw would, after such an exhibition of justice and mercy, apostatize in heaven, nor any who on earth would fall away after being induced to turn from sin to God; this is supposing, without any authority whatever, that the perseverance of the inhabitants of heaven and earth depends wholly on their being those identical creatures rather than others of the same mould, or of the same race with a somewhat different constitution. If you suppose that God foresaw that those identical creatures would independently persevere rather than other creatures of exactly the same mould and in the same circumstances, you suppose the foresight of an effect without a cause, and certainly an effect not caused by him. And it is inconceivable how God should foresee an event nowise dependent on his will. It is said by our brethren that, antecedent in the order of nature to his decree even to create, and as the ground of that decree, God foresaw that if he brought forward such a system of government and grace, such and such would be

the decisions of the self-determining power in different individuals. The certainty of those decisions thus conditionally foreseen, I will call a *conditional* certainty, which was afterwards made *absolute* by the decree to bring forward the system. Now as that conditional certainty existed anterior to any decree of God even to create, and therefore was in no sense dependent on his will, how could he foresee it? He could indeed foresee the result of any supposed laws by him impressed on matter or mind; for it would be contemplating the exact operations of causes appointed to work in a determinate manner: and to suppose mind to operate by fixed laws, is not supposing the mechanism of matter transferred to the soul, but only a rational adherence to motives in accordance with the free desires of the mind. If the movements of created minds do depend on God's will, then certainly he cannot foresee them any further than he determines them. - Here is a world to be created. None but God can create it. How can he certainly know that it will be created if he has not determined to create it? But the supposition is, that he foresees the future operations of an efficient cause wholly independent of him. I say future, for though God exists in one eternal now, yet these operations of created minds were not eternal. The theory is, that he foresaw what those minds would independently do if he made them; a foresight anterior, in the order of nature, to all his purposes, and the very ground of the decree even to create; and yet this conditional certainty, thus wholly independent of his will, he distinctly foresaw. If this is not venturing into the unknown without chart or compass, I know not what is.

All that we are authorized to believe concerning the divine prescience is, that "known unto God are all HIS WORKS from the beginning of the world," and that there is a close connexion between "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God."* All the rest is a dream. He is omniscient within his own dominions: but if there could be a world beyond the bounds of his empire, how does reason or Scripture intimate that he could know that? How, more than you can know what people will do in another world?

If you suppose that the perseverance of saints and angels depends on some peculiarity of constitution by which they are distinguished from other beings of the same race, how does this effectual influence of a constitution passively received, any more than efficiency itself, comport with freedom? God gave them a peculiar constitution which ensured their eternal perseverance. And are you sure that you mean less or more by that constitution than others do by a disposition, which you reject as inconsistent with moral agency?

Take now the other supposition; that the holy creatures of both worlds are unfailingly kept by a view of the punishments of sin and the wonders of redemption. But this is the absolute dominion of motives. And if God can exercise such a dominion, why could he not have prevented sin? You may say, without those consequences of sin,—punishment and redemption,—there were not motives enough to secure the perpetual holiness of the universe or of

* Acts 2. 23. and 15. 18.

any of its parts. Then you have abandoned your favourite theory, that holiness in every case is better for the universe than sin in its stead. And when you have given up that notion, you may perhaps discover a reason why God permitted sin when he could have prevented it. If God can keep saints and angels eternally holy by motives, why did he not keep the universe eternally holy by motives? If you say, the motives were not furnished till punishment and redemption brought them forth, then you say, that some good effects have followed from sin which could not have existed without it: and then sin in some cases is better for the universe than holiness in its stead. While, to disprove God's voluntary permission of sin, you continue to say that holiness in all cases is better for the universe than sin in its stead, you may not say that the consequences of sin have furnished stronger motives to holiness than could have existed without it: and therefore you may not plead that God, by motives, can eternally keep sin from heaven, and yet by motives could not have kept sin from the universe. My own opinion is, that by mere motives he could not have done the one and cannot do the other. Certainly it is not by mere motives that believers on earth are kept. The same motives are urged upon other men without effect. Hell thunders and Calvary weeps, and they march on to death. You say, because they do not believe. Aye, and one reason why they do not believe is, that faith "is the gift of God." If he keeps the saints by motives, why by motives could he not have prevented sin? And if he does not keep them by motives, he must keep them by efficient power. There is no other alternative. You must give up the doc-

trine of perseverance or admit that God could have prevented sin. You must give up the doctrine of perseverance or resort either to that of efficiency or an absolute control by motives. If neither of these is admitted, what chance is there for any on earth or in heaven to stand? Satan fell from perfect holiness; Adam fell from perfect holiness: what should keep believers from falling from imperfect holiness, in a world full of temptations, and with all the influence of former habits bearing upon them? How comes it then to pass that every one of them, without a single exception, perseveringly yields to motives which cannot control others? How comes it to pass that God is so sure of this control over them, that he firmly covenants with Christ and the Church to keep them all? Is it because none but the less stubborn yield at first? But what is stubbornness on your plan but the strength of present passions? And have not the strong passions of a Manasseh and a Saul of Tarsus and a dying thief yielded, while mildness has died in sin? Have not the most unlikely submitted, while the children of the pious, brought up in the midst of means, have died in profligacy? Do you say, God keeps bad motives from those he means to keep? Then he could have kept bad motives from all his creatures and prevented sin. But Christians live every day in the midst of temptations. It is indeed said, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it:" but the safety lies in his making a way to escape, which I understand

to be by efficient power in connexion with his protecting providence.

