

HAND-BOOKS
FOR
BIBLE CLASSES
AND PRIVATE STUDENTS.

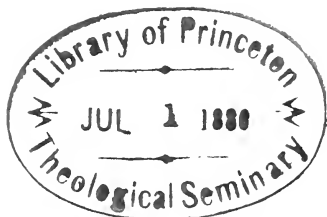
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THE SUM
OF
SAVING KNOWLEDGE
BY
Rev. John Macpherson. M.A.



EDINBURGH

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The sum of saving knowledge

HANDBOOKS

FOR

BIBLE CLASSES

AND PRIVATE STUDENTS.

EDITED BY

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THE SUM OF SAVING KNOWLEDGE.
BY REV. JOHN MACPHERSON, M.A.

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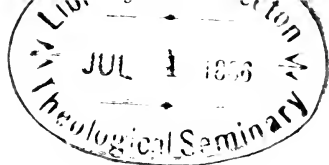
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THE
SUM OF SAVING KNOWLEDGE.

With Introduction and Notes,
BY
REV. JOHN MACPHERSON, M.A.,
FINDHORN.

EDINBURGH:
T. & T. CLARK, 38 GEORGE STREET.



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INTRODUCTION.



THE authorship of this short treatise on Christian doctrine, which is made the basis of the following notes, is ascribed to the celebrated Scottish divine, Mr. David Dickson. This able theologian and valiant defender of the faith was born in Glasgow in 1583. After passing through the regular course of study in Glasgow University, he was licensed, and in 1618 ordained as minister at Irvine. Sentenced four years later, because of his opposition to Episcopacy, and especially his bold denunciation of the erastianism of the attempt to impose any form of Church government against the will of the people, to deprivation of his ministerial charge and to exile to Turriff, in Aberdeenshire, he continued his useful labours, aided by the testimony of a good conscience. Returning in 1623, he resumed his labours in Irvine, and much blessing attended his ministry there. In 1641 he was appointed Professor of Divinity in the University of Glasgow, and about 1650 he was transferred to occupy a similar chair in Edinburgh. He continued to hold the Professorship of Divinity until his death in 1662. Thus for twenty-one years he was actively engaged in the systematic study of theology. He was a ripe theologian and a cultured scholar, according to the learning of his day. At the time when the Westminster Assembly met, in 1643, Dickson, along with David Calderwood and Alexander Henderson, drew up by command of the General Assembly that Directory of Public Worship which is bound up with the Westminster Confession and Catechisms among the Subordinate

Standards of the Church of Scotland. In this volume we also find the *Sum of Saving Knowledge*. In the Act and Declaration anent the publication of the Subordinate Standards of the Church of Scotland in 1851, in the enumeration of documents, this one is described as 'a practical application of the doctrine of the Confession,' as 'a valuable treatise which, though without any express Act of Assembly, has for ages had its place among them.' It is understood that Dickson and Durham consulted together in drawing up this summary. For those who may be somewhat doubtful as to the effect of strictly doctrinal summaries on the spiritual condition of our youth, it may be interesting to learn that M'Cheyne attributes his first clear perception of the way of salvation to the reading of this treatise. His diary of March 11, 1834, has this entry: 'Read in the *Sum of Saving Knowledge*, the work which I think first of all wrought a saving change in me.' [See *Scots Worthies* on David Dickson, edited by Mr. Carslaw; and editor's note on p. 294.]

The type of doctrine here presented is precisely the same as that set forth in the Westminster Confession. The editor has in his notes entered into detailed exposition of the earlier sections, where historical references are helpful; while in the later sections, which did not seem to call for such treatment, he has confined himself to short, and purely explanatory notes.

HEAD I.

OUR CONDITION BY NATURE.



§ 1. *The almighty and eternal God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, three distinct persons in one and the same undivided Godhead, equally infinite in all perfections, did, before time, most wisely decree, for his own glory, whatsoever cometh to pass in time; and doth most holily and infallibly execute all his decrees, without being partaker of the sin of any creature.*

Preliminary. — The subject brought before us in this first section is the doctrine of God, the mystery of the Godhead. Before proceeding to explain the doctrines expressly stated, it is necessary that we should glance at certain truths that are presupposed in the above statement. It is evidently assumed that God is, and that God is knowable.

Belief in God is the first indispensable condition of all religion. This must appear if we consider what religion is. To be religious is to be under a powerful sense of obligation, to be conscious and to make acknowledgment of certain relations which we bear to a higher Being. In worship we approach this Being with whom we have to do. This Being, other than ourselves and higher than ourselves, we call God. He who cometh unto God must believe that He is. No religious act, no act of worship is possible until

we have the conviction that there is One really existing to whom such acts are due from us, and who is able and willing to receive homage at our hands. In Christian countries, where the light of revelation has been shed abroad, almost all, even those who are but little under the influence of religious principle, make profession of belief in the existence of God. There cannot be even the form of religion, either in an individual life or in the life of a community, without the assumption that God is.

To say explicitly, There is no God, is pronounced to be folly not only by Scripture, but also by sceptical and critical philosophy. It is an assertion, and not a simple expression of ignorance or doubt. A declaration so positively made is *dogmatic Atheism*. To say, There is, or there may be, a God, but He is unknowable, is also to make a thoroughly *dogmatic* statement. The Agnostic may say that after careful search he has failed to discover God, and that so God remains to him unknown: he makes a very sweeping and reckless generalization, when he lays down the dogma that God is unknowable. Before we can affirm that God is unknowable,—not merely unknown, but such as cannot be known,—we must already have a knowledge not only that God is, but also a knowledge in some measure of what He is. Those who hold this doctrine as a theological belief (such as Dean Mansel) not only say, God is, but also, God is the Absolute or Infinite. This is a definition of God, but it is not the Christian idea of God. We say not that He is the Infinite in the abstract, but that He is infinite in all perfections. The Infinite in the abstract we cannot know; it—we do not say He—is unknowable. To identify God with this unknowable Infinite is irreligious. The only religious conception of God is that which regards Him as the infinitely Good, to whom our goodness does not reach, but out of whom our goodness springs. While thus we cannot *comprehend* His perfections, we *apprehend* both His being and His nature. If we seek Him, we shall find Him to be not far from any one of us.

The doctrine of the existence of God lies at the root of all

religion,—not only of revealed, but also of natural religion. Certain proofs of reason apart from revelation have been wrought out with great ingenuity in various forms. There are five principal methods of proving the divine existence,—the Cosmological, the Teleological, the Ontological, the Moral, and the Historical.

(a) The *Cosmological* argument starts from the contingency of the world. Nothing that we see is self-existent or independent. If there be nothing higher, no infinite as opposed to the finite existences around us, then we can only think of an endless succession of these things. The idea of the Infinite is absolutely necessary to supply a beginning.

(b) The *Teleological* argument starts from adaptations observed among finite existences and in their several parts. The fact of nice adjustment of parts in natural objects and of fitness in particular agents for the accomplishment of certain results, the evidence in the objects around us of adaptation between means and end, demands the assumption of a supreme Contriver as the author of this prearranged plan. This argument from *design* receives illustrations from all departments of science, and from investigations in the history of nature and man. The best and most apt illustration is that afforded by the growth of the vegetable and animal organisms, which from the first have in themselves the principle of all that is afterward evolved.

(c) The *Ontological* argument starts from the presence in our minds of an idea of God. Anselm (1033–1109) argues that God's existence follows from the very idea we have of Him. We think of Him as the greatest possible Being, and as such He must exist in the sphere of reality as well as in that of thought. According to Descartes, we have an idea of infinite perfection which must have its origin in an infinitely perfect One really existing.

(d) The *Moral* argument starts from the facts of the moral law and moral life, and holds that these necessarily imply the existence of a supremely holy, just, and true Lawgiver. This argument proceeds on lines similar to the ontological; as the idea of infinite perfection in man, who lives in a finite and imperfect world, implies the existence of One in whom such an idea is realized, so

the presence of moral ideas and a moral law in a society where such ideals are never reached, necessitates the assumption that a Being exists in whom the ideal moral standard is attained. (e) The *Historical* argument starts from the fact of the universal spread of religious belief. There is no well-authenticated instance of any utterly atheistic tribe. Various travellers have reported that among certain races no appearance of religion and worship was to be found : but in all such cases we discover on investigation either that the traveller had no opportunity or time for a satisfactory inquiry, or that low forms of religion were disregarded and a higher manifestation of religious sentiment looked for than could reasonably be expected.—Not one of these five proofs, viewed by itself, can be regarded as satisfactory or convincing. Their force is cumulative. The inability to rest in mere finitude, evidence of design which no theory but that of an all-wise Contriver can account for, the actual presence of an idea in man's mind of an infinite cause for finite things, the existence of a moral standard above any empirical attainment in this world, and finally the apparently universal belief among the races of mankind in a superhuman Being,—these together constitute a proof as strong as the nature of the subject will admit. These are precisely the kind of proofs to which Scripture makes appeal in addressing the reason and natural conscience of men. The creation,—the world of finite things from which the Cosmological argument starts,—shows forth the glory of God (Ps. xix. xxix. civ.) ; and especially man, insignificant in himself, yet great in his destiny (Ps. viii. 5, 6),—an argument along the lines of the Teleological proof,—witnesses to the existence of an all-wise God. According to the teaching of the New Testament, there can be no true conception of nature and of human life apart from the assumption of the divine existence. Thus nature teaches the being of God : Rom. i. 19, 20 ; Acts xiv. 17. Then the Moral proof is recognised in the assertion that man as a natural being has the law of God written in his heart : Rom. ii. 14. Scripture, however, regards the witness of the divine Spirit in the spirit of the child of God as the principal

and most satisfactory proof of the divine existence : Rom. viii. 16 ; Gal. iv. 6 ; Eph. i. 14.

Starting, then, with these assumptions that God is, and that God can be known, the first section of this Summary treats of the Mystery of the Godhead. We have first of all, *The Mystery of God's Being*—three Persons, but One undivided Deity. We have secondly, *The Mystery of God's Will*,—decreeing and determining in eternity all that takes place in time. And we have thirdly, *The Mystery of God's Holiness*,—carrying out His decrees, yet not partaking in the sin of any creature.

I. The Mystery of God's Being. — *The almighty and eternal God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, three distinct persons in one and the same undivided Godhead, equally infinite in all His perfections.* (a) The God in whom the Christian believes is described first of all as a *Person*. In much of our popular literature there is a tendency to indulge in a dreamy vague style of talk regarding the divine in nature and in man. There is a sense in which such statements are strictly true. Nature is divine,—earth and sea and sky—because the hand that made them is divine. And if we study the wonders and beauties by which we are surrounded in the world in a reverent spirit, recognising in them the wonderful works of God the Creator, nothing will be more helpful to us in illustrating the truths concerning God told us in His holy word. The Bible is full of references to the displays of God's glory in the works which He has made. But this is the very opposite of that which those do who, while they study nature, never seek to rise to nature's God. Those who either deny or ignore the existence of a spiritual or super-sensuous world are called *Materialists*. But there are others who speak of God and spirit, finding these, however, only in nature. Nature is their God. Those who think and write in this way are called *Pantheists*, which means that they profess to find God in everything, and that they do not believe that God has any separate existence in and by himself. They do not believe

that God was before all things, and that by Him all things were made. But this is what every Christian does believe. In modern scientific theology the distinction referred to is indicated by the use of the terms *immanence* and *transcendence*. The Pantheist thinks of God as immanent, present in nature and only thus existent. Others again, among whom may be reckoned many of the English deists of last century, think of God as transcendent, outside of and not present in His creation. The Christian view recognises at once the immanence and the transcendence of God. God is in every place and in every thing, but before there was any place or any thing, from everlasting to everlasting He is God. The Creator is distinct from His creation. He is a *Person*, not a mere force, or influence, or power.

(b) This divine Person is *equally infinite in all perfections*. Described in the Bible as a person, God is necessarily represented as thinking, feeling, and willing. But we must not suppose that, in the exercise of these personal attributes, He is like one of ourselves. In Him all these personal properties are present in just proportion and in relation to one another,—nothing in excess and nothing in defect. What we distinguish in the characters of men as qualities of the head and qualities of the heart are in them disproportionately developed, but in God they are perfectly balanced. He is *equally* infinite in all perfections, for one does not encroach upon and so render imperfect any of the others. Here arise many popular misconceptions of God. Some regard Him from the intellectual point of view only. They picture Him as Righteousness, the God of Judgment, cold and unattractive, because the qualities of the heart are left out. Righteousness,—or what they conceive to be righteousness, which is something very different from the Bible idea of righteousness,—is magnified at the expense of Grace. Others view God under the emotional aspect only. They picture Him as Goodness, as the God of Grace in whom is no severity, but the representation is one of weakness, where the qualities of the head are left out. If God's goodness is described in terms which lead to the notion of such weak fondness

as allows Him to disregard His own holy law and never mind though it be broken, there is evidently given an encouragement and licence to sin. The Christian doctrine of the divine attributes is not open to the charge either of Stoical or of Epicurean excess. The Christian's God is a Just God and a Saviour : His perfections are *equally* infinite.

(c) There can be but one such God : *the almighty and eternal God*. The gods of heathenism were not regarded as equally infinite in all perfections ; rather each leading perfection was personified in the life and character of one particular deity. Hence arises the Polytheism of heathen religions. The ancient Eranians in Media and Persia, springing from an old Indian stock, made a new departure in religion. Starting evidently from a primitive Monotheistic tradition, of which faint traces remain in the oldest Vedic literature, they stumbled over the seeming contradiction of blessing and cursing, good and evil coming from the one Supreme Being, and so their Magi devised a *Dualistic* religion, recognising two supreme and eternal divine principles, which manifested themselves in the form of good and evil spirits. Zoroaster's own doctrine admitted only one supreme creator from whom both good and evil proceeded. The popular Parsee doctrine is dualistic, naming the good spirit Ormazd and the evil spirit Ahriman. Among historical religions the first that is consistently in principle and development Monotheistic is the religion of Israel. The unity of God was the central doctrine of the Old Testament (Deut. vi. 4). This truth, as there set forth, springs directly from the doctrine of the absolute perfection of God. Jehovah is thus contrasted with the gods many and lords many of heathenism. Their power and jurisdiction were limited:— Gods of the hills, of the valleys, of the sea, of the winds. They were distinguished as male and female, partly to express the inability of their worshippers to combine perfectly in one being the ideas of power and grace, firmness and tenderness. Now if this heathen notion had been true, the worshipper would be in constant danger. Seeking protection from one deity, he might

arouse the enmity of another. Or through ignorance, he might go to one for that which another alone could give. It is for us a glorious and blessed doctrine that there is but one God, in whom all grace and power are centred. If there had been many there would have been uncertainty: because there is but one, there is confidence. What He is once He is for ever. He changes not, therefore the children of men are not consumed.

(d) This one God exists and reveals Himself under three personal forms. *The almighty and eternal God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, three distinct persons in one and the same undivided Godhead.* This mysterious doctrine is clearly a revelation of Scripture. As one might expect, there is no special passage in which it is expressly announced. It is not according to God's manner of revealing truth to state the full doctrine in the form of a proposition. The Bible gives us in history, and prophecy, and the record of human experience, the materials out of which exact doctrinal propositions may be constructed. No other doctrine of God than the Trinitarian fits in with the various representations of God throughout the Scriptures. Not resting on any one text, but taking one with another, the following may be mentioned as affording Scripture proof for the doctrine of the Trinity:—Matt. iii. 13–17; Matt. xxviii. 19; 2 Cor. xiii. 14 (cf. Num. vi. 24–26); John xiv. 11–20; John xv. 26. This, then, is a doctrine of faith. We cannot say that it is contrary to reason, for it is certainly above reason. It comes to us and can only come from immediate revelation.

There are two ways in which we may view and state this doctrine of three persons in the one Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. We speak of the *essential* and of the *æconomic* Trinity. By the *essential* Trinity we mean the doctrine that before creation and apart from redemption, there are still three divine persons. There was no time when either the Son or the Spirit was not. To each person the name is equally due—*the almighty and eternal God.* The Arians thought that the Son was created before the world, the first-begotten Son of God,

the Creator of the world, but not eternal. The Council of Nicæa (A.D. 325) condemned this heresy, and declared it to be the true doctrine that the Son is of the substance of the Father, very God of very God, begotten, not made. By the *æconomic* Trinity we mean the doctrine that each person of the Godhead is specially prominent in different parts or economies of the work of man's redemption. The Father plans and sends, the Son comes and suffers and leaves us an example, the Spirit descends and applies Christ's work and sanctifies. These two ways of stating the doctrine of the Trinity are true together, not apart from one another. It is the heresy of *Sabellianism* that it confounds the persons with the essence, and that, in the endeavour to avoid *Tritheism* (a doctrine of three Gods), it falls into the error of denying the separate and distinct personality of Father, Son, and Spirit. Sabellians in ancient and modern times have always professed to be Trinitarians. It is, however, the doctrine of the *æconomic* Trinity which they hold, while they deny that of the *essential* Trinity. They represent the One divine person as appearing in certain operations of Creation, Redemption, and Grace, as Father, Son, and Spirit. Our doctrine maintains unity of essence and trinity of persons in the Godhead.

II. The Mystery of God's Will. — *The almighty and eternal God . . . did, before time, most wisely decree, for his own glory, whatsoever cometh to pass in time.* This is the doctrine of the decrees of God. To say that before all time God wisely decreed is only another way of saying that the eternal God had a plan for His work. Every thought and purpose of the eternal God must be eternal, must be before time. The thing which is thought of and purposed does not exist in eternity. It has yet to come into existence in time. But that it is to exist, and the manner of its existence, have been determined before time by God. When this doctrine, as the doctrine of the divine sovereignty, is applied to the lives and doings of rational and responsible creatures such as man, there is another truth of God's word, the doctrine of

man's freedom, that must also be kept in remembrance. God decrees in eternity not only that man is to be, but also that he is to be free to choose. His eternal decree regarding the individual likewise takes into account that individual's liberty of will. The following sentence from Martensen's *Dogmatics* (p. 169) should be carefully studied: 'It is not only a decree determined from eternity, but it is also determinable by the freedom of the creature; it is not a perfected decree, concluded already for all time, but one continually coming into existence, and being realized.' For the Scripture statement of the doctrine see Eph. i. 11; Acts iv. 23. This latter passage illustrates the harmony of man's free responsible action and God's absolute sovereignty in His eternal decree.

The *range* of this decree is necessarily universal. Both the attributes of God referred to—*almighty* and *eternal*—involve the application of His decree to everything that comes to pass. On the part of men many things happen unexpectedly. It can never be so with God. Nothing can happen without His knowledge and will, and as His attributes of knowledge and will are eternal, and His decree gives expression to these, this decree cannot relate to some things only, but to all things. His decree is before time, for it embraces the resolve to make a beginning of time. There is no time but only eternity until there are created finite things by which time can be measured. God's creating marks a beginning. Now the eternal decree of God, made before this beginning, embraces everything that comes to pass from that beginning up to the very end.

This decree again has a *moral* character: it is *most wise*. The wisdom that characterizes this decree cannot be fully understood or appreciated by one whose standpoint is time and not eternity. It is as an eternal decree that it is most wise. It is often misunderstood by creatures who, having finite minds, and being able to view only little portions of time, cannot see how it stands in relation to eternity. Part of the divine counsels is published and known. All this is seen to be most wise, and in regard to

the unrevealed and as yet unknown part of the divine counsels, we must consider that as the decree of the ever wise God it is in thorough harmony with all that is revealed. So Paul celebrates the wisdom and knowledge of those judgments and ways that are unsearchable and past finding out (Rom. xi. 33).

The *end or aim* of the divine decree is *God's own glory*. For any creature to resolve and plan simply for his own glory would be immoral. Self-love, self-seeking, self-aggrandizement, where self is finite, implies a disregard of other finite beings. To every creature, to every finite being, the admonition of the Apostle applies: 'He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.' Again, we must be careful in forming our conception of God, before assigning to Him this attribute. The Pantheist says that God aims at and realizes His own glory, but this is reached by crushing or ignoring the individual life and wellbeing. The Jesuits sought sanction for their inhuman and immoral procedure, by assigning as the end of all 'the greater glory of God;' but their God was not the God of righteousness and love. The God who can make His own glory the end and purpose of all His designs and doings, and can claim at the same time the approbation of His intelligent creatures, must be infinite in all perfections and most wise. In human systems of theology and of religious philosophy there has been a tendency to run to one or other extreme. Systems which lay special stress on the divine sovereignty have too often overlooked the love and tenderness of the divine character: the error to which such views tend is *Fatalism*. Systems, on the other hand, which lay special stress upon man's happiness and wellbeing, urging false views of human liberty, overlook the claims of the divine righteousness and sovereignty: the error to which such views tend is *Antinomian licence*. God has Himself shown what *His own glory is*. Christ is the brightness of the Father's glory (Heb. i. 3); Christ's glory is full of grace and truth (John i. 14); those who trust in Christ contribute to the praise of God's glory (Eph. i. 12), because they are brought together into one in Christ (Eph. i. 10).

Thus it appears that Christ is the manifestation of God's glory, and all who are in Him contribute to God's glory ; and hence when God sets His own glory as the end of all His designs and works, the realization of this glory, which is full of grace, embraces as its most characteristic feature the salvation and wellbeing of mankind.

III. The Mystery of God's Holiness.—*The almighty and eternal God . . . doth most holily and infallibly execute all his decrees, without being partaker of the sin of any creature.* It is of the *Almighty* God that we are speaking. Hence what He wills He can accomplish ; what He is pleased to decree He can execute. But further, as the *Eternal* God He is *unchangeable*, and consequently, He will infallibly execute what He decrees. When anything is made a subject of the divine decree, its execution is ensured. If this were not so, God would not be unchangeable. Now God is unchangeable, because He is *Almighty and All-wise*. There is no need of change, because, on the one hand, there is no want of power to carry out, and on the other hand, there is no call for correcting and improving, what was purposed. The All-wise and Almighty God changes not, and so what He decrees is *infallibly* executed.

But further, when rightly understood, perfect wisdom implies Holiness. In God's language regarding man, folly and sin, wisdom and holiness, are identified. God's decree, as the result of perfect wisdom, does not need to be repented of. It is executed holily. There is no contradiction between that which is executed in accordance with the divine decree and God's own holy nature.

But just here one of the most puzzling questions in theology makes its appearance, to crop up again and again under almost every subsequent division. How may we describe the origin of evil so as to avoid representing it as something for which God is responsible ? When it is said that God is not partaker in the sin of any creature, we start with the assumption that any theory

that requires or allows the notion that God is the author of sin, is thereby shown to be false. Sometimes theologians have expressed themselves incautiously so as to give some excuse to their adversaries for the reproach that they make God the author of sin. Several of the old Church Fathers, notably Augustine, carried away by their desire to glorify the cross of Christ and to praise the riches of divine grace shown in redemption, used extravagant language, and spoke of sin as a *happy fault* inasmuch as it was the occasion of so glorious a salvation. Closely allied to this—though the connection, perhaps, was not generally perceived—is the theory called *Supralapsarianism*, according to which man's fall into sin *for the manifestation of God's grace and glory in redemption*, formed part of the divine decree. Bellarmine (1542–1621) was extremely anxious to fasten upon Luther (1483–1546), Calvin (1509–1564), and the Protestant divines generally, the charge of making God the author of sin. Now it was evidently not the intention of Supralapsarians to teach any such doctrine. They abhorred and repudiated it. Still it seems as if their theory when logically carried out involved this dreadful result, and this forms the best refutation of their theory. The leading divines of the Reformation, certainly those of the sixteenth century, held no such doctrine, nor do orthodox theologians of the present day. There is a distinction that ought to be carefully made between the *foreknowledge* and the *decree* of God. The divine foreknowledge is much wider, more comprehensive than the divine decree. When we say that anything has been decreed by God, we mean that He has actually willed it. All that He wills He must have foreknown; but it does not follow that He wills all that He foreknows. But, it may be asked, does not such a statement imply that something happens or may happen against God's will? What He foreknows as something that is to take place, although He does not will it, cannot will it, seems a contradiction to His Almightyness and Eternity. When put in this way, it seems as if God were not supreme. Can we say without profanity: Something happens against God's will?