Upon your plan there are two facts wholly unaccounted for : first, that all the individuals who were given to Christ, and only those, are induced at first to submit ; and secondly, that every one of them without exception perseveres. Assign any sufficient reason for these facts, and see if the same might not have kept sin out of the universe. You must relinquish your theory respecting the prevention of sin, or give up the doctrine of perseverance ; and then there is no certainty that a creature in any world will continue to be holy.

You say, the conversion and perseverance of the elect were certain because God foresaw them ; and they were decreed in the very purpose to bring forward such a system of government and grace with a foreknowledge that the self-determining power would yield, and continue to yield, to the motives ; and the promises to Christ and the Church were only engagements to send the means, added to predictions of what the self-determining power would do. This is the explanation of Dr Fitch, put into my own language. And this will explain the apparent contradiction in Dr Taylor's account of the predestination of sin when God was heartily unwilling that it should take place. He believes "that the eternal purposes of God extend to all actual events, sin not excepted." And yet he says, "I do not believe that sin can be proved to be the necessary means of the greatest good, and that as such God prefers it on the whole to holiness in its stead.—But I do believe—that it may be true that God, all things con-

sidered, prefers holiness to sin in all instances in which the latter takes place,—though for wise and good reasons he *permits*, or does not prevent, the existence of sin.”* That is, by creating moral agents, he permitted what he could not prevent but by refusing to create them. And he decreed their sin by deciding to create them and to place them under law. And so he decreed the regeneration, perseverance, and salvation of the elect, by determining to create them and to place them under means, (including the illuminating Spirit,) to which he foresaw that the self-determining power would yield. And his covenant with Christ and the Church was a promise to do just that and no more.

On this statement I remark first, that God’s foreseeing the certainty of their conversion and perseverance, did not make these events certain. This theory therefore leaves the facts as unaccounted for as before. Secondly, their conversion and perseverance, being wrought by a power independent of God, could not, in any conceivable way, have been foreseen. Thirdly, for God, in his solemn covenants with Christ and the Church, to promise to do what really was to be done by another, and then to assume the praise of doing it himself, would involve what no good man would intentionally impute to God.

To sum up all in a word. If God keeps believers by his efficiency, he could have prevented sin. If he keeps them by the controlling power of motives, he could have prevented sin. But if he does not keep them at all, but

* Letter to Dr Hawes.

only foresees that they will keep themselves, under the influence of motives common to all; then the following facts are wholly unaccounted for; namely, that, as the reward of Christ, God covenanted with him to keep them; that he covenanted with the Church to keep them; that he takes to himself the praise of keeping them by his "power—through faith unto salvation;" and finally, that they all without exception do persevere in a world full of temptations, and while embarrassed by their old habits and remaining sins.

I now turn more directly to the great investigation. And in the outset I wish to dispose of a few texts which are thought by our brethren to lie against us. "What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it?" "The Lord—is long-suffering to us ward, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." "Who will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."* If the doctrine of divine efficiency is true, these texts ought to be just what they are; and therefore they do not lie against the doctrine, nor of course against the power of God to prevent sin. If we are dependent on God for holiness, and *none the less* under obligations, then we sustain two relations to God, in a great measure independent of each other; namely, that of recipients of his sanctifying impressions and that of moral agents; in other words, that of beings *acted upon* and that of beings *acting*. And if, on the one hand, we are *none the less* de-

* Isai. 5. 4. 1 Tim. 2. 4. 2 Pet. 3. 9.

pendent for being bound, and, on the other, *none the less* under obligations for being dependent, then each of these relations is entire without reference to the other. And then a being who acts according to truth, must act towards us as moral agents without reference to our dependence, and towards us as dependent without reference to our obligations; that is, he must speak to us as moral agents as though we were independent, and must speak about us as dependent as though we were clay in the hands of the potter, without powers or obligations. God, as he acts towards the moral agent, is the moral Governour; as he acts towards the dependent subject, is the Sovereign Efficient Cause. In the character of Moral Governour, he has no influence to employ but motives. In the character of Sovereign Efficient Cause, he does nothing but produce sanctifying impressions; in doing which he acts as a Sovereign, except when he produces them as a gracious reward or in answer to prayer, or when he withholds them as a punishment, as in the case of judicial blindness. In these instances alone the two departments run into each other. In all other cases they are wholly separate and independent. The Moral Governour fills immeasurably the greater space, because God has inconceivably more to say and do to creatures as bound to obey, than to creatures as merely dependent. And *as, in his direct treatment of moral agents, he can express the benevolence of his nature*, the Moral Governour, who employs no influence but motives, can sincerely express the kindness of his heart in measures and in language which have no reference to men's dependence, and which any benevolent king or

father might employ who could do nothing but make provisions for others and wield motives. It is the Moral Governour alone who says, "What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it?" The meaning is, what *provisions* could I have made, or what motives could I have urged, more than I have done? But the Sovereign Efficient Cause says, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will." The Moral Governour says, "The Lord—is long suffering,—not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." The Sovereign Efficient Cause says, "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Now upon the principle of divine efficiency, and while men are allowed to be none the less bound on that account, such, to comport with truth, must be the language of God to moral agents, for whom he can do nothing but provide privileges, and over whom he has no control but by motives, and by his direct treatment of whom he can express the benevolence of his heart. As such language comports with truth upon the principle of an efficiency which does not impair moral agency, it does not lie against us, but leaves the question of efficiency or no efficiency to be decided by other proofs.

We admit that whatever God does by efficiency or permission is intended to promote the highest happiness of the universe, and that this happiness will probably be connected with the highest holiness: and in this sense God is striving, perhaps with all his might, to promote, in his kingdom at large, the rational operations of holiness,

under the guidance of the highest attainable knowledge. He therefore is displaying himself as fast probably as the nature of things will admit. For this highest exhibition of himself, which involves the display of all truth, the punishment of sin and the work of redemption I believe to be necessary. Whether he is aiming to exalt the universe, as a whole and in all its ages, to the highest possible holiness, is not for me to say. It is likely to be so. But if this is what our brethren mean, they do not draw just conclusions from their premise; for it does not follow from God's aiming at the greatest general holiness, that some instances of sin are not necessary to the greatest good, nor that he is doing his utmost to make every individual holy. It only proves that he aims to make every individual holy so far as comports with the general interest of holiness; and this no believer in revelation denies.

If when our brethren say, God does the best for each that he can consistently with the highest prevalence of holiness in the universe in all ages, they mean no more than that the greatest display of his glory is necessary to the highest general holiness, and that he does for each the best he can consistently with his glory; I do not object; and could say the same in perfect consistence with divine efficiency. But if they mean, (as certainly they do if they mean any thing contrary to the common doctrine,) that God does all he can to make each individual holy which comports with *moral agency*; (the only limit that can be fixed, since holiness *in every case* is better for the universe than sin *in its stead*, and since no conceivable harm could result from his *trying* in every

case to bring about that which, *for that particular case*, would be the best for the universe;) then I deny. Could not more have been done in our world for six thousand years consistently with moral agency? Could not more than one Noah have been sent to the antediluvian world? Could not all nations have had a Moses and a Pentateuch? Could not the God of miracles have filled all lands with Bibles and with Pauls? Could not the spirit of 1792 have begun a thousand years sooner? That God has done the best he could for the display of the character of man and his own,—for the manifestation of his justice, mercy, and patience,—for filling the universe with the knowledge of truth, and thus providing the means of the highest general holiness and happiness; I am willing to believe. But that he has done all he could consistently with moral agency, for the conversion of each individual; or, (which amounts to the same thing,) that he has done all he could for the conversion of each that consisted with the highest holiness of the universe, upon the assumed principle that holiness *in every case* is better for the holiness of the universe than sin *in its stead*; that is to say, all he *could* for each; I cannot believe. These several suppositions amount to the same thing. For if the holiness of each individual is better for the holiness of the universe than sin in its stead, and if God has done all he could for the conversion of each individual that consisted with the highest holiness of the universe, then he has done all he could for the conversion of each that comported with moral agency; in other words, all he *could*. What other limit can be set? If the holiness of each individual is better for the holiness of the

universe than sin in its stead, how could it obstruct the holiness of the universe for God to go to the utmost feasible limit with each? If he succeeded, the holiness of the universe would be advanced and in no way marred; unless it would furnish the universe with more constraining motives to holiness for some to be sinners and punished, which is contrary to the supposition. If he failed, it is inconceivable how the effort could make worse any but the rejecters themselves, who would soon confine the injury to hell and take it from other worlds. At any rate he could not have been kept back from doing his utmost for each by foreseeing a failure: for as both the failure and success must depend on the self-determining power, which lies beyond his control, he could not, so far as we can conceive, have foreseen the result. Indeed it is an overwhelming argument against this self-determining power, that it would shut out all the actions of creatures from his foresight, and leave the whole moral universe for the future to him a perfect blank.

It does not follow that God could not have prevented sin, from the fact that he has not prevented it: for he has important purposes to answer by means of sin. "The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea even the wicked for the day of evil." That is to say, for his own purposes he made Judas, with a full knowledge of the traitor's course, and with an eye distinctly fixed on "the day of evil." Less than this, I think, cannot be made of the text. But whatever else it implies, it certainly implies that God has purposes to answer by sin. He had purposes to answer by the sin of Joseph's brethren, and a providence in

that affair. "God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither but God." He had purposes to answer by the sin of Pharaoh and a providence in that affair. "For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." He had purposes to answer by the pride of the Assyrian king and a providence in that matter. "O Assyrian, the rod of my anger;—I will send him against a hypocritical nation.—Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy and to cut off nations not a few.—Wherefore—I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria and the glory of his high looks.—Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it?" God had purposes to answer by the sins of the betrayer and murderers of Christ, and a pre-determined providence in those matters. "Truly the Son of man goeth as it was determined, but wo unto that man by whom he is betrayed." "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." "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." After God had created the universe "by" Christ and "for" Christ, that is, for a theatre on which he might accomplish the wonders of redemption and un-

cover the great designs of God; after all his covenants with him and the Church; after all the preparations for his advent and death in the types and predictions and arrangements of the old dispensation; after sending him to die and commanding him to die; can it be supposed that he did all he could consistently with moral agency to prevent the sin of Judas and of the Jews? * If your meaning is, that he did all he could consistently with the highest display of his glory, and therefore with the greatest ultimate holiness and happiness of the universe, this is true, and leaves untouched his power to prevent sin.

Sin has certainly been the occasion of immeasurable good. Had there been no sin the universe would have lost all the glorious results of redemption, which, as we have seen, was the great end for which God built the universe. Christ was the "Word" by which the whole mind of God was to be expressed: Christ is the "face" from which all "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God" shines: and "God—created all things by Jesus Christ, to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." † Without sin and the work of redemption, all the

* Gen. 45. 7, 8. Prov. 16. 4. Isai. 10. 5—19. Luke 22. 22. John 10. 18. Acts 2. 23 and 4. 27, 28. Rom. 9. 17. Col. 1. 16. with John 1. 3.

† John 1. 1, 18. 2 Cor. 4. 6. Eph. 3. 9—11.

displays of God which belong to the present universe would have been lost ; and what could have come in their stead no message from heaven has told us. The punishment of sin will reveal God and the claims of his government as nothing else probably could have done. "Tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb ; and the smoke of their torment" ascending "up forever and ever" ! This will lay down into the heart of the universe the boundless evil of sin and the infinite claims of God, as nothing else could do. If "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth," "more than over ninety and nine" who never fell, then, on the strong principle of contrast, there may be more joy in the universe than though sin and redemption had never been.