To answer this we must consider what God did in executing His decree. He created the world, and He created angels and men. We have to speak in detail of creation further on. Here we note the fact that God decreed to call into being creatures endowed with reason and will—intelligent and moral creatures. What then the divine decree is responsible for, is the calling of such creatures into being. God has decreed that creatures should exist possessed of the power of saying whether they will do any particular thing or not. It was God's decree to people His world with beings who should be capable, not merely of mechanical, but of moral, action. Obedience in a creature who *could* do nothing else than obey, would be nothing better than the indication of time by a correctly made and well regulated watch. God executed His decree, and made moral and responsible creatures,—man endowed with free will, the power of choosing for himself. With this arose the possibility of disobedience, that is, sin. The possibility of sin, then, was a result of the divine decree, according to which man—a moral agent—was created; the committing of sin on the part of the creature, though necessarily foreknown by God, had no place in His decree. Any attempt to illustrate a profound truth like this is dangerous, and cannot, from the very nature of the case, be perfectly applicable. Upon the whole, however, the matter is well put by Archbishop Ussher. 'God,' He says, 'is the author of every action, as it is a mere action, but the devil and our concupiscence are the authors of the evil in it; as he that rideth upon a lame horse causeth him to stir, but is not the cause of his halting.' This only, says the preacher, have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.

§ II. *This God, in six days, made all things of nothing, very good in their own kind: in special, he made all the angels holy; and he made our first parents, Adam and Eve, the root of mankind, both upright and able to keep the law written in their heart. Which law they were naturally bound to obey under pain of death; but God was not bound to reward their service, till he entered into a covenant or contract with them, and their posterity in them, to give them eternal life, upon condition of perfect personal obedience; withal threatening death in case they should fail. This is the covenant of works.*

In this section we have the doctrine of creation set forth,—the creation of the world, of angels, and of man,—and then the story of the covenant made with man immediately upon his creation.

I. The Creation of the World.—‘*This God, in six days, made all things of nothing, very good in their own kind.*’

In regard to the universe of the world and man, this short statement supplies us with four particulars. (1) The Creator—this God: (2) the period of the creative operations—six days: (3) the absoluteness of the beginning in creation—all made of nothing: and (4) the quality of the creation in all its parts—all very good.

(1.) **The Creator.**—*This God made all things.* The author of creation is here indicated with admirable precision: *this God.* The reference clearly is to the preceding section, which speaks of the Almighty and Eternal God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The three-one God is creator of the universe. Scripture enables us to assign special parts to each of the three divine persons in the work of creation. John and Paul speak of the world as made by Christ (John i. 3, 10; Col. i. 16). So, too, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (ch. i. 2) speaks of Christ as the Son by whom God made the worlds. These passages do not entitle us to speak of the Second Person of the Godhead as

the creator. It should be observed that in all these passages, the object which the writers have in view is to prove the dignity of Christ the Son. God assigns Him a place which none could fill who was not equal to God. The work of creation was a work of the Godhead : Christ is God, and, as a divine person, had a direct efficiency in the work of creation. When, however, creation is referred to apart from the argument for the divinity of Christ, it is directly spoken of as the work of the Father, as in some sense the first in order of the divine persons.

The statement before us may be regarded as a declaration that the world was the work of the supreme God. Some early Christian teachers were infected with speculative error, which they had inherited from pagan philosophy. Taught to look upon matter and the world generally as necessarily tainted with evil, they hesitated to attribute creation to God. They did not see how they could affirm that God was not the author of sin, if they admitted that He was the creator of the finite world. Hence the Gnostic teachers (that is, knowing ones, who professed to have knowledge of profound mysteries) produced out of their own imaginations an inferior sort of deity, whom they called the *Demiurge*, the craftsman or artificer. The theory that absolutely separates between matter and spirit is *Manichæism*. It is called a *dualistic* theory because it recognises two original principles. Of these, the one is good, and originates all that is good ; the other is bad, and originates all that is bad. Whatever is finite and material is considered to issue from the bad principle. In all the sects and denominations of Gnosticism,—and these were very numerous,—there was more or less of a Manichæan element, a tendency to assign the origin of matter and finite being to some other power than the good and supreme God. One of these Gnostics was Marcion (who lived early in the second century), and he maintained the curious notion that the God of the Old Testament was inferior to the God of the New Testament, who is the Father of Jesus Christ, and that this inferior Old Testament God was the Creator. Scripture, on the contrary, claims for God—the one

living and true God—the origination of all that exists. ‘I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things’ (Isa. xlv. 7).

The truth that is here specially emphasized is that of an immediate creation by a personal God, as distinguished from an infinite series of processes. This latter view is really equivalent to a belief in the eternity of matter. Pagan philosophy never really transcended this point of view. Though Plato declines to call matter eternal, he nevertheless fails to reach any distinct idea of its creation in time. When we come down to the Christian era, we find opposing systems of pagan philosophy, and those strange blendings of that philosophy with certain elements of Christian truth, which is called Gnosticism, still carefully avoiding the idea of creation. There is a strange mixture here of *pantheistic* and *materialistic* views. Things that appear as emanations or new forms of things that were before. It is curious to see how, under the name of modern science, these old attempts to evade the idea of creation by a personal God are, under various forms, revived. German materialists like Buchner and Hæckel boldly deny creation. As, according to them, there is nothing but matter, they quite consistently regard matter as eternal, and affirm spontaneous evolution of one form of being from another. Such thoroughgoing materialists are avowed atheists. It is not so with Darwin and English Darwinians. They trace back the present varieties in the organic world to a few primary forms. But whether they actually postulate a personal self-conscious deity as the creator of these primary forms or not, they certainly do not maintain the doctrine of the eternity of matter. Besides, they admit that there is no proof of spontaneous generation, no case known of a living organism (however low) originating from something without life. Hence the evolutionist has not been able to avoid a break in the continuity when the lowest form of life is reached. There is a gulf between the organic and inorganic kingdoms. The evolutionist that acknowledges this leaves the lowest member of the organic kingdom, as well as the simplest

element or elements in the inorganic kingdom, unaccounted for, except on a hypothesis equivalent to that of creation. The evolutionist who maintains his belief in a personal God, and so remains untainted by materialistic or pantheistic tendencies of thought, will always clearly distinguish evolution from creation. It is upon created things—whether these be many or comparatively few—that his evolution theory must operate. Science must decide whether this sort of evolution is such a theory as accounts for discovered scientific facts. Scripture has nothing to say about it good or bad, but simply affirms the antecedent truth that the Almighty and Eternal God is the creator of all things.

(2.) **The Period of the Creative Operations.**—*This God, in six days, made all things.* This statement has been objected to by certain men of science, and regarded by timid believers with considerable misgivings. There are several different ways in which this account of Genesis has been interpreted. (a) The six days of the Mosaic narrative have been understood by many to mean six literal days. In support of this view, the account of the institution of the Sabbath, as a period immediately following creation, is supposed to imply that the day which designates its duration must be the same as the days which mark the various stages of creation. If the seventh day be a day of twenty-four hours, so also must each of the other six. (b) The use of the expression day in the primitive record was understood by some as a merely figurative way of describing the manifoldness of creation, which yet was the simultaneous and instantaneous work of the divine Creator. This was the prevalent view of early and mediæval times. All the great Fathers and Schoolmen maintained that successive production was an idea unworthy of God. (c) Then again, many, influenced by comparatively recent geological discoveries, have supposed that the Mosaic days indicated indefinitely long periods. This last theory has, perhaps, been most generally accepted, but it has the difficulty of the seventh day Sabbath to overcome. (d) Another view of this whole subject is presented by Dr. Dods in his *Hand-*

book on Genesis, in the present series. See especially, *Introd.* pp. xvii.-xxi.

What has been called the *Vision hypothesis* seems most successfully to avoid difficulties, while answering the requirements of an honest exegesis of the Scripture statements. A series of pictures are presented before the writer of *Genesis*; each represents a distinct scene; and the order of their representation accurately sets forth the order of succession in the production of the divine works. Modern science is in thorough agreement with Moses as to the order in which the various forms of being made their appearance. That there should be light sufficient for vegetable life before the sun, was at one time thought a fatal objection to the Mosaic account. Light appears on the first day; the sun, as ruling and central influence in our system, on the fourth. Science now shows that light, as the vibration of the ether, is independent of the sun, that the sun really presupposes the existence of light. It is curious to notice that in the creation narrative of the *Zendavesta* (the sacred book of the Parsees), the creation of the sun is put before that of light, apparently intended as a correction. Further, science shows that the earliest strata were deposited in water, which presupposes the state of matters described as existing during the second day: then the vegetable productions of the third, and the two separate developments of animal life of the fifth and sixth days (of which the sunlight and heat called forth on the fourth day are conditions), are represented in the succession required by science. The six pictures, then, set forth the actual succession in God's creative working, while it leaves the question of the duration of these successive operations to be discovered and determined by scientific research.

(3.) **The Absoluteness of the Beginning made in Creation.**—*This God made all things of nothing.* The substance of this statement has been already discussed. The material universe is not eternal. This world was not formed out of the wreck of former worlds; but by faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the

word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things that do appear (Heb. xi. 3). According to the Mosaic account, the formless mass, which we call chaos, out of which God produced the orderly universe (the *cosmos*), was itself the creation of God. It is said that the earth was without form, but even of this earth it is said God created it. It is not only said that it was formless, but also that it was empty: new beings had to be made to people it. Scripture tells us nothing about the first calling into existence of this chaos; but, as each successive operation upon it is attributed to the powerful action of the divine word as expressing the divine will, we must assign the origination of the formless mass to the same influence. It is evidently in regard to this chaos that it is affirmed that God made it of nothing. This chaos is absolutely primeval.

The expression 'made of nothing,' though it accurately states a biblical doctrine, is not itself a biblical phrase. The Apostles, indeed, speak of God as calling those things that be not as though they were (Rom. iv. 17), and making things that are seen of things that do not appear (Heb. xi. 3). But these statements are not so explicit as the one before us, and are to be viewed rather as general declarations of God's unlimited power. In an apocryphal book, written somewhere between the years 100 B.C. and 50 B.C., the words are used by the mother who exhorts her son to constancy under torture, 'Look upon the heaven, and the earth, and all that is therein, and consider that God *made them of things that were not*' (2 Macc. vii. 28). The Vulgate renders this phrase by the Latin word *ex nihilo*, out of nothing. The contrary view, that nothing can come from nothing (familiarily known under the equivalent Latin phrase, *ex nihilo nihil fit*), was maintained by Epicurus (B.C. 341-270), and it is curious to observe that the philosopher was driven to this opinion, because no one could satisfy him as to the origin of that chaos of which the ancient Greek poets had sung. Though the exact phrase before us is not found in Scripture, the doctrine that God created the world out of nothing is strictly scriptural. No other theory satisfies the pre-

suppositions and the fundamental point of view of the Bible. The Scripture doctrine of the divine perfections requires us to maintain that nothing outside of God has necessary, and therefore eternal, being.

(4.) **The Quality of the Creation in all its Parts.**—*This God made all things very good in their kind.* This is plainly the doctrine of the Old and the New Testaments. The record of each day's work in Genesis is closed by the declaration that it was found to be very good. Paul (1 Tim. iv. 4) says every creature of God (or rather everything made by God) is good. Thus Scripture everywhere (as in Deut. xxxii. 4) declares God's work perfect. At the same time, the biblical view of creation indicates certain restrictions and limitations which show that absolute perfection was not claimed for the original work of the Creator. Perfection was the goal which could be reached only by overcoming those restrictions and limitations in a legitimate way. All things were very good *in their kind.*

There are two contrasted philosophical theories which endeavour to account for the world as it is. Optimism, with which the name of Leibnitz (1646-1716) is commonly associated, says of the world that it is the best of all possible worlds. This we could maintain only if prepared to regard sin as something desirable, or at least indispensable for the ultimate attainment of a higher good. Pessimism, with which is usually joined the name of Schopenhauer (1788-1860), maintains that this world is the worst of all possible worlds, and that had it been worse, it could not have secured existence. Hartmann, again, says that it is the best of possible worlds, but it is not good, and it would have been better had there been none. As a consequence of the prevalence of pessimist views, the question has been much agitated of late, whether life be worth living.

In contrast to these extreme and intemperate statements, the one given above commends itself for its sobriety. There is nothing originally made evil. All parts of creation, however, have not the same office or rank, and are therefore not equally developed and

endowed. Each in its kind, like the members of the body in their several offices, is very good.

II. The Creation of Angels.—*In special, this God made all the angels holy.*

This is a point on which Scripture says little. Nowhere, indeed, have we any account of the creation of angels. Throughout the Old and the New Testaments, however, there are constantly recurring references to angelic beings and their operations. They are represented, as their name indicates, as the messengers of God. As the Bible is the revelation of God's relations to man, wherever mention is made of angels in the Scripture history, they are found to be bearers of messages from God to man, or agents for God acting in the affairs of men. The earlier references to the angelic order in Genesis are indefinite. Then in a large number of passages in which allusions to angels are made the language is evidently highly poetic. In other Old Testament passages the angel seems to be the Son of God Himself anticipating His incarnate work. The remaining references in earlier Hebrew literature are sufficient to show the existence of angels as God's messengers, but give us scarcely any further information. It is only when we come to a late book like Daniel (written probably about B.C. 530) that we find particular angels named, and accounts given of their doings as individuals. We read of Gabriel (Dan. ix. 16, x. 21) as God's messenger sent to comfort and strengthen His servant. We read, also, of Michael (Dan. x. 13, xii. 1), the great prince, whose office it is to oppose and restrain the enemies of the saints. In the same attitude Michael reappears in a curious passage in the New Testament (Jude 9). In the New Testament history angels play important parts, and especially in the course of our Saviour's life. The personality of those ministering spirits is everywhere assumed. And they are holy—faithful in service and loving in their obedience.

On the other hand, they are represented as beings capable of moral and spiritual development. Paul speaks of them (Eph. iii.

10) as coming to a knowledge of the divine wisdom which they had not before by means of the historical redemption ; and Peter describes the angels as possessed of a desire to look into those things made known to man in the gospel (1 Pet. i. 12). Capacity for such development is proof of creaturely and dependent being. Besides, this view of the angel-nature as one capable of moral development allows us, or even requires us, to assume a testing experience similar to that through which man passed. The intense devotion of the holy angels can be best accounted for on the hypothesis that they had deliberately refused to render unto the creature—that is, to lavish upon self—what was due to the Creator. With a view to the realization of such holiness they were created, and their actions show that they have reached the end of their being.

III. The Creation of Man.—*This God made our first parents, Adam and Eve, the root of mankind, both upright and able to keep the law written in their hearts.*

(1.) Here we notice, first of all, that Scripture recognises and requires the hypothesis of the unity of the human race. Adam and Eve are made the *root of mankind*. The narrative of Genesis certainly leaves the impression that what is told is intended to afford an account of the first appearance of man on the earth. We should find it difficult to reconcile the Mosaic story of man's creation with the idea that there had been earlier races of men than that beginning with Adam, or that, in different parts of the world, other human pairs had been placed coeval with Adam and Eve. Yet this unscriptural view of the plurality of the human race, in both of these forms, has been held. In 1655, a French writer, de la Peyrere (Pererius), founding upon early traditions and speculations, set forth the curious doctrine that other races of men had lived on the earth before Adam, and that these were the progenitors of various existing races ; but that Adam is alone mentioned in Scripture, because he was the progenitor of the Jews. These ancestors of the other races were called Pre-Adamites.

The opinion that the races of mankind sprang from several quite distinct and separate stocks, whether these originated earlier than or coeval with Adam, was eagerly insisted upon by those interested in maintaining the institution of negro slavery. It was thus that many endeavoured to excuse their subjection and degradation of the coloured races. The negro was, according to their view, a member of a race physically, morally, and spiritually inferior to that of those whom he served. In creation there was set before him another destiny, and no system of education or civilizing processes ever could or should be expected to qualify him for discharging the functions of the white population. This theory, and not that of the tenacity of a father's curse (that of Noah against Ham and Canaan), could alone supply anything like a feasible argument in favour of slavery. This same notion of plurality in the origin of the human race was subsequently taken up by men of science, who supposed that human remains, or at least signs of the presence of man, had been discovered in formations, which were proved to be long anterior to the creation of Adam. But this idea of the human race having sprung from several centres rather than one is now generally discredited as a scientific hypothesis. The Darwinian theory of development insists upon a single progenitor for all the varieties of mankind, and refuses to see in these varieties separate species owing their origin to differently constituted ancestors.

The natural interpretation of the record of Genesis is borne out by subsequent parts of divine revelation. Paul declares, in opposition to pagan theories that separate the interests of the various nationalities, that all the nations are of one (Acts xvii. 26), and he can explain the universality of sin only on the hypothesis of one human centre through which it entered into the world (Rom. v. 12). There is thus a moral and a theological interest in the question as to the unity of the human race. Christian ethics bases its doctrine of the brotherhood of man and the obligation of man's love to man on the fact of their common parentage. With the Latin poet the Christian says, 'I am a

man, nothing that concerns man can be no concern of mine.' Christianity traced the common parentage back to God Himself, but it did so through the one human ancestor. Then chiefly, this doctrine is of interest theologically as an essential presupposition of the Christian doctrines of sin and redemption. If our first parents, Adam and Eve, be viewed as the ancestors of the whole race of men, then, and only then, can they be regarded as the root of mankind. The oneness of the human race in respect of sin and of redemption (often now spoken of as the *solidarity* of the race) is the central postulate of the theology of the Apostle Paul.

(2.) We have, in the next place, a statement regarding man's original condition:—*This God made our first parents both upright and able to keep the law written in their hearts; which law they were naturally bound to obey under pain of death.* The uprightness describes the original condition; ability to keep the law is the result of that condition; and the appearance of death is contingent upon the breaking of that law.

(a) God hath made man *upright* (Eccles. vii. 29). The term used indicates that man's will was originally *straight* in reference to the divine law. God's idea was realized in him. He was in his beginning what God intended that in his beginning he should be. Man did not occupy a position of indifference toward good and evil, but had his place within the range of the good. Pelagians and Rationalists, who make as little as possible of human sin, represent primitive man as not yet moral, and so in equilibrium between good and evil. The original bias of the will was, however, toward good, and this gave to our first parents a signal advantage. They were not only experiencing, but also exercising the love of God, and to them God said, 'Continue ye in my love.' Man's original righteousness may be regarded as a phrase more or less equivalent to the divine image in man, and corresponding to the state described as upright. In describing this original state of man two different terms are used (Gen. i. 26), image and likeness. These have been commonly regarded as synonymous

expressions. Augustine, however, following earlier Fathers, and followed by Roman Catholic theologians and several Protestant divines, distinguished these: the *image of God* designates those natural endowments which are never wholly lost to men; *the likeness of God* indicates those higher spiritual qualities which were lost by the fall. The divine image is not lost by the fall: for in Gen. ix. this is given as a reason why he who sheds man's blood must be capitally punished—that men were created in the image of God. If this attribute of the first man did not apply to his descendants, there would be no argumentative force in the statement. There is a decided advantage in appropriating terms like image and likeness to indicate respectively, what is continued, and what is lost, of the original endowments of men. Human personality, which consists in consciousness (of God, the world, and self) and self-determination, is not lost. Original righteousness is lost, which embraced sufficient knowledge of God, and conformity in will and feeling to the will of God. The original words, however, do not imply any such distinction. What both together describe is a conformity that is perfect. On the spiritual side, there is maturity and strength of understanding (Gen. ii. 19; Col. iii. 10), and of will (Eph. iv. 24). On the sentient and bodily side there is freedom from suffering and death. As a consequence of the possession of such natural and spiritual endowments, there is granted to man dominion over the other creatures. Man thus endowed is upright, and he is straight as concerns God's holy law, as concerns what is good—if his attitude toward the good changes, it must be through the surrender of God-bestowed endowments. The seeking out of many inventions is making crooked what was straight. Man's ceasing to be upright is the loss to him of his original righteousness.

(b) Our first parents were *able to keep the law written in their hearts* because of the original bias of their wills toward that which is good. This statement implies that the first man had a competent knowledge of God's will. He was endowed with a conscience, a moral faculty which enabled him to distinguish

right and wrong. Though our first parents had not the ten commandments written on tables, which they could handle, that written in their hearts corresponded to the sum of these,—the duty of love to God and to others. This law written in the heart said simply, Do the right: and Adam could read the writing of this law. Primitive man, therefore, had an intelligence and a moral sense sufficiently formed to be serviceable. He was neither a rude savage nor a weakly child. It is a favourite hypothesis with the *savants* of our day, that man's social, intellectual, and moral development begins with a savage condition scarcely distinguishable from that of the lower animals. Thoroughgoing materialists, who maintain the theory that man's descent is to be traced from the brute creation, necessarily hold that mind, which they say is but a function of the brain, gradually advances with the rest of the animal organism. Man thus derived, when first he has gained possession of limbs that can be called human, appears as a creature with only the hidden germ of moral and intellectual faculties. The first man, according to this theory, is a savage of a lower type than any to be found now among the most barbarous hordes. It used to be very confidently asserted that among savage races no trace could be found of earlier civilization. It is now admitted by many eminent ethnologists that no proof has been offered for this statement. Within the historical period and among the historical races we find such deterioration from a position of high culture to the very borders of the savage state, that we should find no difficulty in supposing that tribes outside the historical circle may exhibit in their present condition the wreck of prehistoric forms of culture,—a wreck so complete as almost to destroy all traces of the past. This hypothesis alone will satisfy the requirements of the biblical narrative, and ethnological science has advanced nothing, in the form of proved statements, to render it improbable. But while firmly maintaining this position, we must be careful not to rush to an opposite extreme. A famous English preacher, Dr. South, was guilty of an exaggeration when he said,—An Aristotle was

but the rubbish of an Adam. There is nothing in the Scripture narrative to warrant such a saying. Man's primitive condition should not be regarded certainly as one of childishness. His was rather a beautiful childlike nature of holy simplicity. The intellectual and moral powers had not yet had any extensive means of exercise. Conscience and understanding, however, mind and will, were in harmony. Primitive man knew and could perform the good, which the will of God revealed to him.

(c) Death of the body was not an element in man's original condition; its entrance into human history was contingent upon our first parents' breaking the law written in their hearts:—*which law they were naturally bound to obey under pain of death.* In his original condition man was not subject to bodily infirmities and that death of the body of which they are the prelude. It may be, as geologists think they can prove, that there was death in the animal creation before the appearance of man. But, according to the Scripture account, the distinction between man and the beasts of the field,—he being capable of exercising dominion over them,—was of such a kind as would lead us to expect exemption as concerned him from that law of animal life. This exemption, however, could only hold when man's whole complex nature was in harmony. Let discord appear, dissolution would follow. We may gather from the whole narrative that it is regarded as a law of nature that what is from the dust returns to dust. The Apocryphal writer Jesus, son of Sirach, describes God's works in creation, and says (Ecclus. xvi. 29, 30): 'After this the Lord looked upon the earth and filled it with His blessings; with all manner of living things hath He covered the face thereof, and they shall return into it again.' And further, to show that where earth is the substance from which anything is made a return to earth may be expected, he adds: 'The Lord created man of the earth, and turned him into it again.' But, so long as the spiritual faculties of man wrought in harmony, their harmonious action kept off this dissolution of the bodily substance. The declaration of God to Adam, that in the day he should eat of the forbidden tree he should die, clearly requires us

to believe that should this disobedience never occur, it would never be said of man's body, 'Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.' Man's death is spoken of in Scripture, not according to its physical, but according to its moral and spiritual aspect. It is never spoken of as natural (a debt of nature) but as penal. It is indeed universal, but it is so because all have sinned,—because our first parents who sinned were the root of mankind. The keeping of the law written in their hearts was simply maintaining the equipoise of their nature and its powers. This would be continuing to live. Such was man's natural immortality : he need not die. His moral freedom, however, introduced a contrary possibility : he might die. Death cannot be called natural, nor yet unnatural, to man. It is the threatening addressed to the creature placed under law, to strengthen the resolution of his will to keep that law. It is the doom of the law-breaker, coming not from without, but actually consisting in the confusion, distortion, disunion of the spiritual elements in man's being.