If God has no power to sanctify nor effectually to restrain sin, prayer for the suppression of sin and the conversion of the world would seem to be mockery. Or if in such petitions a limited power is to be acknowledged, it would be no more than the expression of the truth to add, *as far as thou art able*. But an appendix so unlike the Scriptures and so shocking to mankind, would soon open the eyes of all to the claims of the new doctrine.

Upon the principle of our brethren, judicial blindness results from the withdrawal of the illuminating Spirit and of such restraints as God in his providence can impose. But even this is abandoning men to sin which might have been in a measure restrained. God therefore does not do his utmost to restrain sin. You say, he abandons some as a warning to others, and by this means

promotes holiness in his kingdom at large. Then the withdrawal of the Spirit and the relaxation of restraint, which lead to increased sin, are, in some instances, better for the holiness of the universe than more light and restraint and less sin in their stead. And why, upon the same principle, may not sin and its punishment be better in some cases for the holiness of the universe than perfect obedience in its stead? It is impossible to reconcile a single instance of abandonment in any world with the highest efforts of God in every case to restrain sin. But he does abandon sinners on earth and in hell. And if he can promote the public good by letting sin loose to rage when he could have restrained it, why may he not benefit the the universe by suffering sin to come into existence when he could have prevented it? I admit that judicial blindness results from nothing on God's part but the *withholding* of influence and restraint when he might have applied them; but his manner of speaking of this seems to imply more absolute dominion over mind than our brethren are willing to allow. "God gave them over to a reprobate mind." "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour and another unto dishonour?" "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned." "A stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient, *whereunto also they were appointed.*"* I admit that God's appointing them to disobedience was only decree-

* Rom. 1. 28. and 9. 21. 2 Thes. 2. 11, 12. 1 Pet. 2. 8.

ing *not to do all he could to sanctify them*. But if all that God could do was to *invite* them by his Spirit, and the issue depended on their self-determining power; and if for a time he did invite them and did all he could for their salvation; it would be strong language to call the withdrawal of a rejected invitation to obedience an appointment to disobedience. How could he appoint to disobedience if he had no power to prevent it? The language becomes still stronger. "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." "The election hath obtained it and the rest were blinded; according as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber; eyes that they should not see and ears that they should not hear." "Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes nor understand with their heart." "Why hast thou made us to err from thy ways and hardened our heart from thy fear?" God is said to have hardened the heart of Pharaoh, of the Egyptians, of Sihon, and of the Canaanites.*

All these texts, I suppose, prove no more, as to the wicked, than that God withdrew his influence and restraint: but I think they imply a power to prevent sin. At least they show the permission of sin in the excess when that excess might have been prevented. And they seem worded with too much authority for one who can

* Exod. 7. 3, 13. and 14. 17. Deut. 2. 30. Josh. 11. 20. Isai. 63. 17. John 12. 40. Rom. 9. 18. and 11. 7, 8.

only invite but cannot control. Can it be seriously thought after all these representations, that God had nothing more to do in those cases than to send his word and illuminating Spirit and restraining providence to do *his best* to keep them from sin and to make them holy, and afterwards, in discouragement, to withdraw his restraint and inviting Spirit? You might as well say of a faithful minister, who had followed his hearers with unremitting entreaties and tears, that he had sovereignly hardened the obstinate, because he had withdrawn, discouraged, to another people; especially if he was the only minister on earth.

It is the common doctrine of the Bible that God can restrain from particular sins. God said to Abimelech, I also withheld thee from sinning against me; therefore suffered I thee not to touch her." "This day," said Phinehas, "we perceive that the Lord is among us, because ye have not committed this traspas against the Lord." Nay more, in language which cannot be misunderstood or explained away, we are assured that God can unlimitedly restrain sin, and that he will restrain all that does not contribute to his glory; in other words, that every sin which he allows to exist will promote his praise. "*Surely* the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."* Were there no other text in the Bible on the subject, this ought forever to settle the question: and I cannot but wonder that, with this single

* Gen. 20. 6. Josh. 22. 31. Ps. 76. 10.

text on the sacred page, there should be, among believers in divine revelation, a remaining doubt on earth.

In all the common affairs of life God is certainly able to turn the hearts of men as he pleases. Many texts in proof of this were cited in the fourth chapter. I add another thought. Christ has received from the Father power to conquer sin and all its pernicious effects. "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."* When the apostle uttered this he had his eye directly on the effects of sin as exhibited at the bottom of the grave, and affirmed that the mighty Conqueror would subdue death and all things else. And shall sin itself, the greatest enemy and cause of all, elude his power? These two things, his power to control the heart in common matters and his power to subdue sin, place him on an undivided throne. Such a throne, to the joy of the holy universe, he does fill. "My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven and in earth, in the seas and all deep places." "The counsel of the Lord standeth forever; the thoughts of his heart to all generations." "He is of one mind and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth even that he doth." "All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, and he doth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and

* Phil. 3. 21.

none can stay his hand or say unto him, What dost thou ?”* This looks like any thing but weakness and disappointment and frustrated desires; any thing but inability to regulate the moral universe as he pleases; any thing but being defeated in his attempts to restrain his creatures from sin or to bring them back to obedience. Such a theory assigns to him a very limited empire: and certainly it takes from the universe its highest consolation. If the question could be put to every holy being in heaven and earth, Shall all the counsels of infinite wisdom and love stand? shall all the wishes of infinite benevolence be gratified? one universal shout, “as the voice of many waters,” would respond, “Amen:—alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.”