IV. The Covenant of Works.—*But God was not bound to reward their service till he entered into a covenant or contract with them, and their posterity in them, to give them eternal life, upon condition of perfect personal obedience ; withal threatening death in case they should fail. This is the covenant of works.*

(1.) We have here, first of all, the covenant form under which this obligation was expressed. Some people object to the mode of expression here adopted. They say that there is no mention of any covenant arrangement entered into by God with man. The thing, however, which we mean by a covenant is there, and it is foolish to dispute over a word. The term covenant, though not used in Scripture to describe the relations of God and man, as respectively lawgiver and subject of law in the primæval state, is a very convenient one. In the same way the words Trinity and Sacraments are extremely useful in theology, and the theologian is surely entitled to employ them, though they are not found in Scripture, to give convenient and exact descriptions of scriptural

truths and ordinances. By a covenant we mean a contract entered into between two parties with the free consent of both, wherein mutual obligations are recognised and mutual assurances given, confirmed by solemn sanctions. The general terms of God's covenant with man are through all ages the same; God saying, I will be your God, and man saying, I will be Thy subject, servant, son. The obligations are, on God's part, His continued exercise of rule and government over man, and, on man's part, his yielding obedience to God's law. Reward and punishment are the sanctions by which the fulfilment of covenant engagements is enforced; death is threatened as the doom of those who break the covenant. Though the reward of faithfulness is not explicitly stated, it is legitimately inferred that, when once the temptation to disobedience has been successfully met, the mere negative attitude toward death (thou shalt not die) will be exchanged for a positive attitude toward life (thou shalt live).

(2.) It is here said, further, that, under the covenant, God binds himself, but not man, to do more than under the terms of the law simply could be required. The obligations of man as under law are not enhanced by the terms of the covenant. It was perfect personal obedience that was required of him from the first. The penalty for any breach of the law written in the heart was death, just as in the case of the breach of the covenant. But God places himself under a new obligation by attaching a promise of reward to the obedient. The law written in the heart corresponded, as we have said, to the sum of the ten commandments. It was moral, and so the apprehension of its injunctions as right belonged to the very constitution of man's being. It spread out into multitudinous details, but the principle underlying all was the obligation of obedience to the holy and wise will of the Creator. If the period of trial and probation were to be extended without limit, then no other revelation of law would be necessary. But God graciously resolved to restrict the term of man's temptation. When the appointed days of sifting were over, if man should stand the test and prove faithful, the trial would end, and he would enter upon

a state of confirmed holiness. This resolve of the Creator was altogether in favour of man. But in order to carry it out, the substance of the law written in the heart, the moral law, must be expressed by means of a positive command. We mean by a positive command a simple, unexplained utterance of the superior will. That God wills it is the sanction or authority of His positive laws; that it is right is the sanction of the moral law. Now, as we have seen, the substance of the moral law is obedience to God's will. The presentation, therefore, of a positive command will test once and for all man's attitude toward the moral law. God forbids eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, a thing indifferent, neither good nor bad in itself. This not only shortens, but it simplifies man's task, yet the principle of the trial—obedience to God's will—is ever the same. On the other hand, while no new obligation is laid on man, God places Himself under a new obligation. This he does in shortening man's probation, which involves the new promise of eternal life—that is, the possession of life beyond the possibility of danger—as the reward of faithfulness. This covenant is therefore called the covenant of life, because the promise of life is the one really new provision in it. Outside the covenant there is death threatened to the disobedient: only under the covenant is there any promise of assured and perpetuated life.

(3.) We have to consider, in the next place, the parties and their obligations under the covenant of works. As to the *parties*, we have seen throughout that these are God on the one hand, and man on the other. God makes the covenant with man, for man's advantage; and for this reason, besides those mentioned, that he may be able to deal with Adam as the root of mankind. Had no covenant, with its positive command, been entered into, the test resulting from the keeping or breaking of the law written in the heart, must from the very seat of that law have been individual and not radical. Under the covenant only could God deal with the first man as representative of mankind. Adam in his probation was the covenant head of the race, or fœderal head (from *fœdus*, a covenant). That the trial should be made

thus, and not in the several lives of individuals, was a decree of divine wisdom. We cannot fathom or explain it. This at least appears, that only in the case of a sin-fall taking place under a covenant arrangement could such a redemption as that wrought for sinful man have been accomplished. Consider the case of the angels. Created in number, so as at once to present the whole extent of the race, not increasing by addition of successive generations, each individual angel stands the trial for himself. Certain of these fall, like so many units, by their own act. They are not a fallen race: theirs is not a fallen nature. There is no fallen angel race into which a redeemer can be born. Mysterious as the subject is, we seem to see in man's trial under the provisions of a covenant the foundations of a possible redemption, laid in case man under his trial should fail. Then as to the *obligations* under the covenant, we have seen that God's obligations were the rewarding and punishing of the faithful and the unfaithful. The obligation laid upon man was the rendering of *perfect personal obedience*. The test applied by the imposition of a positive law clearly did not admit of degrees in the enduring of it. The result must either be utter failure or complete success, disobedience or obedience, with no intervening gradations more or less. During the period of probation the one under trial had before him the forbidden object. In such circumstances we could conceive of the fluctuations of feeling; an alternating approach toward and retreat from that which was not to be touched. Such motions of feelings did not become sin, until the deed was consciously resolved upon with the prohibition in full view and distinctly understood. An evil suggestion resisted and put from us is not sin: the putting away is the victory by which sin is barred out. Had Adam decided to obey, when the issue of obedience or disobedience had been distinctly set before him, his act of will would have been perfect personal obedience, whatever swayings of feeling might have preceded that decision. The crisis was reached when the serpent counselled the rejection of the expressed will of God. There was no doubt entertained as

to the terms of the divine command (Gen. iii. 3, 4); the act of eating the fruit, therefore, was one of defiance. Man dared the consequence of disobedience. His act was one of thorough personal disobedience.

(4.) We have still further in this paragraph—God's purpose concerning man under this covenant. The question is often put: Why did not God set down man in a position where no temptation to disobedience would assail him? This has been already answered when we described man as a moral being. The reason why God could not do what is suggested was that perfect personal obedience could not be rendered apart from temptation. If no opportunity were ever given of disobeying the divine will, man's doing of the divine will (we cannot rightly call it obedience) would not be a moral act or course of conduct. An act is moral only when a man might have done otherwise and yet does what is good. The innocence of our first parents in Eden was that of childhood, which implies ignorance. They knew the good only in a half-conscious way, because they did not know or know about its opposite. Until they knew the good in full consciousness by contrasting it with and choosing it before the evil, they could not be said to have reached the position of positive and confirmed holiness. Only two classes of beings are exempt from temptation,—the divine and the irrational. God, because of His positive holiness, the irrational creatures, because incapable of moral distinction, cannot be tempted. For man, however, the temptation struggle is inevitable if he is to outgrow his original moral childhood. The truth has been generally recognised in the more earnest and spiritual ethical systems of antiquity. Admirable expression was given to it in the myth of Hercules at the cross roads by Prodicus the Sophist (nearly 500 B.C.). He who was to be the typical example of human strength, is represented as put under a probationary trial. He is shown the way of pleasure, and none of its immediate attractiveness is concealed, and the way of duty, and none of its immediate hardness is hidden. His choice of virtue is a moral triumph, and a condition of the development of

moral strength in character. There is no character, in the proper sense, till such an ordeal has been passed through. What Hercules, as an individual, is represented to have endured, Adam passed through as the root of mankind. The necessity of such a moral struggle on the part of man is symbolically set forth by the trees of the garden. The benefit of the tree of life—that is, the attainment of life in the true moral and spiritual sense—was possible only to those who walked round and round, but did not taste of the tree that was forbidden. Wisdom, says Solomon, is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her (Prov. iii. 18). But those who fail in the temptation struggle, who eat of the forbidden fruit, find, that by reason of the Cherubim and their flaming sword, they cannot lay hold upon the tree of life. Only the holy who have conquered temptation can enjoy life; for life has its source and being in holiness.

§ III. *Both angels and men were subject to the change of their own free will, as experience proved (God having reserved to himself the incommunicable property of being naturally unchangeable): for many angels of their own accord fell by sin from their first estate, and became devils. Our first parents, being enticed by Satan, one of these devils, speaking in a serpent, did break the covenant of works, in eating the forbidden fruit; whereby they, and their posterity, being in their loins, as branches in the root, and comprehended in the same covenant with them, became not only liable to eternal death, but also lost all ability to please God; yea, did become by nature enemies of God, and to all spiritual good, and inclined only to evil continually. This is our original sin, the bitter root of all our actual transgressions in thought, word, and deed.*

This section treats of the beginning of human sin. There are certain presuppositions, which must be taken into account before

any conception can be formed of the origin of sin in man. We must postulate the existence, and understand in some measure the nature, of real freedom. In the previous fall of angelic creatures, we get a superhuman source of temptation. In the first sin of a responsible and representative man, as head of the race, we have an explanation of mankind's universal sinfulness in the doctrine of original sin.

I. The intelligent and moral creatures of God—angels and men—are changeable, whereas God is Himself alone unchangeable. This statement concerning God is quite equivalent to that of James (i. 13), God cannot be tempted with evil. It is a notable quality of God that He is not subject to change.

(1.) Unchangeableness is a property of God. When we speak of divine *properties*, we mean those characteristics by which God is distinguished from all other beings. These properties (so, *e.g.*, Amesius and other divines) tell us how great (*quantus*) and of what kind (*qualis*) God is. Under the divine qualities we have God's faculties and virtues. The faculties are two,—intellect and will. In regard to each of these it is affirmed that God is unchangeable. His knowledge and His purpose are the same in all ages (Acts xv. 18; Ps. xxxiii. 11). Nothing outside of God can cause Him to change, for He is absolutely independent of the world. There is no imperfection or incompleteness in His nature that could allow of development or call for modification. It is, however, no mere dead, uniform changelessness that we attribute to God. Although no need of His being requires change, there is yet inner movement. His eternal knowledge and will, too, are manifested at sundry times and in divers manners.

(2.) The divine property of unchangeableness is *incommunicable*. Properly speaking, no divine property is communicable inasmuch as it is a manifestation of the divine nature. Instead of speaking of certain attributes of God as communicable, and others as incommunicable, we would rather say, that some are

imitable and others *inimitable*. All God's moral attributes—goodness, truth, etc.—are imitable by man and are revealed and manifested in order that they may be imitated. His metaphysical and psychological attributes—omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence, absolute freedom—are inimitable. The quality in each of these which man cannot imitate is unchangeableness. Thus, for instance, man can relate himself to space, but his *presence* in various portions of space can only be successive, and implies change on his part; when God relates Himself to space, His *omnipresence* secures the simultaneous and continuous occupation of all portions of space, and implies no change on the divine being. God's omnipotence is power which no opposition or hindrance can invalidate. Take away the quality of unchangeableness and these attributes of God would be distinguished from the properties of man, it may be in degree, but certainly no longer in kind. It is therefore rightly said that as respects His nature God has specially reserved to Himself this property of unchangeableness. Yet, although this property cannot belong *naturally* to any other being than God, it may be the gift of grace to angels and men who have stood their trial, and are, by a gracious covenant arrangement, confirmed in holiness.

II. In the history of the angels, as beings who are not unchangeable, we meet with the incidents of a trial and a fall:—*Many angels of their own accord fell by sin from their first estate, and became devils.*

(1.) It is here said that *many angels fell*. The fall of the angels is certainly a presupposition of Scripture history, but is not very prominently or explicitly referred to. The reason of this is that man, and not the angels, is the subject of revelation. In the earlier books of the Bible, and indeed throughout the Old Testament, we have no clear statement regarding a fall in the angel world. One, indeed, bearing the name of Satan appears in the Book of Job and in the Book of Zechariah (ch. iii.), but he is the minister of God, bent upon testing the sincerity and

purity of motive in God's professed servants. In the New Testament, however, light is shed upon obscurer passages in the earlier Scriptures. The serpent that tempted Eve is identified with the Devil and Satan (2 Cor. xi. 3; Rev. xii. 9, xx. 2). Then we are told by the Saviour (John viii. 44) that the devil abode not in the truth; while the Apostle John declares (1 John iii. 8) that by the devil a beginning of sin was made. In two of the catholic Epistles very definite reference is made to the fall of angels. Peter says that God spared not the angels that sinned but cast them down to hell (2 Pet. ii. 4). Jude says that God has reserved in everlasting chains the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation (ver. 6).

(2.) Their fall is described as resulting from an act of will:—*Many angels of their own accord fell.* The main thing to be observed here is that the angel world is regarded as consisting, not in a race of angelic beings, but in a multitude of individual angels. There may be grades and orders among them, but there is no federal union. What one of their number does can affect the rest only as example and stimulus. Each one acts for himself, and secures praise or incurs blame for his own particular action. It would have been so with men had they been created in numbers, and not as a single pair. The whole number of the angels must have been created at once, for no addition was to be made to their ranks. Many of them fell, the higher and more powerful no doubt exercising a mighty influence over others. Whether the passage in Rev. xii. 3, 4 refers to Satan's original fall, as Milton assumes (*Par. Lost*, ii. 691–695), or not, it may serve for an illustration of what we say. The mighty rebel inspires a multitude of other spirits with rebellious thoughts. But they do not sin in him and fall with him in his transgression, but each one through his own act.

(3.) The occasion of this fall of angels is said to be sin:—*Many angels fell by sin from their first estate, and became devils.* How sin could originate in a pure creation of God is an unsolved and unsolvable mystery. We must, however, postulate

an absolute beginning of sin in the angel world, and nothing else but sin can be conceived of as sufficient to account for a fall of angels. As to the particular form of that first sin, Scripture speaks only in one passage. Paul warns Timothy against ordaining to the office of the ministry any very recent convert, lest such a one should be lifted up into pride, and so fall into the condemnation of the devil (1 Tim. iii. 6). The apostle here evidently assumes that pride was the occasion of the devil's fall, that it was this that brought condemnation upon him. Many of the Fathers and the Schoolmen thought that the occasion on which this pride showed itself was the declaration of the divine counsel to set up a kingdom under Christ, the Son of God, which was to embrace all angels and men. That refusal of submission to the dominion of the Son, saying we will not have Him to rule over us, was the angels' sin, seems supported by the 6th verse of Jude, in which the significant words occur (as literally rendered in the Revised Version), the 'angels kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation.' They refused subjection to the Son, and strove to set up a rival kingdom. They would themselves be as gods. Here, too, we get a view of the extent of the fall. The angel fallen becomes the devil. The strength and intensity of self-originating wickedness show themselves in the whole course of diabolical actings.

III. Man in the possession of free will is naturally changeable : — *Men were subject to the change of their own free will.* This statement indicates that man's original position was in the realm of good. In this he might continue, or he might possibly change and enter into fellowship with evil. In either case, he must exercise his free will, and this would give a moral character to the result. An important distinction is made between *real* and *formal* freedom. [See especially Müller, *Doctr. of Sin*, vol. ii. pp. 6-21.] Real freedom means the harmony that exists between man's will and man's moral ideal. As the creature of God his end is the fulfilment of God's will. Man exercises his real freedom

by refusing to depart from the doing of God's will, and resolving to carry out the purpose of his being. Formal freedom means simply the power to choose between good and evil. This formal freedom, this liberty of choice, is absolutely necessary in order to the exercise of real freedom. Adam could not have freely willed to obey God, and thus in the exercise of real freedom attain to his chief end, unless he had formal freedom, the power to determine whether he could yield this obedience or disobey. The will of man has a law. As free, it can determine whether or not it will observe this law. If it does so, its freedom is maintained; if it does not, its freedom is lost. In the exercise of his free will man first sins, but in doing so he forfeits his freedom and becomes the bond-slave of sin. The service of sin is slavery, because it implies *change* and deviation from man's own ideal; the service of God is freedom, because it involves no change, but the attainment of the purpose of man's creation.

IV. Man as possessed of the power of free will is subjected to temptation:—*Our first parents, being enticed by Satan, one of these devils, speaking in a serpent, did break the covenant of works.* The point which is here to be attended to is the origination of sin in man as the result of suggestion and enticement coming, in the first instance, from without. The Scripture record affords a most instructive account of the several stages in man's temptation. Man is represented as consciously observing the positive command of God, which forbade his eating the fruit of a particular tree. He knew this to be God's will, and he knew that obedience to God's will was the ideal rule of his life. In the exercise of his free will, however, as we have seen, he might persevere in this *natural* obedience till through victorious conflict it had become *moral*, or he might change and refuse to continue this natural obedience, and thus, failing to render perfect personal obedience, break the covenant of works. Neither alternative could be gained unless a full presentation of the one side as well as of the other had been made. So the tempter appears to

contradict the word that God had spoken. He begins subtly to inquire whether the prohibition is actually admitted to be God's word. This does not at once awaken doubt: the command was certainly from God. This was Christ's reply in His temptation, and His victory was won by adhering to what God had enjoined. But when man had shown full acquaintance with God's word and will (Gen. iii. 2, 3), the serpent was allowed without contradiction to deny the truth and the love of that word. Sin, on the part of men, begins here in the absence of zeal and jealousy for God's honour and glory. It is not liability to temptation, but yielding to it, that marks the entrance of sin into our world. The subject of any real temptation must feel its force, understand the advantage offered, but only when the suggestion is so received as to determine thought and feeling does it become sin.

V. The nature of man's sin:—*Our first parents did break the covenant of works in eating the forbidden fruit.* The first sin of man is described as disobedience. The act of eating the fruit of that particular tree viewed in itself was not moral; it was neither good nor bad. It can be regarded as bad only when viewed as disobedience to a divine command. The law of God is the most comprehensive expression for the will of God, which, however it may be uttered, ought to be obeyed. It may express itself in conscience (the law written in the heart), or in a positive command (as to Adam), or in the moral law (as given by Moses and expounded by Christ), or in the life and example of our Saviour Himself. God's law under any mode of expression is the rule of our obedience; and sin is the transgression of the law (1 John iii. 4). This then is the most comprehensive description of human sin: it is disobedience. Another question here presents itself:—What, looking upon man's inner nature, is the inmost root of sin? Has it a spiritual or a sensuous origin? It is evidently possible, in a being like man, consisting of flesh and spirit, that sin may have its source in one or other of these constituent elements. Looking to the record in Genesis of the first sin, we find (Gen.

iii. 6) that the eating of the forbidden fruit commended itself to our first parents on a threefold ground : the fruit seemed good for food, it was pleasant to the eyes, and also somehow desirable as likely to make the eater wise. Here it would seem that we have the sensuous, under a lower and higher form, and also the spiritual, element in Adam's first sin. An exactly similar account of sin among the generations of fallen man is given in 1 John ii. 16, where the world that is the contradiction of God is described as comprising the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. This, again, agrees with the order of the three temptations of our Lord as given by the third evangelist (Luke iv. 1-13). But flesh and spirit in man constitute one individual being. No act of man can be absolutely sensual to the exclusion of the spirit, nor can it be absolutely spiritual to the exclusion of sense. Sin is an act of the whole man. As disobedience to God's will, it is the setting of man's own will against, instead of along with that of God. This is selfishness on the part of man. There is here self-assertion. Man would be as God : he would subordinate all to self. Pride, says an apocryphal writer (Ecclus. x. 13), is the beginning of sin ; but he had just said, "The beginning of pride is when one departeth from God, and his heart is turned away from his Maker." Man's sin therefore, in its beginning and in its consummation (2 Thess. ii. 3, 4), is the setting self in the place of God.

VI. The consequences of man's sin:—*Our first parents did break the covenant of works, whereby they and their posterity, being in their loins, as branches in the root, and comprehended in the same covenant with them, became not only liable to eternal death, but also lost all ability to please God; yea, did become by nature enemies to God and to all spiritual good, and inclined only to evil continually. This is our original sin, the bitter root of all our actual transgressions, in thought, word, and deed.*

(1.) We have here, first of all, the mysterious yet undoubted truth set forth, that mankind is involved in Adam's sin. The

posterity of our first parents is described as *being in their loins, as branches in the root, and comprehended in the same covenant with them*. Adam is not one individual among many, but he is the starting-point of a race. What he does in terms of the covenant he does as representative of mankind. This is what the older divines mean by calling him *a common person*. The first sin, therefore, as an act under the covenant, exerts a disturbing influence on the development of the whole human race. With this, however, the federal relation of Adam to his posterity ended. The covenant was thereby broken. Whenever Adam disobeyed, he ceased to be head and representative of man. What affects his posterity is this one sin of eating the forbidden fruit. Had not the covenant of works ended with the first transgression, then all Adam's subsequent transgressions would have been transmitted, and those of the fathers to the sons through all generations. Original sin is not our parents' sins, but our first parents' sin. Hence the prophet says (Ezek. xviii. 20), the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father; and the apostle says (Rom. v. 19), by one man's disobedience many were made sinners.

(2.) We have here, in the next place, the statement that Adam's sin has rendered mankind liable to death:—*Our first parents and their posterity became liable to eternal death*. Throughout Scripture death is always spoken of as the wages of sin and the common doom of all men. The penalty announced for any breach of the covenant was death (Gen. ii. 17). Paul most explicitly asserts (Rom. v. 12), that death entered the world by the sin of one, and became universal in its sway over man just as sin did. The only question requiring consideration is as to the meaning of this death. We distinguish in some sort death physical, spiritual, and eternal. But the distinction is not thoroughgoing. We have here rather spiritual death as the proper doom of sin, the immediate effect of sin upon man, leading on to physical death, and this again opening the way to eternal death. In the day thou eatest thereof, said God, thou shalt die. Disobedience meant the derangement of man's inner being and the breaking up

of his fellowship with God, and this is spiritual death. The commission of sin and the subjection of man to this death were precisely simultaneous. Physical decay, betokened by the removal of man from the presence of the tree of life, immediately set in, and the death of the body became henceforth a necessity. The dissolution of the body, however, did not put any limit to the dominion of death over the man. Apart from a redemption through grace, the penalty of sin was death eternal.

(3.) The next point to be observed here is that Adam's sin has rendered man incapable of doing good :—*Our first parents and their posterity lost all ability to please God.* The inability of fallen man to do good so as to please God is an element in spiritual death. Man by reason of sin has lost *all* ability to please God. It is total inability that is spoken of. By theologians it is called natural and moral inability. It is *natural*, not as characterizing man's original nature, but as a property of certain faculties of his fallen sinful nature, apart from the will, such as the understanding, bodily powers, etc. It is *moral*, as consisting in the want of inclination, or the presence and power of a contrary inclination. [See Jonathan Edwards, *Inquiry into the Freedom of the Will*, Pt. i. § 4.] This loss came upon man just through the entrance of sin, which, we have seen, is selfishness. Love, we are told, is the fulfilling of the law. Man transgressed the law by withdrawing his love from God and squandering it on self. This love of God, which is just another name for harmony between our will and God's, is the one indispensable condition for pleasing Him. Enoch walked with God, and so he has won this testimony, that he pleased God. But without this agreement it is impossible to please Him. By reason of the fall this harmony with God's will, and the consequent pleasing of Him, are to man *naturally* impossible.

(4.) But we are called to observe, further, that Adam's sin has produced in man an actual aversion from the good and a bias toward the evil :—*Our first parents and their posterity did become by nature enemies to God, and to all spiritual good, and inclined*

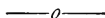
only to evil continually. It is true of all fallen men that they are not subject to God's law, and want of subjection constitutes enmity. This is regarded by many in our day as a hard saying. It is customary, and in accordance with approved forms of modern culture, to extol the excellences of human nature. Scripture says, and conscience bears witness to its truth, that the mind of the flesh—that is, the unregenerate nature of man, present in remnant even in the children of God—is enmity against God. Consider Rom. v. 10, viii. 7; Eph. ii. 15, 16; Col. i. 21; Jas. iv. 4. Nothing so signally shows the intensity of the sinner's hatred of God, as the display of bitterness awakened in one obdurately impenitent by any special manifestation of divine grace, or by the sight of one faithfully witnessing for God. Men hated Jesus just because they could not convict Him of sin. The Athenian mob voted Aristides' condemnation because wearied by hearing him called the Just. It does certainly seem hard to say of such a one as the noble pagan just named, and of unbelievers in Christian lands and ages of beautiful natural character, that they are inclined to evil continually. It simply means that where love to God is wanting as the motive, nothing can be good before God, but all is evil.

(5.) Finally, we learn that the sinful nature inherited from Adam is the source of all particular acts of sin:—*This is our original sin, the bitter root of all our actual transgressions, in thought, word, and deed.* This is the interpretation which the Church has put on the teaching of Scripture. The doctrine of original sin is expressed with no uncertain sound in the Old and in the New Testaments (Ps. li. 5; Eph. ii. 3). Augustine (354–430) gave full and accurate expression to the doctrine in his controversy with the British monk Pelagius (fl. 410). According to Pelagianism, children are born innocent as Adam, but like him unconfirmed in holiness, and under evil influences they fall into sin. According to Augustinianism, children are born with a sinful and perverted nature, which is the root and spring of actual transgressions. The Church Councils decided in favour of the

Augustinian doctrine, but gradually the corrupt Church of Rome drifted toward the Pelagian view. The Jansenists of Port Royal (Pascal, 1623-1662, and others) were Augustinians in conflict with the Jesuits, who were more or less Pelagians. Luther (1483-1546), Calvin (1509-1564), Knox (1505-1572), and other leading Reformers were vigorous maintainers of the doctrine of original sin. Only on the basis of this doctrine can this universality of sin, which is a historical fact, be philosophically explained. Apart from its unscripturalism, the view of Pelagius completely fails to account for facts. Adam's children are (Gen. v. 3) in his own likeness as a fallen man.

HEAD II.

THE REMEDY PROVIDED IN JESUS CHRIST.



§ 1. *Albeit man, having brought himself into this woeful condition, be neither able to help himself nor willing to be helped by God out of it, but rather inclined to lie still, insensible of it, till he perish; yet God, for the glory of his rich grace, hath revealed in his word a way to save sinners, viz. by faith in Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, by virtue of and according to the tenor of the covenant of redemption, made and agreed upon between God the Father and God the Son, in the council of the Trinity before the world began.*

In this section we have brought before us the remedy provided by God for our fallen and lost condition of sin and misery, viewed as the subject of God's thought in eternity. It is His eternal plan that arranges the terms and conditions according to which deliverance may be wrought for the sinner. Here we necessarily fall back upon the statements of the last section in order to enforce the doctrine of men's inability, and to make it the basis of the doctrine of redemption. Principal Cunningham calls attention to the unique importance of this doctrine of human depravity, on account of its close connection with the maintenance of spiritual life. During certain periods of the Church's history other fundamental doctrines have been more or less imperfectly appreciated without the warmth of the Christian life

being thereby destroyed ; but any failure to estimate aright the indispensable necessity and sole efficiency of divine grace, and, consequently, the utter inadequacy and unsuitability of man's natural powers to contribute anything to his salvation, has always resulted from and been a proof of a low degree of spirituality in the Church. Hence the importance of connecting closely a deep consciousness of man's unworthiness and weakness with a profound realization of the sovereignty of God's grace in the salvation of the sinner.

I. Our attention is, first of all, called to the doctrine of the sinner's *responsibility* for his state :—*Man brought himself into this woeful condition.* It is necessary to keep this very carefully in mind, that the inability to good and the proneness to evil which characterize the natural man are wholly consequences of the fall. There are theories of human nature widely prevalent in these days which regard man's present state as the result of limitations imposed originally in his creation. Finite creatures, it is said, are necessarily imperfect. According to this view, imperfection belongs to the very notion of creaturely existence. All admit, of course, that finitude means limitation ; but are we to identify limitation and human sin ? This is what the theory in question does. It says, What you call sin is nothing else than the limitation, which is a characteristic attribute of the finite creature. There is no room here for any conception of guilt. If carried out consistently, the conclusion would be that man was no more responsible for what is called sin than for the colour of his hair. It results from the imperfect constitution of his being. Scripture, however, supported by the universal conscience of the human race, maintains that man is what he is by his own fault. Not against our will, as Augustine says (*non inviti tales sumus*), do we become sinners.

II. In the next place, we are reminded of the *helplessness and insensibility* of the sinner in his sinful condition :—*Man is neither*

able to help himself nor willing to be helped by God out of it, but is rather inclined to lie still, insensible of it, till he perish.

That spiritual death, which has been shown to be the penalty which followed the breaking of the covenant of works, involves not only the enfeeblement of man's faculties, but their complete destruction or effacement in the direction of any spiritual good. Life, in respect of the exercise of its functions, is extinct, since the numbness, which indicates death's presence and reign, is already felt. We must be on our guard here against extreme views. It ought to be remembered, and to be emphatically stated, that all the powers which belong to man as a creature of God are continued to him since the fall, not merely in name, but distinctly as powers. And not only is there no diminution in the faculties of man, but there is no addition to their number. There is, further, no withdrawal of any substance belonging to man's nature, and the substitution of some other in its place. It was a grievous error of Flacius (1520-1575), one of a band of violent and one-sided Lutherans that rose up immediately after Luther's death, when he maintained that original sin was a substance, just as holiness is a substance, and that the soul of fallen man is a mirror or image of Satan, and that, in effect, the soul is itself, as to its substance, original sin. This is a reintroduction of Manichæism, which gives substantial form to evil as well as to good. This is the one extreme, which springs out of a denial of human freedom, with the intention of exalting the divine sovereignty, but ends in a denial of man's responsibility for his conduct and his belief. On the other hand, the contrary extreme, which exaggerates the capabilities of the natural powers of man in a sinful condition, must be met by calm, well-balanced statements of Scripture truth concerning man's helplessness and insensibility under sin. The sinner does not draw near to the Saviour, but is drawn by the Father (John vi. 44). This does not mean that men are treated as stocks and stones, for they are drawn by influences that work upon their intelligence and will. The opposition of fallen human nature is recognised. The powers of

man are there ; misapplied, yet active. He must be spoken to and dealt with through these ; but with these nothing spiritual can originate. The natural man refuses to acknowledge his sin, but the Spirit *convincens* him of it (John xvi. 8). His inclination toward God, as well as his perception of what separates him from God, man owes to the teachings of the Divine Spirit, to the workings of God's grace. The first faint trace of a desire after God is the Holy Spirit's work. Even those movements toward good, which are not followed up, and do not lead to decision for God, are to be attributed to God's Spirit. There is a preparing grace (*gratia præveniens*) which moves and affects man, who is in himself insensible to spiritual things. We owe convictions, which are silenced by our own sinful wills, as well as conversion, where our wills are conquered and brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, to the awakening power of God's grace.

III. We are shown, in the next place, how God provides a remedy for the breach of the covenant of works by making a new covenant of redemption :—*God, for the glory of His rich grace, hath revealed in His word a way to save sinners, viz. by faith in Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, by virtue of, and according to the tenor of the covenant of redemption, made and agreed upon between God the Father and God the Son, in the Council of the Trinity, before the world began.* Here it is to be observed that in many particulars the covenants of works and of grace correspond. Of both, the author is God, the moving cause His grace, the end the manifestation of His glory, the parties God and man, the condition perfect obedience, and the promise everlasting life. There are also various differences between these two covenants, resulting from the fact that the fall of man and his enmity against God introduce modifying conditions into the new covenant arrangement. The covenant of redemption is with Christ, the second Adam, on behalf of those of fallen mankind represented by Him. Throughout the *Sum of Saving Knowledge*, it will be observed, the covenant agreement

with Christ in eternity, and the covenant made with elect individuals in time, are distinguished by name, and are referred to respectively as the covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace. This distinction is undoubtedly a real one, and when consistently carried out, as in the following section of the formulary before us, will be very helpful in securing clearness of statement and definition. Turretin (1623-1687) and Witsius (1636-1708), together with those divines who followed the covenant scheme in the distribution of theology, and Dr. Hodge (1797-1878), who largely sympathized with that school, approve of this distinction in the use of these terms. Certainly it is only Christ who can *redeem*, and it is only finite creatures who can be said to be the recipients of grace. On the other hand, we find the term covenant of grace ordinarily employed to designate the new covenant generally, in contrast to the covenant of works. It is thus used in a wider and less exact sense, and also in a way more particular and limited. Boston (1676-1732) and the Westminster divines in the *Larger Catechism* (1648), while recognising the distinction indicated, refuse to speak of two covenants, and give to the new covenant the name of the Covenant of Grace. Thus (*Larger Cat.* Qu. 31) the covenant of grace was made with Christ as the second Adam, and in Him with all the elect as His seed—referring to Gal. iii. 16. We should remember, too, that the covenant of works also is properly a covenant of grace.

(1.) We speak here of the Father's covenant with the Son in eternity:—*The covenant of redemption, made and agreed upon between God the Father and God the Son, in the Council of the Trinity, before the world began.* As we have already seen, though God, in decreeing the creation of moral and responsible creatures, willed the possibility of sin, He simply foreknew, without willing man's actual fall into sin. In the councils of eternity, however, provision was made for the foreknown consequences of man's probation. The covenant made with the Son, and the decree to create man as a moral being, are thoughts of eternity; but, as ideas presented to our minds, the covenant with the Son

appears as a consequence of the decree to create man, and of the impending fall of man as foreknown of God. Of such a covenant transaction in eternity we have ample Scripture proof. God hath saved us according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began (2 Tim. i. 9). That eternal life which is our hope God promised before the world began (Tit. i. 2); and this is but the sum of those promises that are yea and amen in Christ (2 Cor. i. 20). The redeeming blood of Christ is called the blood of the everlasting covenant (Heb. xiii. 20); and the gospel of salvation is the everlasting gospel (Rev. xiv. 6). Christ Himself and the evangelists who record His earthly life always go on the assumption, often giving to it express statement, that the Son came into the world in fulfilment of the eternal counsel of the Father. We should notice, further, that this covenant is made by the Father. There are certainly abundant proofs of the willingness of the Son. The plan of redemption, however, is ascribed to the Father. He is not reluctant, unsympathetic, or indifferent, urged by the warm, compassionate eagerness of the Son to permit Him to become the Saviour of sinners. A Moravian system of theology, which inclines to recognise as the originator of any redemptive process no person of the Godhead but the second, necessarily gives an impression of God the Father that is, to say the least of it, unattractive. On the contrary, God *essentially*, that is, as Father, Son, and Spirit alike, is love. The plan is by the Father, which is wrought in the Son and applied by the Spirit. Again, the Son, as the party with whom the covenant is made by the Father, is the second Adam, the representative Head of redeemed humanity. Like the first Adam, Christ is viewed as a public person under the covenant. He says to the Father, when speaking as a party in the covenant: Behold I and the children whom Thou hast given me (Heb. ii. 13). He puts Himself under the covenant of works when He becomes man. In this way He becomes subject to the curse of the law, and that for the purpose of redeeming them that are

under the law. For this reason, that is, in view of its purpose, the covenant with the Son is called the Covenant of Redemption.

(2.) In the next place, we speak here of God's gracious purpose regarding fallen men:—*God, for the glory of His rich grace, hath revealed in His word a way to save sinners, viz. by faith in Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God.* (a) The way of salvation under the covenant of grace is here described as the subject of divine revelation. There are many things regarding his own nature, condition, and responsibilities, and also regarding God, which man may know from the light of nature and the exercise of his reasoning faculties; but the way of salvation can only be made known to us directly by Him who devised it. If we turn to the Scripture history of redemption, we find that God Himself made the first announcement of His purpose of grace to fallen man (Gen. iii. 8-15). In gospel times, too, the proclamation is from God regarding that which had been hid until He, through His messengers, made it known (Eph. iii. 3-5). And, again, the revealing of this gospel of salvation to the hearts of those who are being saved is described as immediately of God (Matt. xi. 25, xiii. 11). (b) This way of salvation is by faith in Jesus Christ. We here meet with one of the most important differences between the covenant of works and the covenant of grace. Under the first covenant it was said: This do, and thou shalt live. There was no mediator between God and man: for the covenant was one between friends, and so was naturally an arrangement made directly between the parties. But the parties on whose account the covenant of grace was devised were at enmity with God, who devised the covenant, and that covenant was designed to bring about their reconciliation. Since the unalterable condition of a covenant is obedience on the part of those on whose behalf it is contracted, and those who are in a state of enmity cannot render this, it becomes necessary to have a surety or substitute appointed, who is able to yield perfect obedience. The new covenant

which demands perfect obedience, is made by God with Christ, and faith in Him exercised by the individual man secures that he as a believer is reckoned in Christ. The *eternal Son of God*, with whom the covenant in eternity is made, is *Jesus Christ*, the appointed Saviour, who, as the Head of redeemed humanity, the second Adam, represents and secures acceptance before God for all who are bound together into one in Him. To this Christ are all the promises made. Faith unites the sinner to Him; and union with Him is salvation. The exercise of such uniting faith is essential to salvation, and nothing more can be required as a condition under the new covenant. 'It was by no accident that union with Christ exalted and transfigured the whole spiritual nature of man, and raised him to diviner levels of life. Man was made for this: "before the foundation of the world" God has determined that *in Christ* man should find God, and God find him' (Dale, *Ephes.* p. 34). Seeing, then, that the whole transaction takes place in Christ, the moving and efficient cause is God's rich grace, and the end is His glory. Whatever God works in grace must yield Him glory as its end. Each manifestation of divine grace is a contribution to the divine glory: and the fulness of God's grace is the consummation of His glory. Christ is seen in His glory when full of grace.

§ II. *The sum of the covenant of redemption is this: God having freely chosen unto life a certain number of lost mankind, for the glory of his rich grace, did give them, before the world began, unto God the Son, appointed Redeemer, that, upon condition he would humble himself so far as to assume the human nature, of a soul and a body, unto personal union with his divine nature, and submit himself to the law, as surety for them, and satisfy justice for them, by giving obedience in their name, even unto the suffering of the cursed death of the cross, he should ransom and redeem them all from sin and death, and purchase unto them righteousness and eternal life, with all saving graces*

leading thereunto, to be effectually, by means of his own appointment, applied in due time to every one of them. This condition the Son of God (who is Jesus Christ our Lord) did accept before the world began, and in the fulness of time came into the world, was born of the Virgin Mary, subjected himself to the law, and completely paid the ransom on the cross. But by virtue of the aforesaid bargain, made before the world began, he is in all ages, since the fall of Adam, still upon the work of applying actually the purchased benefits unto the elect; and that he doth by way of entertaining a covenant of free grace and reconciliation with them, through faith in himself; by which covenant he makes over to every believer a right and interest to himself and to all his blessings.

This section treats in detail of that covenant of redemption which was spoken of in the previous section as the eternal condition of man's salvation. Here we distinguish two main topics under which the contents of the section may be grouped. We are shown, first of all, how in God's electing love the covenant of redemption with His Son becomes a covenant of grace in respect of man; and secondly, what the conditions are to which the Son must submit in order that this purpose of grace may be realized. Here then we have to treat of two leading doctrines of the Christian faith: the doctrine of Election, and the doctrine of the Humiliation of Christ.

I. God has sovereignly chosen certain from among the fallen sons of Adam unto life in Christ:—*God, having freely chosen unto life a certain number of lost mankind, for the glory of His rich grace, did give them, before the world began, unto God the Son, appointed Redeemer.* In the controversies about election, disputants have been found to assume one or other of three possible positions. The Socinian denies altogether the divine foreknowledge as well as the divine foreordination of what takes place in time. He is thoroughly self-consistent in refusing any place in

his theology to the doctrine of the decrees of God. The Arminian maintains that God did not elect particular persons to eternal life, thereby securing to them the faith and other graces necessary to their attaining unto salvation, but that at most He foresaw in certain individuals the presence of faith, and such perseverance therein as would entitle them to be included in His purpose of grace. The Calvinist, on the other hand, holds that the decree of God depends not upon, but itself provides, the grace needed for securing the end of election ; that men are not chosen for their faith, but that upon the chosen is bestowed the gift of faith. The sentence upon which we are commenting expresses in the plainest and most unmistakable terms the Calvinistic doctrine. Principal Cunningham has given (*Reformers and Theology of the Reformation*, Essay viii. · Calvinism and Arminianism, p. 433) a most admirable condensed statement of the Calvinistic doctrine of election, which, in every phrase contained in it, deserves careful study : ‘The Calvinistic doctrine is this, that God from eternity chose or elected some men, certain definite individuals of the human race, to everlasting life,—that He determined certainly and infallibly to bring these persons to salvation by a Redeemer, that in making this selection of some men and in resolving to save them, He was not influenced by anything existing in them, or foreseen in them, by which they were distinguished from other men, or by any reason known to or comprehensible by us, but only by His own sovereign good pleasure, by the counsel of His own will,—and that this eternal decree or purpose He certainly and infallibly executes in time in regard to each and every one included under it.’ This doctrine was first carefully formulated by Augustine in the beginning of the fifth century : the views of earlier Church Fathers on this question are vacillating and not self-consistent. It was reaffirmed in a very rigid and precise dogmatic form at the Synod of Dort (1618). The opinions of Arminius (1560–1609) had been vigorously controverted by Gomarus (1563–1641), and a defence under the title of a *Remonstrance* was submitted by the followers of Arminius in 1610 to the States of Holland. The tenets of the Remonstrants

were condemned at the Synod, and the principles of Calvinism reaffirmed and very carefully formulated in its published Acts. Calvinism was now recognised as the legal and orthodox doctrine of the Reformed Church. The Westminster Assembly (1643-1649) gives in its Confession and Catechisms perhaps the very best and the most carefully defined expositions of the doctrine that have ever been given from the standpoint of Calvinism. It is pointed out by Principal Cunningham that among those who reject the Socinian doctrine, the only alternative lies between Calvinism and Arminianism. The rejection of the one necessarily involves the adoption of the other.

From this general description of that type of doctrine set forth in the section under review, we now pass to consider a few points of detail which seem to call for special consideration.

(1.) It is important that special prominence should be given to the statement that the election spoken of is an election to life : *God hath freely chosen unto life*. What has occasioned by far the most serious objection to the doctrine of election, is the idea that its acceptance necessarily leads to the belief in a doctrine of divine reprobation. Unguarded and rash statements have given a colour to such objections. If we speak simply of an absolute decree, according to which some are chosen of God, there seems a logical necessity for proceeding to the declaration that equally by a divine decree the rest are rejected. There is a decree of election, but no decree of reprobation. We must not forget, or leave out of sight, the solemn and stern utterances of Scripture (Rom. ix. 22 ; Eph. ii. 3). It is to be noted that the vessels of wrath who are fitted, that is, destined, to destruction are not said to have this destiny from God ; while, on the other hand, it is said that glory was afore-prepared for the vessels of mercy ; and those called children of wrath are those who cease to be such by being called to participate in the blessings of the elect. God's choosing is unto life. We ought to be very careful always to bear with us the Scripture truth, all-important as a safeguard alike against fatalistic and antinomian error,—God is not the author of sin.

Now death eternal as the consummation of death spiritual is to be viewed only as the consequence, the wages of sin. If, then, we refuse to say that God is the author of sin, we must with equal determination maintain that He is not the author of death. The decree of God, as the definite expression of His will, embraces not the reality, but only the possibility, of sin ; so this decree embraces, not the absolute assignment, but only the possible self-abandonment, of man to death. God has to do with holiness and life. What God wills is that man should live ; and if any man misses life, it can only be because his will thwarts the will of God. For man there is no exclusion but self-exclusion. It is man, not God, that has to do with death. He loves and chooses death who hates and rejects Christ, the wisdom of God. What is all-important for us to know has been duly revealed : God wills and decrees the absolute association of sin and death.

It is an unalterable law of His kingdom : the soul that sinneth, it shall die. There is certainly a profound mystery here in regard to God's passing over some. This is a mystery stated but not explained in revelation, and we ought not to attempt or insist upon an explanation. We can only advance to the limit which Scripture fixes. If, then, we listen to Scripture and follow its example, we shall reflect adoringly and thankfully upon an election by God unto life, and not speak or speculate about a decree of reprobation, which human reason may suppose to be its logical complement. This we know, that a decree is an expression of will, and Scripture explicitly assures us, as does also the experience of all who know Him, that God has no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, that He wills not that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (Ezek. xviii. 32 ; 2 Pet. iii. 9).

(2.) This election unto life is an eternal and free act of divine grace :—*God hath freely chosen . . . a certain number of lost mankind for the glory of His rich grace.* The practical use of the doctrine of election is the humbling of man before God. In any measure of reconciliation and recovery, it was necessary that

some safeguard against the entertaining of proud thoughts should be provided. Under the covenant of works none was needed, for the keeping of that covenant would have secured man against the entrance of pride into his heart. If he had rendered perfect personal obedience to the divine law, he would not have been boastful, for innocence would have continued unbroken, and he would have known by experience no other power than the love of God. But under the covenant of grace, God was dealing with a corrupt nature where selfishness and pride were already present. When faith was introduced in place of works as the condition of the covenant on man's side, there would be a danger of man's regarding faith as a work of his own upon which he might pride himself. It was necessary, therefore, in order to exclude boasting, to show those who are children of God by faith, and to make them remember that their faith was no work of their own, but a gift of God. Now, this is just another way of stating the doctrine of election. Those on whom God bestows the gift of faith are the chosen. It is His sovereign good pleasure alone that determines who are to receive this gift. It is the divine election which is the condition of our receiving His gift of faith. At the same time, so far as we are concerned, God's choice of us in His electing love, can become known only through our possession of that grace of faith which is the gift from God by which all His chosen are distinguished. In bestowing this gift He showeth mercy unto whom He will have mercy (Ex. xxxiii. 19; Rom. ix. 15). That there is a certain number freely chosen of God as recipients of this grace is a necessary consequence of the fact of the divine sovereignty. This we can only affirm, but we cannot comment upon it. Alongside of it we must place the doctrine of man's full responsibility, and, in keeping therewith, the universal gospel invitation. The one as well as the other—the doctrine of God's sovereignty as well as of the free call addressed to man—is a doctrine of divine revelation. Each must be held with equal persistence, but the unrestricted call to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ is what we have to do with as sinners. When we have

believed, then God shows us that our believing is not of ourselves but of His grace.

(3.) This election unto life is in Christ, and, viewed in terms of the covenant of redemption, the chosen from among men are a gift of God to the Son :—*God having chosen unto life a certain number . . . did give them, before the world began, unto God the Son, appointed Redeemer.* This is repeatedly affirmed by our Lord and Saviour Himself. Those who come unto Him are those given Him of the Father (John vi. 37). As the Father's possession they are made over to the Son, and are kept by Him in time and for eternity (John xvii. 6, 12, 24). 'The Elect, being the Father's property, are not entrusted with that happiness to be conferred upon them, but are given over to Christ, and committed to Him in the covenant of redemption, that He may die to satisfy justice and obtain eternal redemption for them, and may apply His purchase in converting them and preserving them and their furniture till they come to obtain everlasting life' (Hutcheson *On John*, publ. 1657). The grand benefit secured unto the chosen in Christ is that they have God's word declared unto them by Christ; and the immediate effect of that declaration of the word with power, which is made unto those given of God to Christ, is that they keep His word. Chosen unto life in Christ, having their life hid with Christ in God, it is true of them that because Christ lives they live also.