* Job 23. 13. Ps. 33. 11. and 115. 3. and 135. 6. Isai. 46. 10. Dan. 4. 35.

CHAPTER X.

Alleged Dominion of Motives.—A Distinct Theory.

I HAVE NOW finished what I had to say on the subject of divine efficiency, and have come to another theory entirely distinct, but equally opposed to that fundamental truth. It is, that God can mould the heart at pleasure by the mere influence of motives, whether they are adapted to its present temper or not. This, so far as I know, is a theory entirely new: but it accords much better than the other with the true doctrines. It is reconcilable with special grace in regeneration and with election and perseverance. Still it is nothing but moral suasion, and ill comports with that representation of divine *power* in regeneration with which the Scriptures abound. And all that has been said in proof of divine efficiency lies against it. All that has been said to show that the Bible does not ascribe regenerating power to the word, lies more against this than against the other theory; for if the mere illuminating Spirit cannot give efficacy to the word at all, surely it cannot always.

On some printed pages before me I find the following. "It is evident, if God is able to exert his agency on the mind *through* the truth, that no limitation can be assigned to that agency short of absolute omnipotence.—Through

its instrumentality God can exert any influence however great, and overcome every obstacle to be found in the un-renewed soul." "I have no where said that regeneration is caused by the will of man, but by the Spirit of the living God operating through motives." "The creature is turned—in the twinkling of an eye." "You do not—make motives the *cause* of all the holy and sinful acts of the mind, but you suppose that the cause of these actions is to be found in the mind itself." "The will is determined to choose the Almighty through the influence of motives as crowded upon the mind by the eternal Spirit." "How will this serve to throw him off from his Antinomianism, as long as you tell him that he has a depraved heart or temper that renders him entirely unsusceptible of the influence of holy motives?" On the pages of another work I find the following. "God regenerates men with truth as a Sovereign, when and where he pleases." "The sentiment of the text may—be thus expressed: Ye are regenerated through the instrumentality of the truths or motives or moral suasion of Scripture." "These truths are motives. They constitute the moral suasion of the Bible." "Truth or motive are God's established laws of governing the moral world, just as attraction and gravitation are God's established laws of governing many movements in the natural world." "God has ordained that our acts and volitions—shall be *caused* by motives." "All our volitions and actions are *caused* by motives."

These two writers fully deny the self-determining power. But they both represent the action of God to be on the truth, and not directly on the mind. One of them,

finding fault; says, "You had recourse to the doctrine that in all the acts and exercises of the moral agent, the Spirit acts directly on the mind and mind only." "Unless an instrument break it will bear power applied to it to any extent. Hence if God can exert an influence through the truth on the mind of the sinner, inasmuch as the truth is an instrument that—cannot break, so through its instrumentality God can exert any influence however great." "I know that you assert that God is unable to exert any influence *on* or through the truth; but—does the supposition—diminish his claim to the—gratitude of his creatures?—Is the warrior who destroys the enemies of his country with swords and muskets and cannon, any the less entitled to some distinguished meed, than if he had destroyed them with his hands?" Mark this. His hands touch not the enemy, but only touch the instruments. The other writer says, "We do not deny the necessity of the Spirit's special influences when we say men are begotten of the truth. You do not deny the special agency of the mechanic when you affirm that your table was made with a plane and chissel and hammer." "A friend comes to your door, and, finding an immense log cut—off,—inquires how it was divided. You answer, with this axe. That, he says, is—untrue: for, in the first place, *you* cut off the log, and not the axe; in the second place, that axe has no power in itself whatever; and in the third place, you yourself could not have made such a feeble instrument accomplish so great an undertaking."

Now all these representations go upon the principle that the Spirit never touches the mind, but only touches the

truth, and truth touches the mind; and that the mind, in view of truth made clear by the illuminating Spirit, turns without any other action of God. And this is old Arminianism, with the single addition that God can make the truth so clear as to ensure its success. Does this take away the self-determining power? The only self-determination held by Whitby was in regard to attending to the thing presented and believing it to be the greatest good. As these writers ascribe no such independent power to the mind, but believe it absolutely controlled by truth divinely illumined, they must be acquitted from holding to the self-determining power.

This idea of God's pressing upon truth and pressing it into the mind, and by the pressure, not only introducing it, but shaping the affections, seems to me one of the most extravagant dreams ever conceived. The real meaning however is, that God, by a pressure upon truth, thrusts it into the *eye* of the mind, and thus makes it take such hold of the natural susceptibility to motives, as to cause the affections which he wishes to excite.

Allowing that the mind, in all its holy affections, is consciously moved by the rational considerations involved in truth, (a point about which no one can doubt,) it does not follow that the action of God which precedes these affections is on the truth and not on the mind. How can God act upon truth? If this were done some change must be wrought in truth, in point of form or place or position or motion, or in some other respect: but what change in form or position or place or motion, or in any other respect, can be wrought in truth? God makes the truth seen and felt

and loved: can you prove that this is not done by an operation on the mind? Can it not be infallibly proved that it is done by an operation on the mind, and cannot be done by acting on any thing else? All the change that can be predicated of truth in this case, respects it, not as an active instrument, but as a passive object. It is seen, felt, and loved by an active mind which did not see, feel, and love it before. Is not this all the change that can be predicated of truth? Can you prove any more? Can you conceive any more? Does the Bible say any where that the action is not on the mind to cause it to see, feel, and love the truth? In reference to the conscious piercings of truth when reflected on and felt, we hear indeed of "the sword of the Spirit;" but that is a figure of speech from which nothing so particular and exact can be inferred. Does not the Bible every where speak of the action as being on the mind? And in which has the change actually taken place? The truth remains the same and the mind is changed. What it did not see it sees; what it never felt before it feels; what it hated, "in the twinkling of an eye" it loves. One is the active agent whose action is changed, the other is the passive object which can only receive the regards of the mind, and remains forever the same. You can see with your eye that the change is not in truth but in the mind; and therefore that the power has not been applied to truth but to the mind. Truth is indeed the instrument of the new affections; but it is so made, not by any action in truth, but by a new action of the mind; not by any impression on truth, but by an immediate impression on the mind. This seems so self-evident, that the contrary opinion

appears to me one of the most curious instances of turning the emblem of a figure into literal reality, and even of transferring to truth, to thought, the attributes of matter, and to a passive object the energies of a conquering agent, that I recollect to have found in the history of mind. Why, all these piercings of "the sword of the Spirit" of which you speak, are nothing but the *actings of mind* in view of truth. Let God, by his energies upon the soul, put mind into action in view of truth, and all is done.