When all this has been said, much still remains mysterious. It is very frequently objected to Calvinism, that it undertakes to solve and definitively answer all difficulties in connection with this subject. This is a pure calumny, and those who circulate it, like most calumniators, seem utterly ignorant of the system and its authoritative expounders of which they so confidently and offensively affirm. So far as I have been able to discover, no Calvinistic divine has ever pretended to fathom the mystery or to explain how the two sides, which to human reason seem irreconcilable, are brought into harmony. What the Calvinist does affirm is that divine sovereignty and human freedom and

responsibility, implying a real and honest offer of the gospel unto all, are two Scripture truths, each of which finds corroboration in the fact of man's own consciousness. That they are both true, on the evidence of Scripture and of his own conscience, he believes: how they are to be reconciled he does not know, and a scheme for their reconciliation he has never attempted or proposed.

II. We are next shown what the conditions are to which the Son must submit, in order that this purpose of grace may be realized. Man by his disobedience had fallen under the curse of the broken law. In order that this curse might be removed, divine justice must be satisfied, and the honour of the law and of the lawgiver must be upheld. Further, sin had entered by a personal act, so also a person must perform the work of redemption. This personal redeemer must be man, in relation to the race as truly representative as the first man had been. The Son of God, therefore, *appointed Redeemer*, must become man. That this may be, He must *humble Himself* by resigning His heavenly form of being. It is the incarnate Son of God who renders obedience on man's behalf in fulfilment of the law's demands, and suffers the penalty due to them who had broken the divine law. He is the only Redeemer of God's elect, and therefore all who are saved in all the ages owe their salvation to Him.

1. We are to consider, first of all, what the Son was called to surrender when He undertook to redeem man:—*Upon condition that He would humble Himself*. The classical passage on the doctrine of the humiliation of Christ is Philippians ii. 5–8. Christ Jesus had His being from all eternity as God, yet He resigned the glories of His heavenly state, and stripped Himself of the outward marks of divinity. The phrase 'made Himself of no reputation' is in the Greek one word (*ekenōsen*), which literally means 'emptied.' There has been a long-continued discussion in German theology on this subject, in which one side spoke of the humiliation of Christ as a *kenosis*, an emptying, and

the other side preferred to speak of it as a *krypsis*, a concealing. This controversy is in part interesting, in part very dreary. John Brenz (1499-1570), the head of what is known as the Swabian school, in the interests of the Lutheran doctrine of the ubiquity or omnipresence of the body of Christ, taught that Christ's humanity possessed from the first all that it has as exalted at God's right hand. As has been well said by Dr. Bruce (*Humil. of Christ*, p. 120): 'In the system of Brenz, the two states of exaltation and humiliation are not successive, but rather simultaneous and co-existent.' The human nature of Christ was endowed with majesty, which was simply *concealed* during the period of suffering and death. This gave to Christ's humiliation an appearance of unreality. Those, again, in the Lutheran Church who were anxious to preserve the doctrine of Christ's humiliation in its fulness, were charged with surrendering the Lutheran doctrine of the ubiquity of Christ's body, on which Luther's doctrine of the Supper rested. What distinguished the Lutheran Christology, and occasioned much difficulty, was what is called the doctrine of the *communicatio idiomatum*, the communication of divine properties to the humanity of Christ. The Reformed theologians, that is, those who accepted the Calvinistic system, maintained the integrity of Christ's human nature, undisturbed by the infusion of divine properties. When endeavours were being made during the first half of the present century to bring about the union of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches in Germany, various schemes were proposed to explain the humiliation or self-depotentiation of the Son of God. The self-emptying or *kenosis*, to use St. Paul's phrase, corresponded literally to the *exinanitio* of the Reformed theologians. The latter, however, wisely confined themselves to the statement of Scripture facts, while the Lutherans had indulged in rash theorizings. The nineteenth century theologians clearly perceived that the attempt made in the sixteenth century to explain the incarnation as a raising of finite humanity by the infusion of divine properties, had failed by destroying the integrity of Christ's human nature. Modern

modes of thought demanded that the humanity be preserved entire. So the endeavour is made to explain the incarnation as a descent of the infinite into the region and within the limits of the finite. All the elaborate Christological theories of Thomasius, Gess, Ebrard, and Martensen, are just so many attempts to show how two natures, the divine and the human, can be conceived as coexisting in the one person of the God-man. According to the old Lutheran view, the incarnation was a deification of the humanity of Jesus; according to the point of view of these recent theories, the incarnation was, as Scripture and, in accordance with Scripture, Calvinistic theologians affirm, a self-emptying of divine properties on the part of the Son of God in assuming the form of man. In their attempts to explain this mysterious subject, those German theologians referred to either fail to appreciate the unity of the person, that is, assume a twofold life, divine and human, alongside of one another, or confuse the natures, that is, make the divine nature take the place of a human soul. That human speculation on such a theme should thus result is inevitable. It must end in one or other of these erroneous conclusions, in which one side of the truth is emphasized, while the other is ignored. Just as in regard to the doctrine of election, we are assured from Scripture and our own spiritual experience that God's grace is sovereign, and that yet all men have the gospel call honestly and freely addressed them,—we know the facts, but cannot explain their harmony; even so, the revelations of Scripture plainly teach that our Saviour is true God and true man, that as God He humbled Himself to assume the form of man, but how the two natures coexist together we are not told, probably because we could not comprehend the telling of it; and, therefore, in vain and at our peril, are speculations attempted on this theme.

2. We have to consider, in the next place, that this self-limitation of the Son of God was in order to this assumption of our nature:—the condition of His acceptance as party in the covenant was *that He would humble Himself so far as to assume the human*

nature, of a soul and a body, unto personal union with His divine nature. This statement places before us all that Scripture makes known as to the nature of the incarnation. It falls naturally into two divisions. We are told, in the first place, that in the God-man there are two distinct natures; and, in the second place, that these two natures are brought together in personal union.

(1.) In the God-man there are two distinct natures :—*God the Son humbles Himself so far as to assume the human nature of a soul and a body.* In the very earliest ages of Christianity errors arose over the nature or natures of the God-man. Confusion entered into men's thoughts about Christ just because they allowed one or other of the natures to gain undue or exaggerated importance. What they required to do was to say He is very man, and at the same time, and with equal emphasis, He is very God. Whenever they began to call out boldly the one, and to whisper timidly and doubtfully the other, error made its appearance.

(a) Some began to speak almost exclusively of His human nature. This was the form of error into which early Jewish Christians were most liable to fall. There were two reasons for this. On the one hand, the very purity of the idea of God in which they had been educated made it difficult for them to say of a man he is God. They had learned to know God as a spirit, and a spirit hath not flesh and bones as Jesus had. On the other hand, the traditions of His everyday life were fresh among them, His relatives and the descendants of those who had talked with Him and familiarly known Him continued with them. The Apostles, and those who received the Apostles' doctrine, found in all these reminiscences an aid to their faith in Jesus as the Son of the living God. Yet we find, even in New Testament times, that among the Jewish followers of Christ there was a tendency to make too much of the types and shadows of the ceremonial law. It is very evident that if such leanings were encouraged, the importance of the person of Christ, amid such a crowd of rites and

ceremonies, would be seriously compromised. Hence Paul and the other Apostles, in order to maintain sound doctrine, emphatically denied the necessity for salvation of any thing or any being save Christ alone. Jewish customs were permitted, and their continued observance even recommended to Christians of Jewish origin, especially if living in Jerusalem; but they were duly warned against the danger of allowing such practices to obscure or depreciate the supreme significance of Christ. During the period covered by the Pauline Epistles—and that brings us down to about the year 68—Judaism is not quite formally a heresy, but a dangerous tendency in that direction within the Church. After the destruction of Jerusalem, however, Christians in Palestine more or less escaped trouble by making the difference between themselves and Jews as distinct and marked as possible. In Aelia Capitolina, for example, which was built by Hadrian in A.D. 134 on the site of Jerusalem, no Jew was allowed to settle, but quiet and orderly Christians of Jewish nationality were free from all restriction or molestation. Many Jewish Christians now cleared themselves of every vestige of Judaism, and were henceforth thoroughly assimilated in doctrine and practice with Gentile Christians. Those who were not prepared to take this step fell back more and more into Judaism, until the person of Christ as divine became not merely imperilled, but utterly destroyed. Those who remained Jewish, after all excuse for doing so had been, by the destruction of the temple, removed, ceased to be regarded as orthodox Christians. The Jewish Christians generally had been usually distinguished by the name of *Nazarenes*, and this designation was long reserved for those small Palestinian communities, which continued to follow the faith and practice of James and the elders of Jerusalem. To those who so far fell back into Judaism as to speak of Jesus simply as a great Jewish prophet and teacher, the name of *Ebionites* was given. The word *ebion* means poor; and this word, and not the name of a leader, is the origin of the designation. Some have supposed that it was applied to the heretical sect, because of the *poor* and

low views entertained of the nature of Christ. It seems rather to have been given first of all to Christians generally, because of their prevailing poverty ; then to the Jerusalem Christians, who were poor even among the poor ; and finally, to those who had further suffered loss through the destruction of the nation, to whose fortunes they fanatically adhered. In course of time it was undoubtedly applied and restricted to those who held poor and unworthy views of Christ. To the *Ebionites*, properly so called, Jesus was simply the son of Joseph and Mary, a wise teacher, and a noble Jew, but nothing more than a man. This is *humanitarianism* in its baldest form. It recognises only the human nature, and fails to discern the presence of the Son of God. Arianism, Socinianism, modern Unitarianism, are all modifications of this thoroughgoing humanitarian heresy. In accordance with Scripture, we say with them all that they can say as to the perfection of Christ's humanity, but we also call attention to the singular omission of that part of His being which renders Him unique among men. He is the Son of God. Even in the days of His flesh, when His glory was veiled, Peter saw that He was the Christ, the Son of the living God (Matt. xvi. 16). Unto Paul, who had apparently not seen Him during His life on earth, He was declared to be the Son of God with power (Rom. i. 4). In accordance with this witness regarding the historical Jesus of Nazareth and regarding the risen and exalted Saviour, the doctrine of the Church has emphasized the truth of Christ's divinity alongside of its assertion of His full and perfect humanity. In modern times attempts have been made from the purely naturalistic standpoint (Strauss), and from the sentimental standpoint (Renan), and from the purely moral standpoint (*Ecce Homo*), to account for the life of Christ, without any assumption that we have more to deal with than simple human nature. For the most part we find in these valuable contributions toward the understanding of one side of Christ's person ; but even Christ's humanity can be studied successfully only under the light of His divine nature. He is not perfect man unless He is also much

more than man. It is evidently impossible for us to appreciate the beauty of His humility as man, unless we know Him to be the Son of God.

(*b*) While some gave attention to the human nature of Jesus in such a way as to lose sight of His divinity, others formed such views of the divine Christ that they were inclined to explain away the reality of His human nature. Those who entertained such views did so in connection with other religious notions. They were distributed over a great variety of more or less heretical sects, which were all embraced under the general designation of Gnostics, because they professed to know and ventured to speculate about mysteries. Among these were found great diversity of views regarding Christ. Some of them, like Cerinthus (about A.D. 100), were Ebionites and viewed Christ simply as a great prophet; but most of them thought that to attribute to Him an ordinary human body of flesh and blood was unworthy and unsuitable. Such views are called *Doketic*, because they explain Christ's humanity as a mere appearance or semblance, not a reality. *Doketism* is thus the theory that seeks to preserve Christ's divinity, by supposing that what His contemporaries took for a human nature of soul and body was only the appearance of such, which the divine *Logos* or Word of God assumed that He might be visible among men. This was an opposite tendency to that which led to *Ebionism*. It made its way most rapidly among non-Jewish but Eastern Christians, especially in Syria and Alexandria. Generally the systems in which it appeared were distinguished by their vigorous opposition to Judaism, and doketic views were often called forth by antagonism to the merely human conception of Christ prevailing among the more reactionary Jewish Christians. But even where the individual remained devotedly attached to the Church and in general sympathy with Church doctrine, the tendency often made its appearance, especially during the earlier centuries. The apostles looked upon this error as no less dangerous than that which overlooked or depreciated the doctrine of their Lord's

divinity. If He was not very man, a real member of our race, He would be no more fit to be our Mediator than if He had been a man and nothing more. Hence Paul, who had put the doctrine of our Lord's divinity in the forefront of every Epistle, is equally emphatic in his assertion of the reality of His humanity. Especially in his later Epistles—those addressed to Timothy—we find the Apostle enforcing with special earnestness the doctrine of the completeness and reality of the Lord's human nature, evidently in order to oppose and correct certain doketic tendencies which were making their appearance in the churches of Asia Minor (1 Tim. ii. 5, iii. 16; 2 Tim. ii. 8). It is as man, as manifested in the flesh, as sprung of the seed of David, that the Son of God is qualified to be Mediator between God and man. When we pass from the later writings of Paul to the later writings of John, we find that the thirty intervening years had wrought a material change in those heretical tendencies. Towards the end of the first century heretical teachers were boldly preaching a mere phantom Christ, who had not actually assumed flesh and blood; they shrank not from denying that the Son of God had come in the flesh, or that the man Jesus was actually the Son of God. This John opposed by a direct counter statement of the truth. He advances the evidence of his own experience as that of one who had heard, seen, looked upon, and handled the Word of life (1 John i. 1). It is the one decisive proof of being taught of God, if we confess that Jesus is the Son of God, the Christ come in the flesh (1 John iv. 2, 15). There is no other productive faith, such as can secure victory over the world, save that which consists essentially in believing that *Jesus* is the Son of God (1 John v. 5). Whoever denies this truth is a liar and a deceiver (1 John ii. 22; 2 John 7). The same truths are enforced, less controversially, but rather by way of simple doctrinal statement, in the prologue of John's Gospel. In the opening verses of this Gospel, which is occupied in an eminent degree with unfolding the fulness of the divine nature of Christ, we are told that the Word, which was God, was made flesh and dwelt among

us (John i. 1, 14); and in its closing verses, the object of the entire history is declared to be to persuade men to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (John xx. 31). The earlier and more simply narrative accounts of our Lord's life on earth in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, assume throughout the reality and integrity of His human nature. From another point of view, as partaker with us of all our human sensibilities and emotions, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (especially ch. ii. 9-18) lays much stress on the pure humanity of Jesus. In the creeds and confessions of the Church, the doctrine of our Lord's humanity is emphasized just as strongly as that of His divinity. The so-called Apostles' Creed (which, as based on the baptismal formula, is no doubt very ancient), in its simple and objective style, as opposed to the elaborate and doctrinal style of later creeds, gives a very clear statement of the doctrine of the twofold nature of Christ:— I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. Even the Creed of the Nicene Council (A.D. 325), which was drawn up for the purpose of giving a strong and explicit statement of the doctrine of Christ's full divinity, fails not to describe this divine being, very God of very God, as very man who 'came down from heaven, was incarnate, was made man, suffered, rose again the third day,' etc. In our Scottish Confession (A.D. 1560), in the XXXIX. Articles of the Church of England (A.D. 1562), and in the Westminster Confession (A.D. 1649), ample expression is given to the truth of our Lord's humanity. The brief statement before us is equally satisfactory. It has, however, been commonly charged against ordinary Christian orthodoxy, that it gave preponderating attention to the divine aspect of Christ's person, and did but scanty justice to the human side. Perhaps the general tendency of Christian thought has been somewhat one-sided; and in so far as this may have been the case, the modern tendency to minute study of every trait of His human character, though in

most instances showing itself in thoroughly one-sided discussions, will afford an important and desirable corrective.

(c) It ought further to be observed, that it is the human nature, not simply a human body, that the Son of God humbled Himself to assume. The earlier Church Fathers simply used scriptural or synonymous phrases to describe the relation of the human and the divine in Christ. But it was always humanity or the flesh which they spoke of as joined with the divine nature. During the first three centuries, it seems to have been assumed that the flesh or humanity of the Lord meant ordinary human nature of soul and body. No need had yet arisen for giving an explicit statement of this truth. It was only after an attempt had been made to represent this humanity of Christ as only part of a human nature, that Church teachers began to say that Christ had a true body and a reasonable soul. About the middle of the fourth century, Apollinaris, a very learned and pious Syrian bishop, in endeavouring to describe the union of divine and human natures in Christ, made room for the divine by impairing the human. Accepting from Plato a thoroughgoing trichotomy of man's nature, as consisting of body, soul, and spirit, he explained the person of Christ as comprising a human body and soul, and the divine Logos in place of the human spirit. The great Church leaders, Athanasius (299-373), Gregory Nazianzen (330-390), and Gregory of Nyssa (322-396), all perceived the danger of thus interfering with the true and perfect manhood of the Redeemer. They saw clearly that unless Christ is man, with all the powers and faculties that belong to man, He cannot be the God-man. What is meant by 'soul,' in the statement before us, is that which Apollinaris distinguished as soul and spirit. It is more particularly and exactly described in our Shorter Catechism as a reasonable soul: all in man, in short, that is not body. It is not a body that constitutes man, but, along with that, all his intellectual, moral, and spiritual powers. Our Lord assumes man's moral and religious consciousness. He takes our nature, —not merely part of it,

(2.) In the God-man, the two distinct natures of God and man are joined together in the unity of one person :—*He assumes the human nature unto personal union with the divine nature.* While the two natures in Christ are distinct from one another, and each uncurtailed and perfectly complete, they form together not two, but only one person. It is not therefore proper to speak of certain experiences of the life of the Redeemer in the world as belonging to the one nature, and certain experiences as belonging to the other nature. Everything that He said and everything that He did, are to be attributed to His divine-human person. It is the God-man, and not the God or the man in Him, that speaks, and works, and suffers. In the early Church some erred in this way. There were two opposite extreme tendencies which caused excessive annoyance and trouble during the first half of the fifth century. On the one hand, there were some who completely distinguished and separated the two natures in Christ, so that, while they continued to speak of one person, they made the divine and human practically two complete persons bound together only by a common name. There were not only two natures, but two persons. Those holding such views came to be called *Nestorians*, from Nestorius, who had been educated under Theodore of Mopsuestia, deriving his doctrinal views mainly from the teaching of this celebrated master. Nestorius was consecrated Bishop of Constantinople in A.D. 428 ; he had for his principal opponent the well-known Cyril of Alexandria ; and he was finally condemned and deposed in A.D. 431, at the third Œcumenical Council held at Ephesus. Considerable misunderstanding of one another's position seems to have prevailed, and exaggerated statements occur on both sides. Nestorius objected to such expressions as these : God was born, God suffered, Mary was the bearer of God. The use of such terms is certainly objectionable. We should not speak of God, but of the God-man, as being born, and as suffering. At the same time, it is equally erroneous to attribute such experiences simply to the human nature of Christ. God in Himself cannot suffer or be

subject to change—this is the truth emphasized by Nestorius : God the Son incarnate, having assumed human nature, subjects Himself, not merely His human nature, to suffering and change of being,—this is the truth emphasized by Cyril. This last statement is the accepted doctrine of the Church regarding the union of the two natures in one person in Christ. On the other hand, there were some who confounded and mixed up the natures with one another, so as to have not merely one person in Christ, but only one nature. These were called generally *Monophysites*, maintainers of the doctrine of one nature, while the orthodox were called *Dyophysites*, maintainers of the doctrine of two natures. Those who keenly opposed the heretical tendency of the Nestorians, which threatened the unity of Christ's personality, were in danger of overlooking the completeness of each nature, the divine and human, in the God-man. This, indeed, was made a charge against Cyril (Bp. of Alexandria, A.D. 412-444) by the followers of Nestorius ; but whatever exaggerations of language he may have indulged in, he explained away in an orthodox sense. Others did not show this moderation, and Monophysitism spread in many quarters. Those under the influence of such tendencies revelled in the use of the very phrases which had given offence to Nestorius ; and cunningly charged moderate, that is, orthodox men, with Nestorian leanings. This party was headed by Eutyches, who had before been a zealous opponent of Nestorius. He was head of a large monastery near Constantinople, and was, in the year A.D. 448, already an old man of seventy years, when he was first called before the Synod of Constantinople to answer the charge of heresy. After a good deal of what looks extremely like prevarication, Eutyches explained his belief in these words : I confess that before the union of the Godhood and manhood He was of two natures ; but, after the union, I confess only one nature. The Synod proceeded to depose Eutyches, and a most emphatic condemnation of Monophysitism in every form was pronounced by the Œcumenical Council of Chalcedon in A.D. 451. It will be seen that this

heresy is simply a development of that one-sided tendency which appeared earlier in Apollinarianism. From the middle of the fifth century onwards, the doctrine of the two natures united in one person in Christ has continued without dispute as the orthodox Church doctrine. Any subsequent discussions on such questions were only in regard to details—like that of *Monotheletism and Dyotheletism*, in the seventh century, where the doctrine of the completeness of the two natures, and their union in one person, was not disputed, but it was simply asked whether this required us to speak of two wills, or only of one will, in the God-man. The details of all such controversies now seem insufferably tedious, and many of the points raised appear, from our point of view, extremely frivolous. Reflection, however, shows that these discussions were absolutely necessary. Until all possible difficulties had been stated, and all possible modes of answering the question had been sifted, the Christian Church could never have framed those admirable statements of Scripture truth regarding the nature and person of Christ, which are so conveniently expressed in the words before us, and in our Shorter Catechism.

3. We have brought before us in the next place, the relations which the Mediator, as God-man, bears directly to God and His holy law :—*He humbles Himself to submit Himself to the law, as surety for them [the elect], and to satisfy justice for them, by giving obedience in their name, even unto the suffering of the cursed death of the cross.* Christology is generally divided into two great divisions, in which we treat respectively of the Person and of the Work of Christ. In the two preceding sections we have had before us the questions affecting Christ's person, and the conclusion reached sets before us the Redeemer as the Son of God, who has assumed our nature of soul and body into personal union with His divine nature. In this and the following sections, we are required to consider the reason that led the Son of God to assume our nature. It is the question that is answered by the doctrine of the Atonement. *Cur Deus Homo?* Why does God

become man? The *Sum of Saving Knowledge*, construing doctrine from the point of view of the eternal divine covenant, answers that, in order to be accepted as party in the covenant transaction with God the Father, the Son had to submit Himself to law, had to yield satisfaction for those whose place He took, and had in all things to render perfect personal obedience to God.

(1.) The God-man *submits Himself to the law, as surety for the elect*. As Son of God He was lawgiver, rather than subject to the law; but as Redeemer He places Himself under its sanction. It is, however, only as Redeemer that He is thus under law; He is born under law simply for the purpose of redeeming those who were already under it (Gal. iv. 4, 5). This statement of the doctrine by the apostle calls our attention to the important point that His position under law was that of the law-breakers. Had He simply appeared as an example of the perfectly sinless man, to influence us by an exhibition of holiness, He would not have been subject to a law which was not made for a righteous man (1 Tim. i. 9). Personally observing the precepts of the law throughout His spotlessly holy life, the curse of a broken law lay upon Him on account of those breakers of the law whose place He had assumed. Submitting to the law as man's substitute, means submitting to the sufferings and penalties which constituted the curse of the broken law. To be born under law was for Christ equivalent to being made a curse for us. Here we already reap the benefit of previous discussions about Christ's person. We can distinguish between what is true of Christ in Himself as Son of God, and what is true only of the God-man, the Son of God after assuming our human nature. It is only *as surety* for His people that the penal expressions of Scripture can be applied to Him. As the Word made flesh, He is our substitute, made sin for us, whereas otherwise he had nothing to do with sin.

(2.) The God-man makes full satisfaction for the elect:—*He humbles Himself, to satisfy justice for them*. No calm, patient, fair-minded student of the New Testament can fail to see that

Christ and all the Apostles set forth, under various modes of expression, the one truth that our Lord's death was for our sins. The wages of sin is death. Scripture knows of no other death than that which follows sin. The death of Christ is no exception to this ; He dies for sins, but not His own. As surety for us He has to pay our debt, and in doing this, nothing less and nothing more, He satisfies divine justice. The law delivers over guilty man—man lying under God's wrath—to death. This is the curse of the law, and from it only the death of our surety can deliver the guilty. His death, looked at from man's point of view, is Redemption ; looked at from God's point of view, it is Satisfaction. It is God's law that is broken ; it is His claim that must be met. The doctrine of Christ's death as an expiatory sacrifice, a satisfaction rendered to God, is most thoroughly treated by Paul, and his most elaborate expositions are given in the Epistles to the Romans and to the Galatians. It is there shown that God might have exhibited His righteousness by judging the guilty and pronouncing and executing the sentence of death. He shows His favour or grace in passing over the guilty. But when He exacts the penalty of our surety, He at once shows His grace to us, and receives satisfaction to His righteousness. Hence we are justified freely by His grace, and it is God's love toward us that is commended ; but this is brought about by a propitiation in Christ's blood, by Christ dying for us sinners, which declares God's righteousness (Rom. iii. 24-26, v. 8-10). God regarded us as His enemies, that is, because of our sin we were objects of His wrath ; and only propitiation in Christ's blood, satisfaction to His claims by the shedding of the blood of our surety, could turn that wrath away.

The Church doctrine of satisfaction was matured by very slow stages. From Paul to Anselm marks a period of a thousand years. The theologians of the early Church in the East and in the West were occupied with other problems. In the Eastern division of the Church, as we have seen, Christological questions occupied the attention of the most influential and thoughtful divines ; and

in the West, the principal interest of the leaders and scholars of the Church was given to anthropological questions, such as emerged in the Pelagian controversy. Soteriological questions, that is, discussions leading to the formulating of the doctrine of the work of Christ, to the establishing of a Church doctrine of the Atonement, were reserved, or at least did not secure any prominent place. Undoubtedly the early Fathers have much to say about the work of Christ, but their modes of expression are inexact, vague, and unsystematic. They were unable to present a well-balanced doctrine of the Atonement, because of their defective and one-sided view of sin. Themselves recently rescued from heathenism, and directly engaged in the contest with heathenish practices and modes of life, it was the power, rather than the guilt, of sin that occupied the most prominent place in their thoughts. They had much to say about human weakness and ignorance, much to say about the strength of the evil principle in man's corrupt nature, and in demoniacal powers which had access to those hearts already prone to evil. This was all true and important: it was not in the least inconsistent with a strongly-expressed doctrine of the sinner's guilt before God; but where undue prominence was given to the idea of the dominion of sin, that of its guilt became obscured. For want of a strongly-accentuated idea of the guilt of human sin, a strict and systematic statement of satisfaction for sin rendered to God, redemption from guilt by the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, could not be set forth. Anselm (1033-1109) of Canterbury made the first considerable scientific attempt to elaborate a doctrine of the Atonement. In a short treatise, entitled *Cur Deus Homo?* Why did God become man? of which the first part was published in 1094, and the second part in 1098, he cleared the way by repudiating the old patristic notion that Christ's death was a ransom-price paid to Satan. Some of the Fathers stated this notion at length, supposing that Satan was deceived or disappointed of his expected prize when Christ burst the bonds of death. Anselm was able to overcome this crude conception, by means of the idea of the

importance of human personality which had been gradually rising into prominence. An illustration of the growth of the sense of individual responsibility may be found in the fact, that in the Western Creeds the expression 'we believe,' with which the earlier Eastern Creeds open, is changed into the more direct 'I believe.' On the basis of such a conception of human personality rests the true conception of the guilt of sin. Previously, the idea of the value of Christ's work for conferring on sinful men a right of grace for the conquest of sin, had been enforced, while the equally true idea of the value of Christ's work for the satisfying of the divine justice in regard to its sentence already pronounced against sinful man, had been overlooked. When the sense of man's individual, personal responsibility before God—his answerableness for his conduct as an intelligent moral and spiritual being—was more clearly realized, the idea of satisfaction in connection with Christ's death, claimed in the scheme of doctrine its rightful place. This doctrine of satisfaction by the vicarious sacrifice of Christ is, as we have seen, a doctrine prominently and clearly expressed in Scripture. Anselm performed a distinguished service to theology,—and won a place for himself with Augustine and Calvin among the very greatest of theologians,—by securing for this doctrine of satisfaction by atonement its proper place in the theology of the Church. The only objection that can be brought against the position of Anselm by one who accepts in their natural sense the statements of the New Testament regarding Christ's work, is one that concerns his peculiar way of stating the doctrine, not the doctrine itself. Anselm speaks of the honour of God as demanding satisfaction for sin, and the work, and especially the death, of Christ as reparation offered for what we might call a personal injury or wrong done to God. Calvin and his modern followers prefer to regard sin as an offence against the holiness and righteousness of God, and the work of Christ, especially His death, as the satisfaction rendered to the divine holiness and righteousness, which makes it possible for the Righteous One, after He has exacted the penalty of sin from the sinner's surety, to be reconciled

to the sinner that believes in Christ Jesus. The doctrine of a real satisfaction rendered to God by the work of Christ as an atonement to reconcile God to us, alongside of the doctrine of the effective influence of that work upon the believer's heart in reconciling him to God, is an essential and indispensable doctrine of scriptural Christianity. Any departure from it inevitably leads in the direction either of Mysticism or of Socinianism.

(3.) This work of the God-man, which was wrought by Him as a subject under law, and as a surety yielding satisfaction to divine justice, was obedience rendered in doing and in suffering even unto death :—He submits to law and satisfies justice for His people, *by giving obedience in their name, even unto the suffering of the cursed death of the cross.* This constitutes a comprehensive description of the whole work of Christ for man. As man's substitute, He requires to render that perfect personal obedience which was the condition of the first covenant. This is what is called the *active obedience* of Christ. It was accomplished in that life of holy service in which He did the will and the work of Him that sent Him. Under this must be included all observances of the details of the divine law (Matt. iii. 15, v. 17, etc.) which He rendered as man's representative ; and the whole range of that obedience rendered by the Second Adam, which is set over against the disobedience of the First Adam (Rom. v. 19). This active obedience involved at every step an element of suffering. With the development of the active life of service, this element of suffering also developed. From time to time, the element of suffering became more and more prominent, till at last it assumed a greatly enhanced and intensified form. It culminated in the death of the cross. This yielding to suffering, viewed as the penal suffering of the sinner's surety, constitutes the *passive obedience* of Christ. The whole obedience of Christ, under the two aspects of active and passive obedience, and not merely under one of these, constitutes the ground of the sinner's justification before God. The one really cannot be viewed apart from the other, any more than the divine and human natures in Christ can be viewed as

operating separately. Christ's holy life, His active obedience, gives value to His suffering, His passive obedience. Unlike priests taken from among men, He did not need first to offer for His own sins. Suffering unto death was just the extreme limit short of which His obedience did not stop. The reaching of this limit was claimed as satisfaction by God's righteousness, and the obedience of the Son did not fail to attain unto it. Inasmuch as the God-man gave Himself to death, the climax of His suffering was His own act. His active and His passive obedience alike culminated in His sacrificial death upon the cross.

4. The work of Christ has not only this Godward aspect as the reconciliation by satisfactory obedience of God to man, but it has also a manward aspect as the means of man's deliverance from sin and death, and of his obtaining righteousness and life. God did give a people unto Christ, *that He should ransom and redeem them from all sin and death, and purchase unto them righteousness and eternal life, with all saving grace leading thereunto, to be effectually, by means of His own appointment applied in due time unto every one of them.* Here we have three different points, which may be separately treated in order. (1) The work of Christ accomplishes man's deliverance from sin and death ; (2) The work of Christ secures to man possession of righteousness and eternal life ; and (3) This deliverance wrought and possession secured by Christ's work, are by Himself made effectual to His chosen ones individually.

(1.) One important element in God's purpose in giving His Son as the sinner's surety, and in giving a people to His Son, was, *that he should ransom and redeem them from all sin and death.* Man is viewed not only as guilty before God, but as under the power of sin, and consequently of death. That work of Christ, His life and death, which renders satisfaction to God's justice, and so delivers man from his guilt, also gives to man power over sin, that otherwise has power over him, and so frees him from bondage. Christ's righteousness sets the believer free from sin. Our surety covers our disobedience against God by His own

obedience, so that the guilt of our disobedience is forgiven ; but He also wins our hearts from disobedience, and delivers us from the dominion that sin had gained over us. It was for this purpose that Christ gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity (Tit. ii. 14), that He might redeem us from our vain conversation or evil manner of life, which we live after the precepts and examples of men (1 Pet. i. 18), and this redemption is by the precious blood of Christ. The righteousness of Christ that atones for sin before God, and delivers the conscience from the power of sin, necessarily secures deliverance from death, which is the wages of sin. Death cannot be visited upon those whose sins are forgiven, and for whom sin, in respect of guilt and dominion, is no more. This is the first stage, or negative result of Christ's work in the believer,—deliverance from sin and death.

(2) Christ's work not only has this negative effect on the believer in respect of sin, it has also a positive effect in respect of righteousness. God gave a people to His Son *that He should purchase unto them righteousness and eternal life*. Everywhere throughout the New Testament that righteousness which characterizes the believer, as sin had characterized his natural state, is described as the purchased gift of Christ to His own. Our righteousness is spoken of as the gift of righteousness (Rom. v. 17), and is always ascribed to Christ as its source. Just as death follows sin, so life follows righteousness (Rom. v. 20, 21). Life as a possession at Christ's disposal is obtained by Him as wages for His righteousness, as death was secured by us as wages of sin. Our receiving of righteousness is as a gift from Christ (Rom. vi. 23). The bestowing upon us life through righteousness was the end for which God gave His Son (John iii. 16, vi. 40, xvii. 2), and for which the Son declares that He gave Himself (John iii. 14, v. 24, vi. 47, 51, x. 27, 28). It is because this righteousness is Christ's righteousness that it stops not short of eternal life. The value of Christ's work is infinite. 'The merit of this His obedience is so great, as it shall never be recorded to the full ; the saints shall not learn to eternity the full worth

of it out in glory' (Goodwin). The idea of purchase ought never to be pressed so as to present a notion of exact equivalence between the sufferings of Christ and the blessedness of believers. We only say Christ's work was adequate to this result.

(3.) Christ Himself in His own way renders His work effectual to every believer, in delivering from sin and conferring righteousness; so God gave to His Son a people to redeem and make righteous, and also for this end to endow *with all saving grace leading thereunto, to be effectually, by means of His own appointment, applied in due time to every one of them.* Christ's work is saving grace. It does not consist simply in something which lies outside of man, which he may take and apply to himself or leave alone. He who works for us works in us. All those manifold influences by which the power of sin is shaken and the power of righteousness enhanced,—by which, therefore, movement in the direction of salvation is secured,—are not simply divine influences, but are such as issue from the mediatorial work of Christ. All that helps to salvation, as well as that salvation itself, is from Christ, either directly, or by some means appointed by Him. This embraces all providential occurrences and combinations, consequences of our social relations and what is often regarded as the merely fortuitous association of ideas. Whatsoever may be the means, He makes these effectual, so that His righteousness might for us actually become ours unto eternal life. This personal application of His abundantly sufficient work is secured for all who were given Him of the Father (John vi. 37). But though the provision is made at once and once for all, each of the chosen ones has his own due time, his day of salvation, when the means of grace are made, by the operation of God's Spirit, effectual to him individually in conversion.

5. In the somewhat lengthy statement which concludes the present section, it is shown how Christ, as party with the Father in the covenant of redemption, becomes party with the elect in the covenant of grace, and how, in the terms of this covenant, the blessings of salvation have been conferred to all ages throughout the

history of fallen man. The idea that runs through the whole sentence is that of Christ as the centre or middle point of all history. The covenant theology, of which the sum of saving knowledge may be regarded as an example, is in the best sense Christocentric. The engagement of the Son with the Father in the covenant of redemption, being an eternal act, has a bearing upon, and an efficacy in regard to, the whole course of the history of that race which it concerned. He assumes the garb of flesh, indeed, only when the fulness of the times had come ; but so soon as sin and death, which His redemption work has undertaken to remedy and remove, make their appearance in our world, the practical activity of the Saviour begins. For those before Christ's incarnation, as well as for all who have lived since, there is no salvation by any other, but by Christ alone. By the merit of His obedience unto death, the chosen of God in all ages have been saved. Expression was given to this truth from age to age in language of ever-increasing clearness, as the gradual advance of the dispensations would allow. The promise that the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent (Gen. iii. 15), given on the day of the fall, is usually called the *Protevangelium*, or earliest announcement of the gospel. In a striking manner the promise of blessing was renewed to Abraham and his seed, to be perfectly realized in Him who is *the seed* of men, summing up in Himself all that is genuinely human to the rejection of all else (Gal. iii. 16). To all alike, whatever the characteristics of the age or the special circumstances of the individual life, salvation consists in the appropriating of Christ by faith ; a right to and enjoyment of the blessing of His grace are dependent upon vital personal union with Himself. This relationship of the believer and the Saviour is described under terms of the covenant. It was simply the Father's will expressed in the eternal covenant of redemption that the Son carried out. To raise up in the last day and give eternal life to those given Him, was the Father's will (John vi. 38-40), but these blessings are to be enjoyed only by those who are in Christ

§ III. *For the accomplishment of this covenant of redemption, and making the elect partakers of the benefits thereof in the covenant of grace, Christ Jesus came clad with the threefold office of Prophet, Priest, and King: made a Prophet, to reveal all saving knowledge to his people, and to persuade them to believe and obey the same; made a Priest, to offer up himself a sacrifice once for them all, and to intercede continually with the Father, for making their persons and services acceptable to him; and made a King, to subdue them to himself, to feed and rule them by his own appointed ordinances, and to defend them from their enemies.*

In the covenant of works there were but two parties: God and man. In the new covenant there are three: God, and man, and the mediator between God and man. This new covenant embraces the covenant of redemption, under which there are two parties, God the Father and God the Son, and the covenant of grace, under which there are two parties, Christ and man. By reason of sin, the parties in the covenant, God and man, are kept apart, and the covenant arrangements can be brought about only by means of a mediator. The mediatorial work of Christ, the Son of God incarnate, is described as executed by Him under the offices of a Prophet, of a Priest, and of a King. This distribution of the work of Christ is thoroughly scriptural. The division is nowhere expressly made in the Old or New Testament, but His work is viewed under all these aspects. Moses is directed to promise to the people of Israel their Messiah as a Prophet (Deut. xviii. 15), while Isaiah, in oft-repeated utterances, foretells His prophetic activity (Isaiah xli. and onward); as a Priest, Christ Himself declares that it is at Jerusalem that He must suffer (Luke xiii. 33), and the people recognise in Him a great Prophet, the Prophet of Nazareth (Luke vii. 16; Matt. xxi. 11). He is described as a Priest of the order of Melchizedec (Psalm cx.), and this idea is elaborately developed in a doctrinal form in the

Epistle to the Hebrews ; He is represented as Priest upon His throne (Zech. vi. 13), to whom is owing the existence and glory of the temple (comp. Heb. iii. 1-6) ; and Christ speaks of sanctifying Himself that He may sanctify His people (John xvii. 19), which is the language applied to the action of a priest. The kingly office is set forth especially in the Psalms (Ps. ii., lxxii., cx.) ; in the parables of the kingdom, and before Pilate, our Lord Himself assumes the title (Luke xix. 12 ; John xviii. 33-36). The three offices are bound together, though with no dogmatic intention, in Rev. i. 5,—Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Use was made in theology of this threefold distinction in the work of Christ by Eusebius, as early as the beginning of the fourth century. All the greater theologians, such as Augustine and Aquinas, show their acquaintance with it by occasional references. Calvin first used it (*Institutes*, ii. 15) as a principle of division, employing it, exactly as it is employed in the *Sum of Saving Knowledge*, to explain in detail how Christ accomplishes His mediatorial work on our behalf.

We shall now consider in order the three offices which Christ executes as Mediator of the New Covenant, in terms of the covenant to bring together God and man.

I. Christ the mediator is a prophet :—*made a Prophet, to reveal all saving knowledge to His people, and to persuade them to believe and obey the same.* The Word is the name given to the pre-existent Christ, and when the Son of God became man it is said the Word was made flesh. This name marks out the Son as from all eternity in idea, and then through all time in reality, the instrument of communication between God and His creation. He is the revealer of God,—in a state of holiness as the Word, and in a state of sinfulness as the Word made flesh. Not only is He with God, but He is sent of God. Thus He is called the Apostle (Heb. iii. 1), as sent by God with a message to men. Being entrusted with such a mission, He is a prophet, a revealer

in His person and work of God's will. By Him all saving knowledge is made known to His people. It is not otherwise attainable. The appearance of a great prophet marks an epoch. The arrival of each of the great Old Testament prophets proclaimed in a sinful world the advancing fulfilment of God's word of truth. Their messages were ever being spoken more and more plainly; but of this prophet it was said, Never man spake like this man. He does not make known anything altogether new. There is not a single doctrine of Christ which we do not find in the Old Testament. But He is Himself personally the embodiment of them all. Other prophets were with God, and spoke on behalf of God; but Christ as prophet was God, and when He spoke on behalf of God, He spoke in His own name, for He and the Father are one. His position as prophet is quite unique. No man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whom the Son shall reveal Him. No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him. The great work of the prophet is to reveal God. Christ had therefore to show Himself in word and deed; and then He said, he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father also. Thus He executed the office of a prophet, especially in the training of the twelve,—manifesting and declaring unto them the Father's name, and giving them the words which the Father had given Him (John xvii. 6, 8, 26). He felt it to be His mission to preach the gospel to all the people of Israel as the children of the promise, and to make known God's saving will. In performing this work He makes bold claims. His self-assertion is such as only His divine nature and divine commission can justify. He speaks with personal, not delegated, authority. Impressively, and with strong emphasis, He says, Verily, verily, I say. Christ's prophetic office, however, is not limited to His state of humiliation. The risen Saviour continues to execute this office by means of His Holy Spirit in the Church. As He was leaving the world, as He protested before the Father His faithfulness to His commission, He said not only I have declared, but also I will declare Thy name to those whom

Thou hast given Me. The Spirit's work is rightly regarded as that of the glorified Christ; and the work of the Spirit in persuading men to faith and obedience, may fitly be reckoned under the prophetic office of the Redeemer.

II. Christ the mediator is a priest: *made a Priest, to offer up Himself a sacrifice once for them all, and to intercede continually with the Father, for making their persons and services acceptable to Him.* The prophet represents God to man; the priest represents man to God. The mediator of the New Covenant must be at once a prophet and a priest, reconciling man to God by revealing God in a loving and attractive aspect, and reconciling God to man by removing, by means of expiation, that which prevents God having any dealing or intercourse with men. What Christ proclaimed as prophet, He procured as priest. The priestly office consists of two main parts,—sacrifice and intercession.

I. Christ as a priest *offers Himself a sacrifice once for them all.* It is evident that no earthly type, either Melchizedec or Aaron, can adequately represent the idea of Christ's priesthood. While throughout the Old and New Testament the work of Christ is very frequently referred to in terms and under figures borrowed from sacrificial rites and priestly actions, it is in the Epistle to the Hebrews that the doctrine of Christ's priesthood is thoroughly elaborated. There a careful comparison is instituted between Christ as priest, on the one hand, and Aaron and Melchizedec as priests, on the other hand. All the particulars in which these two types of priesthood foreshadowed the priestly office of the Mediator, are brought together and constitute the perfected New Testament doctrine of Christ's work as conceived under the head of priesthood. According to the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, the mediator as priest must satisfy three demands. (1) He must be appointed of God. No one assumes such an office of himself. There is, indeed, no temptation to do so. Any attempt rashly to arrogate such an

office would indicate unfitness, ignorance of the serious and onerous nature of the undertaking. God alone can judge of qualification, and determine when His requirements are satisfied,—and Christ is called of God (Heb. v. 4). (2) He must be taken from among men to act in things pertaining to God. The most essential feature in the priestly office is its representative character. The priest stands before God for men, and therefore he must be taken from among them. He does officially what God's law demands of every man. Those who nailed Christ to the cross represented man in his sinfulness ; but also the crucified represented mankind. The sanctifier and the sanctified are all of one. (3) He must have somewhat to offer. The offering of earthly priests could never be perfect, because it was something external to themselves. They had nothing to offer ; therefore, something had to be given them to provide a sacrifice first for their own sins, and then for the sins of the people. Christ, as Himself sinless, had in Himself that which He could offer. Christ was Himself priest, sacrifice, and altar (*Amesius' Medulla*, 1. cxix. 19). He was priest in His two natures as God and man ; sacrifice, specially as viewed in His human nature, hence the reference is not so much to His person as to His body, His blood, etc. ; and altar, in respect more immediately of His divine nature, and thus the altar sanctified the gift. As Amesius further admirably says : Christ the Mediator was necessarily God and man, for unless He had been man He would have been no fit sacrifice, and unless He had been God this sacrifice would not have been of sufficient worth.