One of these writers, without intending it, falls into a happy manner of illustrating the very truth I am supporting. "To declare God cannot—regenerate men with truth, is to deny his omnipotence. For aught we know, God could have made the blowing of the rams' horns, not only shake down the walls of Jericho, but also convert all its inhabitants.—He opened the blind man's eyes with spittle; and if he pleases he can regenerate us with truth." And pray, did he apply his power to the rams' horns or to the walls? to the spittle or to the eyes? And had he made those trumpets the antecedents to the conversion of the inhabitants, would the power have been applied to the trumpets or to their hearts?

But there is another question. If the action of the Spirit is immediately upon the mind, is it upon the head or the heart? Upon the head perhaps in conviction; upon the heart surely in conversion. The mind will never choose God and his ways until religion appears to it the greatest good. And can religion be the greatest apparent good to a mind of bad affections? If not, a power must be exerted behind the affections, prior, in the order of nature

to religion's appearing the greatest good ; prior therefore to the mind's being swayed by motives to love and choose religion.

Let us examine this subject. I have no occasion to explore the Scriptures or to dive into metaphysical reasonings : I make my appeal directly to the common experience of mankind. Tell the duellist of the value of life, of the claims of humanity, of the claims of God ; and what does it avail ? While those fiendish passions rage in his heart, the greatest apparent good to him is honour and revenge. Tell a drunkard of the ruin of his property, the decay of his constitution, the griefs of his family ; you can fasten no motives upon him ; because, with his propensities, the greatest apparent good is the gratification of his appetite. Tell the miser of the wants of the dying heathen, the sacrifices of Calvary, the commands of God ; and you cannot extort from his withered hand a cent ; because, with his sordid attachments, the greatest apparent good is wrapped up in mammon. Nothing can appear the greatest good that is opposed to the prevailing appetites and passions. If light cast upon the understanding was sure to control the heart, it ought to appear that every man does as well as he knows how ; that wherever the knowledge of divine truth is found, there reigns the love of God ; that as no where below the heavens is knowledge so perfect as in hell, no where below the heavens does holiness so much abound. Truth and reason will never govern a wicked heart ; will never therefore, under all the lights of the illuminating Spirit, and even of the last judgment, (for they are nothing but truth

and reason still,) transform it into the image of God. Then certainly they will not do it always. To say that this is breaking up all moral agency by denying a susceptibility to motives in the wicked, is arraying your power to comprehend the secrets of nature, against all the facts in the universe. It is an eternal fact that the damned will not be holy, because their bad affections will never yield to truth: then, according to your assumption, there is no moral agency or sin in hell.

The sole question respects the power of truth; for the self-determining decision about *attending* to it and *believing* it is disclaimed. And if truth, *more faintly and unsteadily seen*, cannot exhibit to the mind the greatest apparent good in opposition to prevailing passions, can it when *more plainly and constantly seen*? Then the reason why Judas does not now love as well as Peter, is that God does not present truth so plainly and steadily to his mind. There is no depravity to prevent the success of truth; or if there is, it operates only to turn away the attention, an evil which a clearer view of truth would correct. A distinct view of truth, according to this, would make religion appear to Judas the greatest good, though diametrically opposed to his satanic temper. If you say, there is no chance for religion to appear to him the greatest good, because, in his state of unchangeable reprobation, it offers nothing which to self-love can appear a good; I ask, is he not under *obligations* to love God and his service? and you say, there can be no moral agency, and therefore no obligations, without a present susceptibility to motives founded in self-love. If Judas is still under obli-

gations, he is infinitely to blame that God and his service do not appear to him the greatest good ; and therefore he has all the susceptibility to those motives which is necessary to a moral agent.

Self-love is essential to a rational being : for if I regard my own happiness as worthless, I shall see nothing valuable in the happiness of others. And if all happiness is worthless, there is nothing for reason to seek or approve. Nothing is reasonable or unreasonable. It is then essential to our nature to be influenced, in personal matters, by that which promises to us the highest happiness. But we have social, and still more extended affections, which reach after the happiness of their objects irrespective of our own. Whatever tends to gratify these personal or disinterested affections, will appear to us a good ; and that will appear the greatest good which is calculated to gratify the feeling which for the time is the strongest. Whatever then falls in with the predominant affection, will offer the strongest and the prevailing motive. This is only saying, what none can doubt, that all beings, good and bad, will follow their prevailing inclination. What motives then shall prevail, must depend on the state of the affections. Of course, if a motive which ought to be the strongest, will, when clearly exhibited to the mind, certainly prevail, there is no depravity in the universe. If the mind is prepared to relish and fall in with the truth when clearly seen in its own proper character, there was no aversion to it to obstruct belief, and, considering its infinite superiority to the world, nothing that could steadily draw away the attention from it to the world. No antecedent depra-

vity therefore kept out a clear exhibition of truth to the mind, or rendered the convicting Spirit necessary. If that illuminating influence was necessary to penetrate the veil of criminal unbelief, produced by selfish aversion, that aversion and unbelief must also be overcome, before the mind will relish the truth even when it is fully presented. But if there is no such aversion or unbelief to overcome, but a readiness to fall in with truth as soon as it is clearly seen, there is no depravity at all. It must always depend on the temper or affections whether truth shall prevail or not. It is a wrong state of the heart which makes a bad motive the strongest. Cure that temper and the motive becomes the weakest. Something must first be done upon the heart to make the truth the stronger motive, urge it whoever will and with whatever power of eloquence. This is a point wholly overlooked.