2. Christ as a priest *intercedes continually with the Father*. This function of the mediatorial office is executed by Christ, partly in His earthly, partly in His heavenly state. As exercised on earth, it may be regarded as an anticipation of the functions of the glorified Redeemer, just as the redemption of those saved before the crucifixion of Christ was accomplished in anticipation of that sacrifice. Christ's priestly intercession consists in His appearing before God as our representative, and presenting in His

presence the works of satisfaction and merit which He had wrought on earth. This intercession is practically the continuation of Christ's sacrifice, and so is to be regarded as the continued cause of our justification. We have had access into the grace of God by the death of Jesus Christ (Rom. v. 2), and by Him too, through His intercession, we are kept standing in that grace. The continuance of our standing in grace depends upon the continuance of His intercession. God has determined that access to Him can never be, save by a mediator. Hence the mediator whose priestly offering of himself reconciles enemies unto God, must as a living Saviour by his intercession secure continued salvation unto those who are reconciled (Rom. v. 10). The death of Christ was an all-satisfying atonement for man's guilt and the perfectly sufficient means for procuring salvation (*medium impetrationis*); the intercession of Christ is simply the means of applying salvation (*medium applicationis*), adding nothing in supplement of the sacrificial work, but securing the effectual application thereof. As thus understood, intercession forms an essential function of Christ's priestly office. His office would have been imperfect had He remained on earth (Heb. viii. 4). Just as the Jewish High Priest with the blood entered into the Holiest of all to make intercession, so Christ in the exercise of His priestly function enters heaven as intercessor, and He realizes the ideal of priestly intercession by continuing it for ever. (See an admirable exposition of this doctrine in Goodwin, Works, iv. pp. 56-91.) This intercession of Christ precedes our prayers and anticipates our temptations. Christ says to Peter, while foretelling his fall, that He had already interceded for him so that his fall should not be final. It may be defined simply as the expression of the Saviour's will (John xvii. 24). It should also be observed that the same name, *Paraclete*, is given to Christ and to the Spirit. This word means 'one called upon,' and is translated 'advocate' as applied to Christ (1 John ii. 1), and 'comforter' as applied to the Spirit (John xiv. 16, etc.). The intercession of Christ as our priest is to be distinguished from the intercession of the Spirit. Christ's intercession is apart from us,

on our behalf; we can take no share in it, for it is something done for us that we cannot do for ourselves (1 John ii. 1; Rom. viii. 34; Heb. vii. 24, 25; Heb. xii. 24); the Spirit's intercession is, along with and in our spirits, teaching and moving us to approach God (Rom. viii. 15, 26, 27). This doctrine of the eternal intercession of Christ enforces, in a very striking way, the great truth that God's favour toward us is wholly and for ever dependent upon the satisfaction that He has in Christ. It is the presence of Christ before God that secures a continuation of the divine goodness to us, and it is the eternity of Christ's presence as intercessor that assures us of eternal salvation from God.

iii. Christ the mediator is a king:—*Made a King to subdue them to Himself, to feed and rule them by His own appointed ordinances, and to defend them from their enemies.* In virtue of His divine being, Christ is king. In the exercise of this personal right, He has dominion over all things that exist and over all intelligent beings. As mediator, He is king of saints, and has this office conferred upon Him by His Father. He is by the Father set king in Zion (Ps. ii. 6), the government is put upon His shoulder (Isa. ix. 6), and the Father hath put all things into His hand (John iii. 35). The universal sovereignty which He exercises as mediator is exercised by Him on behalf of His own people: He is head over all things to the Church (Eph. i. 22). In dealing with those who belong to His mediatorial kingdom, that is, with those whom God has given Him out of the world, Christ, in the execution of His kingly office, exercises a threefold activity. (1) He reduces them to subjection, that they may acknowledge His sovereignty: *He is made a king to subdue them to Himself.* This He does by His Word and Spirit, seeking them out, convincing them of sin, enlightening their minds in the knowledge of the truth, and renewing their wills. It is as king that the mediator sends His Spirit into our hearts to accomplish these gracious results. (2) He supplies nourishment and the means of growth to those who are thus actually brought under His kingly authority: *He is made*

a king to feed and rule them by His own appointed ordinances. The king is lawgiver. His laws are at once authoritative commands and means of spiritual nutriment to His people (Ps. cxix. 4, 93). Besides the word, which under the Spirit is the means by which the mediator subdues and then feeds His people, He employs special means, granted only to those who have been brought into subjection, and devoted to providing them with their necessary food, the sacraments, and especially the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. In the life of faith, and in believing reception of the Supper, He gives us His flesh to eat, and we find that His flesh is meat indeed, and His blood is drink indeed (John vi. 51, 55). His rule is spiritual, and results from the indwelling of His Spirit. In spiritual matters this rule is sovereign. Unless we resist all hierarchical and papal pretensions on the one hand, and all Erastian encroachments on the other hand, we shall be guilty of breaking our allegiance to our king. The relation of Christ the king to the Church universal is set forth in the name which He assumes: He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand (Rev. ii. 1). Chastisement and the manifold discipline of life are forms of the exercise of His regal authority over His people. (3) He wards off hostile attacks, and makes the evil designs of His people's foes to work out good to them: *He is made a king to defend them from their enemies.* The believer's worst enemy is the plague of his own heart. While the guilt or condemning power of sin is removed, and its dominion is broken, it continues to exist, but under sentence of utter destruction. Satan also seeks to overthrow and destroy, but Christ promises His Church that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (Matt. xvi. 18). He now restrains the enemy of His people, and shall bruise him under their feet shortly (Rom. xvi. 20). In the execution of these three offices the Mediator of the New Covenant effects such a communion between Himself and His people, that they are brought into eternal relations with the Father in the bonds of the covenant of peace.

HEAD III.

MEANS TOWARD PARTAKING OF THE COVENANT.



§ 1. *The outward means and ordinances, for making men partakers of the covenant of grace, are so wisely dispensed, as that the elect shall be infallibly converted and saved by them; and the reprobate, among whom they are, not to be justly stumbled. The means are specially these four—(1) The Word of God; (2) The Sacraments; (3) Kirk-government; (4) Prayer. In the Word of God, preached by sent messengers, the Lord makes offer of grace to all sinners, upon condition of faith in Jesus Christ; and whosoever do confess their sins, accept of Christ offered, and submit themselves to his ordinances, he will have both them and their children received into the honour and privileges of the covenant of grace. By the Sacraments, God will have the covenant sealed for confirming the bargain on the foresaid condition. By Kirk-government, he will have them hedged in, and helped forward unto the keeping of the covenant. And by Prayer, he will have his own glorious grace, promised in the covenant, to be daily drawn forth, acknowledged, and employed. All which means are followed either really, or in profession only, according to the quality of the covenanters, as they are true or counterfeit believers.*

This section deals with the question of the means of grace,

defining precisely what is meant by the term, showing what particulars are included under it, and how these means are used really or in appearance only.

I. We have here, first of all, a careful statement as to what may be expected from the use of the outward means, and what ends these are fitted and intended to serve:—*The outward means and ordinances, for making men partakers of the covenant of grace, are so wisely dispensed, as that the elect shall be infallibly converted and saved by them; and the reprobate, among whom they are, not to be justly stumbled.* The general statement is here made, that outward means of grace have been ordained of God for the conversion of sinners, and in order to secure for the converted the blessings of the covenant. This results from the Scripture revelation of God, which declares Him to be the author not of confusion but of peace (1 Cor. xiv. 33). To the Jews had been committed the oracles of God (Rom. iii. 2), and to them pertained the covenants, the giving of the law, and the service of God (Rom. ix. 4). This constituted their peculiar privilege. According to the Apostle, the same privilege is open now to all in the spiritual use of ordinances in which Christ is set forth as crucified for us. This Scripture doctrine of the means of grace has been faithfully maintained in the Church. It was necessary to insist upon the doctrine of the means of grace in its scriptural simplicity, and to guard against extravagances leading to dangerous errors, which had been favoured by superstition and fanaticism. Ever and anon the tendency to fall away from the Biblical and Church doctrine made its appearance, at one time in the direction of an over-estimation and magical conception of the ordinances, as though they had, sensuously or materially, some power for effecting the end in view, and at another time, in the direction of an under-estimation and hyper-spiritualistic depreciation of all outward means, as though what is in form outward and sensible, could never have any place in the accomplishing of a spiritual work. We have the Romanizing tendency,

on the one hand, and the mystical tendency, in its various forms, on the other hand.

1. Very early in the history of the Church there arose that erroneous doctrinal tendency which consists in confounding the means with the efficient cause, and regarding the use of such means as necessarily securing salvation. Many unguarded and exaggerated expressions may be collected from the writings of the earliest of the Fathers, in which it is only too evident that the Church and its ordinances receive an honour and authority which belong to Christ Himself alone. Through the early centuries we can trace the growth of High Church and Sacramentarian views. Particular aspects of the truth were dwelt upon in a one-sided manner,—the ministry, the sacraments, public worship, were considered as in themselves possessed of grace, rather than as simply channels of grace. The outward ordinances were supposed to confer grace by something in themselves. This is the Romish doctrine *ex opere operatum*. This regards the power in the outward means of grace as *magical* and not spiritual. Belief in such a conception is superstition. It regards the outward and sensible ordinance, or the elements in the ordinance, as endowed substantially with the power of accomplishing supernatural results. There is in this, on the one hand, a *Jewish* element, in so far as it interjects something of a mere outward nature between God and man; and, on the other hand, there is a heathenish element, in so far as it ascribes a saving power to that which is of the creature and not of God. Illustrations of this tendency may be found in all ages, and under the most varied conditions of society. It appears wherever there is a form of godliness without the power. Not only the Buddhist, with his written prayers rotating on a wheel, and the Jewish Pharisee thinking to be heard by his much speaking, and the Romanist who pays for others to perform religious rites on his behalf, but also all who go to Church and outwardly conform to religious observances without the love of God in their heart, have latent in their minds an idea, more or less definite, that some

benefit will accrue to them from the mechanical, purely external use of those ordinances. This is to attribute a magical influence to the means of grace. In superstitious ages, and among superstitious people, this tendency is specially noticeable. Under the influence of superstition, the most immoral and reckless sometimes betake themselves to the utterance of words of prayer and to the reading of Scripture, using prayer and the word of God simply as charms to ward off danger or secure deliverance. Such use of holy things, the holiness of which is really not in themselves but in the Holy Spirit's presence in them, is no better than the endeavours of Simon Magus and the sons of Sceva (Acts viii. 19, xix. 13), who would use the name of Jesus for magical ends.

2. While the exaggeration of the effect of ecclesiastical ordinances exercises a wonderful fascination over certain minds, there is another class, represented more or less largely in every age, which is just as easily moved on the other hand to an undue depreciation of all outward rites and ceremonies. The intensity of the protests made by such men against Church organization was often occasioned by the almost exclusive attention which leading Churchmen often gave to mere externals, to the outward framework of Christian institutions. Many who made such protests in behalf of spiritual life, and against a barren formal Churchism, were thoroughly alive to the importance of outward ordinances, if only these were regarded as means and not as ends. Among the early so-called Christian Gnostics we find sometimes a tendency to underrate ordinances which were being overrated, or rather misplaced by the orthodox and recognised leaders of the Church. The first decided formal revolt against prevailing externalism in Church organization was that of Montanism. About the close of the second century this spiritualistic movement began, and for three or four centuries did much to moderate and hold in check the unspiritual influence of ambitious and secular-minded Churchmen. During the Middle Ages isolated thinkers arose from time to time, who, disgusted with the grasping worldliness of ecclesiastics, and the

utter secularization of the Church, abandoned and even denounced Church observances, substituting for these a religion of the spirit in which the use of forms was treated as of no account. During the sixteenth century various sectaries and enthusiasts, generally embraced under the name of Anabaptists, occasioned great trouble to the Reformers by their arbitrary and lawless proceedings. The wilder spirits among them seemed determined to break away from all manner of restrictions, and refused to acknowledge any constituted authority. Pietism and Moravianism, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, represented a revolt of a purely religious character; the undue exaltation of external means was condemned, and their regular and orderly observance, though not expressly repudiated, was often unduly neglected. The Quakers, or Society of Friends, with George Fox (1624-1690) and Robert Barclay (1648-1690) as their chief representatives, carried the revolt so far as to proscribe all outward forms, interpreting injunctions to the observance of ordinances as referring to an inward and spiritual experience, and elevating what they call the internal light, or presence of the Spirit in the heart of the individual Christian, to so exclusive an authority that Scripture no longer is regarded as the supreme judge of controversies. It is worthy of notice that in all those more or less mystical movements referred to, as well as in the more recent Plymouthitic reaction against excessive externalism in the Church, the revolt against the use of means of grace is only partial. In certain movements one particular ordinance, in other movements some other ordinance, is rejected. They all agree in under-estimating the means of grace, and taking an inadequate view of the importance of organization in general.

In opposition to these contrasted erroneous tendencies, the *Sum of Saving Knowledge* asserts the orthodox doctrine of the means of grace, in which the claims of the inward and the outward are equally admitted. It is the wisdom with which those means and ordinances are dispensed—that is, the opera-

tion of the divine wisdom in and by them—that infallibly secures conversion and salvation by them. This is made all the more evident by the limitation of the range within which the means are effectual to the elect, who alone use those means in a spiritual manner; whereas the reprobate, from their unspiritual use of those means, secure no profit, but are left without excuse. By the gift of grace bestowed on the elect, God enables them so to use His ordinances that they become channels of grace for conversion and edification.

II. We have in the next place an enumeration of the principal means of grace:—*The means are specially these four*—(1) *The Word of God*; (2) *The Sacraments*; (3) *Kirk-government*; (4) *Prayer*. The Larger and Shorter Catechisms mention explicitly only three ordinances as worthy to be placed in the first rank as means of grace: the word, sacraments, and prayer. It is quite evident that the Westminster divines regarded Church discipline as a very important means of grace. The parts of religious worship, as given in the Westminster Confession, are prayer, with praise and thanksgiving, the reading and preaching of the word, and the dispensation of sacraments. In some of the Lutheran standards there are three means of grace named—the word, sacraments, and the power of the keys: prayer, as indicative of a spiritual condition, is regarded as a necessary presupposition of the effectual use of any of those means. A very generally received distribution is the twofold one, the word and sacraments. The immediate purpose of the treatment of the subject is sufficient to determine which of those arrangements should be adopted. No exhaustive distribution of the means of grace is attempted, because none is possible. God does not confine Himself within the limits of any number of enumerated means. Whether we name two, or three, or four, we speak only of ordinary means, of those which have been and are so regularly and stately used by God that they are deserving of special mention.

III. The first of the means of grace here named is the word of God :—*In the word of God, preached by sent messengers, the Lord makes offer of grace to all sinners, upon condition of faith in Jesus Christ; and whosoever do confess their sins, accept of Christ offered, and submit themselves to his ordinances, he will have both them and their children received into the honour and privileges of the covenant of grace.* The word of God as a means of grace is in contents the same as the word of God which constitutes the source of saving knowledge. It is Holy Scripture, as presented in the Old and New Testament, which is the revelation of divine truth, and the means of conversion and spiritual edification. These, however, represent two different uses to which Scripture may be and ought to be put. It is possible to regard the word too exclusively as a source of instruction, as was done by the so-called orthodox theologians of the seventeenth century; and it is possible to regard it too exclusively as a means of grace, as was done by the Pietists of the same age. Considering the word of God as a means of grace, we regard it as a channel for the communication of the Spirit of grace. The statement before us calls attention to the saving truth in the contents of the word: there is the offer of grace upon condition of faith in Christ. It is the word that makes this offer, and makes known to us the condition. The word is thus the organ of the Spirit, who again is the author of that faith which the word proclaims as the condition of salvation. The Spirit who works faith in the heart is also author of the word. It is the continued presence of the Spirit in the word which constitutes it a means of grace. 'As the corn of wheat, the fruit of a plant life, bears in itself the power of producing again a plant life of the same kind, so also the word of God, the fruit of the Holy Spirit, bears in itself the power of producing the Spirit' (Kahn, *Dogmatik*, iii. § 14, p. 463). The New Testament doctrine of Scripture gives prominence to the spiritual efficiency of the word, as not merely originating from the Spirit, but as now containing and communicating the Spirit (John v. 39; Rom.

i. 16 ; 2 Cor. iii. 3). Hence, as being in respect of authorship and actual contents immediately connected with the Spirit, the word of God, as the most adequate instrument of the Spirit, is rightly ranked first among the means of grace. This supreme position is given to the word by the Protestant Churches. Even among the Romanists many have nobly insisted upon the pre-eminent importance of Scripture as a means of grace. The Roman Catechism speaks of the word of God as *cibus animae*, the food of the soul.

As a means of grace pre-eminence is given to the word preached. The Shorter Catechism says: The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching of the word, an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort, through faith, unto salvation. This preference given to preaching as a means of grace over any other use of Scripture is in strict accordance with Apostolic doctrine. Preaching is necessary to hearing, and hearing to faith (Rom. x. 14-17). The simple hearing of the outward word might have a merely moral effect in the impression which its contents were naturally fitted to make upon the mind : but as a means of grace and instrument of the Spirit it has a supernatural effect in working faith in the heart.

The word of God as a means of grace is usually described as consisting of law and gospel. This is not by any means the same as the division of the books of the Bible into the Old and New Testament. In the Old Testament we have the gospel as well as the law ; and in the New Testament we have the law as well as the gospel. The distinction is rather that implied in the description of faith negatively and positively, as confession of sin and acceptance of Christ offered. What the word as a means of grace aims at, is the conversion of sinners and the edification of saints. The law element and the gospel element in the word have both their part in the work of conversion and in the work of edification. In conversion, the word operates as law in convincing of sin and leading to the confession and forsaking of it,

and as gospel in preaching Christ and offering His grace for our acceptance. In the edifying of the body of Christ, the word operates as law by affording a rule and standard of a life well-pleasing to God, and as gospel by yielding comfort and strength in promises of the divine favour and assurance of God's hearty acceptance of the reconciliation wrought for us by Christ.

'The Spirit breathes upon the word, and brings the truth to sight ;
Precepts and promises afford a sanctifying light.'

IV. The Sacraments are fitly named after the word as means of grace :—*By the Sacraments, God will have the covenant sealed for confirming the bargain on the foresaid condition.* The name sacrament is not used in Scripture. Its use was probably suggested by the employment of the word *sacramentum* for the oath of fidelity and allegiance given by Roman soldiers. The Christian sacrament is an oath of fealty to Christ. The word used in the New Testament for the holy ordinances which we call sacraments is *mystery*, implying that there is in the holy rite more than meets the eye in the visible element. As means of grace the sacraments are closely related to the word of God. The sacrament, indeed, has no independent existence, and cannot be administered apart from the word. It also teaches and imparts no new thing, but only presents in another form what has been already set forth in the word. The word has all that is essential to the sacrament, and the sacrament is, to use a phrase of the Reformers borrowed from Augustine, a *verbum visibile*, a visible word. 'Faith,' says Durham, 'takes Christ in the word, and strikes hands with Him in the sacrament.' The sacrament, therefore, comes after the word, as helping to secure the end for which the word is given. The Roman Catholic Church lost sight of this truth, and gave a pre-eminent position to the sacrament, completely subordinating the word, until in its ritual the chief means of grace was no longer conspicuous. The Lutheran Church co-ordinated word and sacrament, theoretically allowing pre-eminence to neither; but this position of equilibrium could not

be maintained, and modern Lutherans have inclined more and more, in accordance with a Romanizing tendency, to exalt the sacrament over the word. To some extent the same may be said of the Church of England. The Reformed or Calvinistic Churches, represented by the Presbyterian Churches of the present day, subordinate the sacrament to the word.

The very brief statement given above clearly sets forth the true Church doctrine of the sacraments. It is not to all and sundry symbolical actions that the name is to be given. In early Christian times the word was applied loosely to anything specially sacred, to creeds, doctrines, customs that were in accordance with the spirit of Christianity. From the time of Augustine, however, to that of Peter the Lombard, that is, from the fourth to the twelfth century, the use of the word was restricted, as in the statement before us, to ordinances, by means of which God willed to confirm to us the promises of the covenant, that is, to baptism and the Lord's Supper. Peter the Lombard applied the name of sacraments to seven holy actions which were regarded as possessed of a certain symbolical character: baptism, confirmation, the eucharist, penance, extreme unction, orders, and marriage. Thomas Aquinas elaborated the doctrine of the Church, distinguishing baptism, confirmation, and orders as imparting an indelible character. This arrangement and enumeration of the sacraments, as well as the idea of their conveying grace by a power inherent in them, was adopted by the Church formally at the Council of Florence (1439), and at the Council of Trent (1545-1563). Only baptism and the Lord's Supper answer the requirement of the definition of a sacrament by being ordinances instituted by the Lord. As symbolical rites, the Lord's Supper was instituted in immediate prospect of the sacrifice on the cross, and baptism, as the sacrament of regeneration by the Spirit, in immediate prospect of His ascension, which secured the descent of the Spirit. These two ordinances are actually conjoined in the New Testament as Christian institutions of the same order (1 Cor. x. 2, 3, 6; 1 John v. 6; 1 Cor. xii. 13). These

two symbolic ordinances also cover the entire domain of the Christian life, and so admit of no other as co-ordinate with them ; the one symbolizes entrance upon, the other the continuance in, the sphere of the new life of the Spirit.

Baptism as the sign and seal of regeneration corresponds to the rite of circumcision in the Jewish Church. As symbolic of the new birth it is administered only once. In agreement with its Old Testament counterpart, baptism is administered to believers and their children. According to the previous section of the text, those who receive the word obtain the privileges of the covenant for their children as well as for themselves. Peter, speaking to those who had become hearers of the word, urging them to repent and be baptized, encourages them by the assurance that the promise, of which baptism is the seal, is to them and to their children (Acts ii. 38, 39). As circumcision was given in the beginning of the Jewish Church first to Abraham, an adult and a believer, and ever after in the household of the father of the faithful to children, so in the beginnings of the Christian Church baptism was administered first to adults on a profession of faith, and afterwards to the children of those who had believed and had been themselves baptized. Birth in a Christian family brings with it certain Christian privileges, which baptism symbolizes, and confers membership of the outward Christian community. Erroneous views of the meaning of baptism appeared early in the Church. The sacrament of regeneration was spoken of by some of the early Fathers in a way that was suitable only if used of regeneration itself. This tendency, developed into a dogma of Baptismal Regeneration, is current not only in the Romish Church, but also in the High Church section of the Church of England. The error results from confounding the sign with the thing signified, and thinking of the sacrament as conferring grace by some power in itself. While opposing this error, we must guard against the contrary extreme of the Socinians and others (perhaps Zwingli should be included), who look upon baptism as nothing more than an initiatory rite, for if this

be all, it is then no means of grace. [See *Confession of Faith*, chap. xxviii. § 1; Author's *Handbook*, p. 150.]

The Lord's Supper as the sign and seal of fellowship with Christ in the victory of His death, corresponds to the Old Testament ordinance of the Passover, the memorial of Israel's deliverance from death and bondage. The New Testament ordinance is distinctly associated with the Jewish rite—Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us (1 Cor. v. 7). Christ is the Lamb slain, whose flesh is meat indeed, and His blood drink indeed (John vi. 55). The bread and wine are not the body and blood of Christ, but are symbols of His body and blood. The confusion of sign and thing signified in the understanding of this sacrament, led to the doctrine of Transubstantiation. If this idea of the change of the natural elements into the actual body and blood of the Lord were correct, some colour would be given to the notion that the sacrament of itself conferred grace. Scripture, especially the writings of Paul in 1 Cor. x., xi., regards the significance of the elements in the Supper as precisely analogous to that of the word as means of grace. The word is saving when it is the medium of the Spirit's communication; the bread and wine, broken and poured out, when spiritually received, convey the benefits of the breaking of Christ's body and the shedding of His blood. The Lord's Supper is the sacrament of life, and the communication of this, Christ says, is the work of the Spirit (John vi. 63). The Socinians and others who regard baptism as merely an initiatory rite, consider the Lord's Supper as a mere thanksgiving ceremony and profession of adherence to the Christian faith. It is a means of grace only if it is more than this, a seal of the covenant in confirming the benefits of Christ's death.

V. After the word and sacraments, Church government is mentioned as a means of grace:—*By Kirk-government He will have them hedged in, and helped forward unto the keeping of the covenant.* As a means of grace Church government may be nearly identified with Church discipline or the maintenance of

Church order. This is always to be exercised and administered with a view to the edification of the individual concerned, and of the Church as a whole. The function of Church government consists in the administration of the laws of Christ concerning His Church. Christ has laid down in His word certain regulations for the admission of members into, and the exclusion of the unworthy from His Church, and also for the ordering of the conduct of those who are within its pale. It is the part of Church government to determine who are of the Church, and how those who are of it ought to behave. The terms and conditions of the covenant are to be observed, and Church government discharges a protective and a promotive function in respect of the keeping of that covenant.