God and self are the only rivals for supreme affection. One man loves God supremely, another love himself best and God not at all. No motives can influence the latter but those which are adapted to his self-love or social affections. Do you say, they could be addressed to his reason? But his reason is exclusively employed in weighing the motives by the interests to which they refer. To his conscience? But what appeals to conscience can do against reigning selfishness, may be learnt from the history of the damned. Now would stronger motives addressed to *self-love*, persuade him to love *God*? How could *such* motives more strongly persuade him to love God than to love himself? to love God better than himself? This brings out the inconsistency of the whole scheme. The grand fault is,

the sinner loves himself supremely : and when he cannot get honour, wealth, or pleasure, his dearest interest lies in gratifying the malignant passions which disappointment has excited.

This is not a mere prejudice to be corrected by light. It is the necessary effect of selfishness, and would be the same in all the light of hell, in all the light of the last judgment, in all the light which heaven itself could pour upon mere intellect. Against that selfishness God arrays himself in his commands and prohibitions, and loads it with the penalty of eternal death. This rouses the war. This perpetuates hostility of the deadliest type. All this time the sinner knows that if he would love, God would make him happy. That motive addressed to self-interest against his reigning passions, has no effect. He does not love, but loves himself supremely, and hates God as the infinite enemy and punisher of selfishness, and hates him the more the more he is seen. The enmity is not a delusion to be cured by light. It is not a false image of God that is hated. If it was, the enmity would be a hallowed aversion to an idol. It is enmity to the true God. It is enmity to his whole character and government. It is enmity which light, instead of curing, will only aggravate. It must be so if it is the true God that is hated, and if he is hated in all his character. The more a thing is seen that is hated as a whole, the more it will be abhorred. Light is of vital importance to lead forth good affections which already have a cause, but it cannot cure enmity so radical as that of the carnal heart. What new unfolding of the divine character or of the sinner's

interests can make a selfish enemy love God better than himself? Such an affection is not to be bought by any bribe offered to self-love. Self-love in the natural heart is selfishness, and is the source of all the enmity. It will never give its suffrage in favour of God, and no bribe will engage its influence to turn the soul to the love of him. Nor will appeals to reason bring the enemy to yield. If such appeals had always governed him, he would not have been an enemy to God. Or if, before reason was mature, he was hurried into transgression and placed under the condemning sentence of the law, can mere appeals to reason call back his selfish heart to the love of that purity which reproaches him and of that justice which annihilates all his interests? to love that holy and condemning God better than himself? This is saying that among all the bad passions of the universe, no wretch is too bad to be controlled by reason if reasonable motives are set clearly before him; that the rage of the damned is nothing but a delusion,—the result of a wrong judgment founded in prejudice which light would correct. And then all sin is the effect of ignorance, and holiness is the unfailing effect of sufficiently enlarged knowledge: and then there is nothing in mind,—in its temper or affections,—to prevent it from being holy when sufficiently enlightened. But where is the proof of all this? Not in the Bible: not in a single text: and I know that your unaided reason cannot pry so deep as to see all this, in direct opposition to the word of God.

No motives acting on the mind before that causal influence which produces love, will cause love. To make religion appear the greatest good, there must first be a

change in the temper or affections. And that very appearance, if made to the whole mind, implies love; if made to the understanding only, it will not control the heart. No intellectual assent will make religion appear the greatest good to a mind of bad affections. No addresses of truth therefore to the understanding by God or man, will alone produce love. A heart that can reject the word of the eternal God, could not be won by the eloquence of any agent. "If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."* If the Spirit himself causes religion to appear the greatest good, he must first sanctify the heart.

But if light cannot convert sinners, why, you say, is it employed upon them? It is employed upon them to show the consistency and kindness of God in offering motives which they ought to use for their good. Light is necessary also to show them their obligations, guilt, ruin, and dependence for salvation. And this antecedent conviction, where regeneration ensues, will fill them with greater humility, love, and gratitude all their days. But on this point I have spoken so fully in the seventh of the Park-street Lectures, that I may hope to be excused from enlarging here.

To prove that no power is exerted upon us but motives, confident appeals are often made to our consciousness. But what does consciousness report? Here is a mind opposed to the truth. All at once it yields to

* Luke 16. 31.

the same truth, without intellectually discovering any thing new in it; only its affections are changed, and it feels that the truth is reasonable. All at once, without any new and pressing view of truths preceding, more than it has had for days, the heart is softened into love and acquiescence in the divine will. Can you prove from consciousness that nothing has been there but motives?

I know that the mind, so far as it is *consciously* influenced, is moved by reasons, or it would not act rationally. *To this precise influence* all agree to refer those texts which speak of the instrumentality of the word. There is no disagreement then about what the Scripture expressly declares on this point. It is admitted too on all hands that God is there represented as the Author of regeneration. On these two great points we are agreed. Every proposition which you claim to support by an explicit declaration of Scripture, we admit. But you go further. You undertake to explain the mode of divine operation by a theory of your own. You say, if God calls forth the exercises of the mind by motives presented to the intellect, he does not give dominion to motives by an influence on the heart. But the Bible says no such thing. This is an inference of your own. Against that inference I set the foregoing reasonings, and I fortify them by an appeal to numerous texts which declare that the divine operation is on the heart. "A new heart 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." "Thou also hast wrought all our works in us." "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts

by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." "Ye are—the epistle of Christ,—written, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart." "I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts."

If we would lay aside our systematic terms and our attempts to explain the mode of divine operation, and limit ourselves to the simple, intelligible facts, we should get nearer together. Our consciousness tells us that revealed truths are the objects towards which the mind acts, and are the reasons which influence our affections and volitions. This is all we know, and all that any of us, on either side, pretends that the Scriptures teach about the instrumentality of the word. And all we know of divine efficiency is, that God *wills* that the mind should see the truth, and it sees it; that the mind should feel the truth, and it feels it; that the mind should love the truth, and it loves it. We plead for nothing more. Can you look far enough into the secrets of nature to see that it is not so? Can you bring a single text to prove that it is not so? Even on your plan you must admit that God *wills* holiness in those who become holy; and you cannot pretend to prove from Scripture or even to conceive of any other instrumentality of truth than that it is the object of the affections and the reason in view of which the soul acts. The former is all we ask; the latter we fully admit. Why then should there be any dispute? It all grows out of your attempt to explain the mode of divine operation; that is, to theorize about the manner in which truth affects the natural susceptibility to motives; a point about

which you know nothing unless it is revealed; and no susceptibility is revealed which dispenses with divine efficiency. I know that the will which you ascribe to God is not efficient. That is the grand point of dispute, brought up out of the explanation of the mode. You have too a zeal for uncontrolled liberty: but what is uncontrolled liberty that is absolutely controlled by motives?

If, from a notion that it better comports with freedom, you still insist that the operation is on the head; what matter, I ask, if the influence absolutely controls, whether it is on the head or heart? whether it is *before* the mind, by motives thrown into its eye, or *behind* it, unseen and unfelt? You say, if the mind is controlled by motives it acts with perfect spontaneity; and so it does upon our plan. We know that we are willing, and therefore free, even if we are *made* willing in the day of God's power. But I throw the odds against you. That motives *adapted to the existing temper* should control the mind, accords, not only with our most familiar experience, but with all our notions of liberty. We are moved by the motives which please us. But a domination of motives that asks no leave of the disposition or desires, but encounters and destroys them all, is so new and anomalous a thing, that I know not what to say of its bearing upon liberty. We may suppose a case where motives so overwhelm the mind as almost to take away its freedom; as where a child, by horrid representations, is terrified into a hated measure. This is a case that may be; but the other is so unmanageable in thought, that I will not pronounce upon it further than to say, that it has no existence but in the dreams of imagination.

That in common matters God is able at pleasure to control the world by motives, I fully admit; because those motives are adapted to the governing temper or affections, and chiefly to self-love or the desire of happiness, which is inseparably interwoven with the nature of all things that have life. But even in common matters he cannot control the mind by motives opposed to the prevailing temper or affections; much less, by motives thus opposed, can he turn the carnal heart from sin to holiness.

One of the writers already quoted says, "The fact that the individual is averse to the truth, or to the course which the motive suggests, does not prove that the motive can exert no influence over his decisions and his conduct. Adam, in a state of holiness, was influenced by the motives which Satan presented.—Moral suasion often influences us to engage, with all our hearts, in undertakings to which at first we were utterly disinclined. Motive, repeatedly urged, often overcomes our reluctance. If we were already inclined to the course, the motive would be entirely useless." That temptation prevailed with Adam before God's influence was withdrawn, is an assumption often made by those who know that this is denied by the asserters of divine efficiency. When brought therefore against this doctrine, it is a mere begging of the question. And in regard to the other cases referred to, no one doubts that the judgment and choice are often changed by new truths presented; but the truths must offer an apparent good, and for this purpose must be adapted to the prevailing temper or affections. If they convince a man that a change of purpose is for his interest or for that of his friends, they are

adapted to self-love or social affection, (which are common to all;) and if not opposed by stronger motives, will prevail. If they convince a Christian that a change of purpose is a duty and will glorify God, they are adapted to his habitual temper, and unless counteracted by some temptation addressed to a sinful passion, will prevail. But divine truth can find in the unregenerate no affection to address but self-love inflamed into selfishness and enmity against God. And how can its appeals to self-interest persuade a man of such a temper to subject that interest to the glory of God? If it is the true character of God that is hated, the truth throws light on nothing but a hated object; and how can such an illumination persuade a selfish enemy to love God better than himself? Such an operation would be altogether different from that moral suasion, of every hour's occurrence, which, in ordinary matters, is effected by motives adapted to self-love and addressed to obvious interest.

I cannot dismiss this subject without expressing my high admiration of the point and power with which the duty and importance of immediate submission are urged upon the impenitent by some of our brethren on the other side. In this they are worthy of all imitation. And if they are ever to obtain any advantage over us in point of success and consequent intrenchment in the confidence of mankind, it will be exclusively owing to this. Why should not the followers of Calvin and Edwards and Brainerd wake up to this duty? The way is open for as urgent appeals on our plan as on theirs. We hold to a complete natural ability, the true basis of obligation. We know that God

commands immediate repentance. It is impossible to urge this duty upon sinners with too high a pressure, unless our language or manner countenances their native self-dependence. And we have as much encouragement as our brethren can have on their principles. Such is the coincidence between natural and supernatural operations, that what would prevail if there was no supernatural power, is most likely to prevail now. Would to God that all the orthodox would rise up to an importunity with sinners, not to be exceeded by either class who deny the efficiency of the eternal Spirit.

THE END.