Christ Himself enjoins the exercise of discipline. He assigns to His disciples the power of the keys (Matt. xvi. 18), indicates the various steps to be taken in the process (Matt. xviii. 15-18), and grants the power of absolution (John xx. 21-23). This power was exercised in the Apostolic Church (2 Thess. iii. 6-14; 1 Cor. v.; 2 Cor. ii., vii., x., xiii.; 1 Tim. i. 19, v. 20; Tit. iii. 10). The end of all such proceedings is for edification, not destruction (2 Cor. x. 8); and the severest penalty, delivering unto Satan, was for the destruction only of the flesh and the salvation of the spirit (1 Cor. v. 5). The treatment is not hostile but brotherly, that the faulty one may be ashamed of his fault and repent (2 Thess. iii. 14). As thus viewed, Church government is a means of grace, and stands in immediate relation to the word and sacraments. 'The ordinance of excommunication,' says Durham, 'is added, as divines say, to confirm God's threatenings, as sacraments do seal the promises. . . . No censure should be blindly or implicitly made use of, but, both in reference to the party and others, there should be instruction, exhortation, conviction, etc., by the word going before or alongst with the same. In which respect, though improperly, censures may be some way looked upon as sacraments, in a large sense, in these particular cases, because there is in them both some signifying and confirming use,—they being

considered with respect to the end wherefore they are appointed.' What Church government has in common with the word and sacraments is its edifying tendency and purpose. It enforces both word and sacraments by solemn sanctions. In principle it rests upon the doctrine of the communion of saints. What Professor Bruce calls (*Training of the Twelve*, p. 204) the hotel theory of Church fellowship, according to which one member takes no concern with the conduct and views of another, inasmuch as it proposes neither to hedge in nor to help forward, is a renunciation of true brotherly love. According to the true view of Church membership, all are brethren, solemnly bound to protect and promote the spiritual wellbeing of one another.¹

VI. As a means of grace, to the word, sacraments, and Church government, is added prayer:—*And by Prayer, he will have his own glorious grace, promised in the covenant, to be daily drawn forth, acknowledged, and employed.* Prayer scarcely stands upon the same level as those other means of grace already enumerated. 'We have only to examine these means to feel at once that Christian prayer is something different from all those other means, and at the same time something infinitely higher; not a means among several, but the *conditio sine qua non* to the successful use of all' (Oosterzee, *Dogmatics*, § cxxxv. 5). It is evidently much more subjective in its nature than any of the rest. It consists in the formation and nurture of a spiritual disposition, rather than in the use of some objective, external instrument such as the written word, the sensible elements in the sacraments, and the forms and injunctions of Church order. It is to the man of a prayerful spirit that word, and sacraments, and Church forms are really channels of grace and blessing. Prayer is not to be restricted to petition. Bible prayers, such as those of David, overflow with thanksgiving and freely range over the wide realms of creation,

¹ See this whole subject admirably and exhaustively treated: Professor Bannerman's *Church of Christ*, vol. ii. pp. 186–200. Edinburgh 1868. T. & T. Clark.

providence, and grace, to find materials for adoring praise. These prayers are songs or overflowings of hearts in sympathy with God. Prayer is a devout soul's contemplations, in which the understanding is exercised on the highest mysteries, the affections called forth toward Him who is altogether lovely, and the will moved in struggle against what is earthly, and in desire for the heavenly. It is, therefore, clearly the means of grace *par excellence*, which finds means of sustenance in Church fellowship, the sacraments, and the word of God. Yet, as an important element in prayer, direct petition is not to be overlooked. To those under the covenant the promises of God's grace are given: but the bestowal of these must be asked (Matt. vii. 7), He will be inquired of by us to do these things for us (Ezek. xxxvi. 37). The disposition of the prayerful spirit fits one for making definite requests; it renders us solicitous, and capacitates us for receiving new gifts of grace. Asking in faith is at once the consequence of close communion with God, and the condition and occasion of closer and more intimate fellowship. Prayer is pre-eminently a means for obtaining the use of grace. It lays hold of the covenant promises. But, as Matthew Henry says, 'promises are given not to supersede, but to quicken and encourage prayer.' With these it deals in a variety of ways. Apprehending a covenant right to the blessings of God's grace, prayer draws new supplies from day to day, makes thankful acknowledgment of what has been given, thus increasing the possession of grace, and actively employing that already granted. True prayer reflects the measure of grace received; a man's spirituality is most clearly shown in his prayers. The more spiritual the prayer, the more largely is God's glorious grace drawn forth.

VII. The right use of all these means depends upon the presence of true faith in the heart:—*All which means are followed either really, or in profession only, according to the quality of the covenanters, as they are true or counterfeit believers.* The possession of all the promises is conditioned

upon faith. All things, in the way of obtaining spiritual gifts and graces, are possible to him that believeth (Mark v. 36, ix. 23). In regard to each of the means of grace enumerated it is evident that they can be effectual only when used and exercised in faith. It is to the prayer of faith that the promise is attached (Jas. i. 6; Mark xi. 24; 1 Tim. ii. 8). Church organization and discipline, all forms of ecclesiastical arrangements and modes of worship, are serviceable only in so far as engaged in by those to whom God has distributed in their several proportions the measure of faith (Rom. xii. 3; 1 Cor. xii. 7). The sacraments can be with profit partaken of only by those who believe, and the advantage and enjoyment derived from them is proportioned to the faith exercised; Christ Himself explains eating and drinking as signifying coming to Him and believing on Him (John vi. 35). Faith is the thing signified by the sacramental action. Augustine says: Believe and thou hast eaten. Then again, the word preached is called the word of faith (Rom. x. 8), as well as that, the hearing of which produces faith (ver. 17). That faith which is the indispensable condition of the exercise of prayer and the use of other means of grace is simply real faith, be it weak or strong. Opportunities to use the means of grace are answers to the prayer of him who says, Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief; answers to those who cry, Lord, increase our faith.

§ II. *The covenant of grace, set down in the Old Testament before Christ came, and in the New since he came, is one and the same in substance, albeit different in outward administration: For the covenant in the Old Testament, being sealed with the sacraments of circumcision and the paschal lamb, did set forth Christ's death to come, and the benefits purchased thereby under the shadow of bloody sacrifices and sundry ceremonies; but since Christ came, the covenant being sealed by the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, doth clearly hold forth Christ already crucified before our eyes,*

victorious over death and the grave, and gloriously ruling heaven and earth for the good of his own people.

(1.) It has to be remembered that the covenant of grace belongs to the Old Testament as well as to the New. The distinction of law and gospel is not the same as that of the Old and New Testaments, nor again is the dispensation of the law to be identified with that of the covenant of works, and the dispensation of the gospel under the New Testament to be exclusively regarded as identical with that of the covenant of grace. The dispensation of the covenant of grace really begins with the gospel promise given in the day of Adam's fall. Every renewal or repetition of that promise throughout the Old Testament is a gospel proclamation. Between these earlier enunciations of gospel truth and the later declarations made when the fulness of the times had come, there is really no difference in kind, but only in intensity and degree. The first announcement of grace was made in general terms, and when repeated in Old Testament times few of those particulars were added, which seem to us almost indispensable to the clear understanding of the gospel; yet the simple revelations of the primitive ages contain all that is really essential unto a practical and effectual knowledge of God's one way of salvation. 'The object of faith in these primitive times was, in substance, the same as now: God in His revealed character as just, and the Justifier of him that believeth;—with this difference, that the Saviour was then promised as coming, but is now proclaimed as having come.' (Buchanan, *Doctrine of Justification*, p. 28, Edin. 1867.) The substantial agreement of the presentation of the covenant of grace in the Old Testament and in the New appears in this, that in both records it is the same fact that is proclaimed, the salvation of the sinner through the gracious act of God in forgiving sin; that in both records the ground of this salvation is clearly laid in God and not in us, it is of grace and not of works; and finally, that in both records the means for securing this salvation is the same, for Abraham, as well as Paul

the apostle, is justified by faith. (See Buchanan, pp 425, 426.) It is important to observe the difference between Israel and the Gentiles in the ages before the coming of Christ. The distinction according to the apostle (Rom. ix. 4, 5) lay in this, that to the chosen people pertained the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises. We do not, in emphasizing the peculiar relation of the Jews to the promises of grace, overlook the traces of divine influence evident in the lives of individuals outside of the borders of Israel. The Alexandrian school of Christian teachers did right when they claimed for Christ the praise of every ray of true light that shone forth among Gentile nations. Justin Martyr, the famous apologist of the second century, speaks of the *Logos Spermatikos*, by which he means the germ of divine truth present in men, as the origin of all that is true and good. Even outside the range of His direct revelation, God did not leave Himself without witnesses. The recognition of such fitful gleams, however, only renders more evident the special character of Israel's position. Israel alone had this in common with the members of the Christian Church,—the explicit proclamation of the divine promises. In outward administration the form of the covenant of grace differs in the Old Testament and in the New. The coming of Him who had been looked forward to, altered not the essential truth upon which the covenant of grace was based, seeing that He and His salvation remained the same; but a new dispensation was now inaugurated, the Christian as distinguished from the Mosaic, in which modes of worship of a prophetic and symbolical order suited for ages of propection were laid aside because He had come to whom those ceremonials pointed forward, and because He continued with the Church founded by Him during His stay on earth (Matt. xxviii. 18-20), according to His promise, even to the end of the world.

(2.) The outward difference in administration of the covenant under the Old and under the New Testament is illustrated by the characteristic difference which distinguishes Old Testament

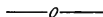
sacraments from those of the New Testament. It is very evident that the ordinances or means of grace of the Old Testament, though formally the same as the New, consisting as they do in both cases of word and sacraments, are distinguished in respect of the degree and measure of spirituality in their dispensation. Nothing, perhaps, more significantly illustrates this than the elaborate inculcation of details in regard to the observance of the Old Testament ordinances, and the subsequent impression of externality which this leaves on the worshipper, as compared with the absence of detailed injunctions in the New Testament, and the prominence given to free spiritual service over that which is ritual and formal, or that savours of mere bodily service. The ceremonial service of Israel, even when not yet added to by Pharisaic traditions, was very cumbrous and onerous; the arrangements of the Christian service are few and simple, giving free scope to individual spiritual development, it being only enjoined that all things be done decently and in order.

We are here specially called to observe that the sacraments of circumcision and the passover were bloody sacrifices, as pointing to the great sacrifice promised but not yet offered; whereas the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper are unbloody, as being simply reminders of the sacrifice once for all made and never to be repeated. The sign of the covenant in circumcision was in blood, with a blood penalty threatened in case of neglect (Gen. xvii. 14; Ex. iv. 24). Still more distinctly the shedding of blood appears as an essential part of the symbolism of the Passover. The ordinance was not only a sacramental meal, but it embraced the slaying of the lamb as a sacrifice, the blood of which, as on the occasion of its institution, was the immediate symbol of expiation. 'In Num. ix. 7, the Paschal lamb is expressly called a sacrifice; it was slain in a holy place (Deut. xvi. 5); its blood was sprinkled on the altar; and the fat was burnt upon the altar (2 Chron. xxx. 16, 17, xxxv. 11, 12).' (Kurtz, *History of Old Covenant*, vol. ii. p. 298, Edin. 1859.) The change in the character of the sacred ordinances in the

Christian Church is very significant. The shedding of blood which was suitable in ordinances that were prophetic and anticipatory of the great sacrifice on the Cross, was no longer suitable in ordinances which were not only commemorative of the sacrifice accomplished, but also intended to emphasize the truth that there remained no more sacrifice for sin.

HEAD IV.

BLESSINGS CONVEYED TO THE ELECT BY THOSE MEANS.



§ 1. *By those outward ordinances, as our Lord makes the reprobate inexcusable, so, by the power of his Spirit, he applies unto the elect, effectually, all saving graces purchased to them in the covenant of redemption, and maketh a change in their persons. In particular, (1) He doth convert or regenerate them, by giving spiritual life to them, in opening their understandings, renewing their wills, affections, and faculties, for giving spiritual obedience to his commands. (2) He gives them saving faith, by making them, in the sense of deserved condemnation, to give their consent heartily to the covenant of grace, and to embrace Jesus Christ unfeignedly. (3) He gives them repentance, by making them, with godly sorrow, in the hatred of sin and love of righteousness, turn from all iniquity to the service of God. And (4) He sanctifies them, by making them go on and persevere in faith and spiritual obedience to the law of God, manifested by fruitfulness in all duties, and doing good works, as God offereth occasion.*

This section speaks first of all of Effectual Calling. The Lord by His Spirit effectually applies unto the elect all saving graces

purchased to them. We have seen that, in the covenant, Christ obtained a right to bestow upon His own certain benefits for which in His substitutionary work He had paid the price. There is a distinction marked between *common grace*, which all have who have the gospel message, and which renders them inexcusable when they refuse to accept it, and *efficacious grace*, which is God's gift in Christ to those who are chosen of Him unto life. What has to be noted here is that the accomplishment of the salvation of the individual, no less than the universal plan and its execution, is attributed to divine grace. This doctrine is a necessary part of the system distinguished as Augustinian and Calvinistic, and necessarily follows from the view which we have taken of man's condition as a sinner in regard of guilt and inability.

The effectual working of divine grace upon the elect changes their persons : and this again is the condition of a change in the state of those thus changed. The next section details the particulars of the change of state secured for the elect by the operation of efficacious grace. Here we have to attend to the changes wrought in the persons of the elect, which are enumerated under four heads :—(1) Conversion or Regeneration ; (2) The accepting of Christ by Faith ; (3) Repentance unto Life ; (4) Perfection through Sanctification and Perseverance in Holiness unto the end.

1. The Spirit of Christ working effectually changes the person of the elect in conversion or regeneration :—*He doth convert or regenerate them, by giving spiritual life to them, in opening their understandings, renewing their wills, affections, and faculties, for giving spiritual obedience to His commands.* The word conversion is here loosely used as synonymous with regeneration, but ought rather to be employed as describing another aspect of repentance. We shall therefore speak here simply of regeneration. The classical passage in the New Testament on regeneration is John iii. 1-18, with which ought also to be read 1 John v. 1-6. It is described as the imparting of a new life. The old nature can only produce its like : the Spirit Himself alone can create

spirit in man as a life altogether new. The change accomplished in regeneration is called renewing, not as implying a mere reviving, requickening of the old, not as indicating moral improvement such as culture in most excellent and approved working can effect, but the implantation of a new power of life, which makes all things new. This spiritual power affects and fundamentally changes all the faculties of men, giving them a new direction and assigning to them again the end determined at their creation. Regeneration gives again the true direction to man's life in setting before him the end of spiritual obedience to God's commands. With a view to securing the attainment of this end for man, the Spirit opens man's understanding. In a state of nature man knows the gospe message according to its letter, and this is sufficient to leave him without excuse; but there is a knowledge even of this which only those know who are taught of God and have their understandings opened by Him. There is a knowledge which is yet no knowledge (1 Cor. viii. 1, 2). 'Take any man that hath never so much knowledge both in law and gospel, and if God turn this man to Him, you shall hear him say, that all things he knew before are known anew by him; he that had all knowledge before, he now profeseth he had none as he ought to have had. And therefore, by the way, will you know what it is to be converted? It is to know over all anew, that you knew by education.' (Goodwin, *Works*, iv. 296.) The will, again, is the very centre of man's nature; it is the seat of government. This the regenerating spirit occupies and controls: it renews, makes anew this will. Therewith the will ceases to be fleshly and becomes spiritual: the purposes and resolutions of the heart are unto obedience toward God. Obedience, to be acceptable unto God, must be willing, and such only the will renewed by the Divine Spirit can render. Then, again, a renewed will implies right affections. Willing service can be given only after the heart has been won. But it is only the new heart—the heart made new by the regenerating Spirit—that turns to God and clings to Him, that seeks to influence will and understanding on behalf of God.

Out of the renewed heart are the issues of this new spiritual life. From the centre it wells forth and circulates through every power and every member, so that the whole man is made new. [See Wotherspoon, *On Regeneration*, for practical treatment of the subject; and Delitzsch, *Psychology* (Edin. 1869), especially pp. 393-407, for an elaborate, speculative discussion.]

2. The Spirit of Christ working effectually changes the person of the elect by leading them to embrace Jesus Christ by faith:—*He gives them saving faith, by making them, in the sense of deserved condemnation, to give their consent heartily to the covenant of grace, and to embrace Jesus Christ unfeignedly.* The possession of this grace of faith is the condition of that new obedience which the regenerate render. He who believes in Christ is born again, and by his faith he overcomes the world (1 John v. 1, 4). Faith is the gift of God (Eph. ii. 8). The Spirit is indeed the real author of faith in the heart, but the means whereby it is wrought is the preaching of the word (Rom. x. 17; 1 Cor. i. 21). Man, however, can interfere with this operation of the Spirit by cherishing dispositions contrary to the divine mind (John v. 44). As in all the operations of the Spirit in man's renewal, there is in faith a real co-operating of the human will. Man may frustrate the grace of God: the will to do so must be overcome ere faith can rule. This faith has as its initial element a recognition of personal demerit. It is based upon a *sense of deserved condemnation*. Faith can arise only in a heart so humbled, and this self-humbling is itself the primary act of faith. Christ's call is to sinners, lost ones (Matt. ix. 13, etc.). Acknowledgment from the heart of guilt and helplessness is the first indication of an awakening to faith in one outside of ourselves, the sent of God. Where there is the spirit of faith there is belief in the record which God has given that in His Son is life, and outside of Him no life (1 John v. 11, 12). The man who is operated upon by the Spirit believes the righteousness of his own condemnation in order to believe in Christ who delivers from condemnation. Faith is an assent first with the heart, then with the understanding and will, to all the

terms and provisions of the covenant of grace,—an assent to the account there of our natural state as well as to the plan devised for deliverance therefrom. The essence of saving faith consists in the embracing of Jesus Christ. It is the possession of Christ that constitutes salvation, and is simply the grasping of Him who is our life. This is what entitles faith to be called *saving*. It joins us to the Saviour. Now the term faith has been employed in the Church to mean the truth which we receive from God's revelation. The catholic faith is the whole body of catholic doctrine. Misled by this application of the word, it soon became usual to think of faith as an intellectual assent to the set of propositions which constitute the creed of the Church. It was by and by seen that mere intellectual assent could not be represented as the means of salvation. Hence a distinction was made between *fides informis*, this mere intellectual assent, and *fides formata*, which was faith filled out and made complete by love and its operations. This was the Romish doctrine that man was not saved by faith alone, but by faith and love. The proper way to correct this error is to correct the definition of faith. It is not mere assent to doctrine, but it is reliance upon and surrender to Christ. [Consult : Halyburton's *Essay concerning the Nature of Faith*, Works, pp. 505-546, Glasgow 1833. O'Brien, *The Nature and the Effects of Faith*, London 1863. Also, very valuable, though somewhat prolix : Goodwin's *The Object and Acts of Justifying Faith*, Works, vol. viii.]

3. A further change wrought in the persons of the elect by the Spirit is Repentance, with which we associate the term Conversion :—*He gives them repentance, by making them, with godly sorrow, in the hatred of sin and love of righteousness, turn from all iniquity to the service of God.* The terms repentance and conversion, as we have said when speaking of regeneration, ought to go together, as two aspects of one and the same thing. The former word might be used, as equivalent to the Greek word *metanoia*, to mean the inward change ; and the latter might be used, corresponding to the Greek word *epistrophé*, to mean that

altered course of life which manifests outwardly the real existence of the other. The two words which are properly rendered by us respectively conversion and repentance, occur in Luke xvii. 4, where an offending brother is described as *turning* (*epistrepheo*) seven times a day, saying I repent (*metanoô*). His turning to him he had offended is proof of the presence of penitent feelings in his heart. Repentance embraces three distinct elements which may be gathered from a comparison and combination of those two passages, Ezek. xviii. 31 and 2 Cor. vii. 9-11, which together may be regarded as the classical passage on this subject. We have first of all true *sorrow of heart* for sin,—this, in the theology of the Church, was called *contritio*, as distinguished from *attritio*, a superficial feeling occasioned simply by fear of the consequences of sin. A good example of the difference is seen in the repentance of Peter and of Judas,—the one was godly sorrow, the other the sorrow of the world. If it is to be an element in true repentance, the sorrow must be over sin itself as transgression against God. This leads to the forsaking in heart and life of that sin which is sorrowed over. This may be identified with the *confessio* of the Church doctrine. According to its true conception, confession means the repudiation of sympathy with and propriety in that which is the subject of confession. When we confess sin, in the proper sense of the term, we mark it as something separable from us, which we desire to put away. The auricular confession of the Romish system is an emphasizing of a mere accidental, and the ignoring of an essential element in confession,—the substituting of an external, uttered acknowledgment of sin for the profound feeling of the heart. In the same way, penance, as a payment of penalties in an outward manner, usurped the place of penitence or true repentance as an enunciation from the heart of all evil. The third element in true repentance is the surrender of the whole life in new obedience. This may be regarded as equivalent to the *satisfactio* of the old Church doctrine. Repentance completes itself in return to that attitude of service from which man had fallen away. The satis-

faction which testifies to the reality of the repentance consists not in acts of penance rendered, nor in payment of penalties imposed, but in the *turning to the service of God*, which as holy service is now attractive to those who hate sin and love righteousness. It is to be observed that repentance is defined not merely as a forsaking of evil, but a turning to good. It is, indeed, only by turning to the good that we turn away from the evil. Dr. Chalmers speaks of the expulsive power of a new affection: we are to cease to do evil by learning to do well; walk in the Spirit so as not to fulfil the lusts of the flesh (Gal. v. 16).

4. Once more the work of the Spirit upon the persons of the elect is described as a process of moral cleansing which secures to them perfection at length:—*He sanctifies them, by making them go on and persevere in faith and spiritual obedience to the law of God, manifested by fruitfulness in all duties, and doing good works, as God offereth occasion.* Sanctification is continued regeneration, the seed of the new birth remaining in us, and presenting a constant opposition to sin (1 John iii. 9). The fellowship with Christ, which is the vital principle in regeneration, implies sanctification from the earliest dawning of spiritual life. It is an expansion and daily exercise of that living germ implanted in the new nature, a continuously advancing appropriation of that divine fulness opened to us in the day of regeneration. It is emphatically represented as the Spirit's work. This is in accordance with our Lord's instruction regarding the new birth: that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. What owes its origin to the Spirit must be carried on by Him: but it is by the Spirit in us, or by that begotten in us by the Spirit, that this new life is carried out. We, as born again, born of the Spirit, are called upon to sanctify ourselves, and to work out our own salvation. The life of sanctification is described as a persevering in faith and obedience. This implies conflict. So long as the remnants of sin exist in any part of man's nature, there is necessarily conflict between it and the renewed nature. In the struggle the

power of the new man is increased. The law of God presents the standard for our aim and imitation, and by comparison with it that which is evil in us is recognised. [Consult: Professor Candlish's recent handbook, chapter vii., *The Work of the Spirit in Sanctification*; also Howe's *Office and Work of the Spirit on the Individual and on the Christian Church*; Owen's and Goodwin's well-known treatises; and Dr. James Buchanan's and Professor Smeaton's more recent works.]

§ II. *Together with this inward change of their persons, God changes also their state; for, so soon as they are brought by faith into the covenant of grace, (1) he justifies them, by imputing unto them that perfect obedience which Christ gave to the law, and the satisfaction also which upon the cross Christ gave unto justice in their name. (2) He reconciles them, and makes them friends to God, who were before enemies to God. (3) He adopts them, that they shall be no more children of Satan, but children of God, enriched with all spiritual privileges of his sons. And last of all, after their warfare in this life is ended, he perfects the holiness and blessedness, first, of their souls at their death, and then both of their souls and their bodies, being joyfully joined together again in the resurrection at the day of his glorious coming to judgment, when all the wicked shall be sent away to hell, with Satan whom they have served; but Christ's own chosen and redeemed ones, true believers, students of holiness, shall remain with himself for ever, in the state of glorification.*

The previous section dealt with the change wrought in the persons of the elect in conversion; they received a new life, became possessed of the spirit of faith, a disposition that turned from sin to righteousness, and a mind that urged them to follow after holiness. As converted persons in whom this inward

change was wrought, they occupy a new position in the sight of God: as born again and believing in Christ Jesus they are justified before God and reconciled to Him; as penitents renouncing sin and turning to God they are adopted into God's family; and as saints striving after further attainments in holiness, they are destined to have God's promises of glory, honour, and immortality fulfilled unto them in the state of glorification. These changes, it is to be observed, are not described as following in succession to the changes of nature referred to before, nor yet as following one another in order of time. They must be distinguished and discussed separately; the succession is logical and not temporal. In time they are simultaneous, only in order of thought are they successive.

1. In logical order the first aspect of that altered state into which we are brought by believing in Jesus Christ according to the terms of the covenant of grace is justification:—*He justifies them, by imparting unto them that perfect obedience which Christ gave to the law, and the satisfaction also which upon the cross Christ gave unto justice in their name.* Justification is a declaration on the part of God that the sinner who believes in Jesus is no longer regarded or treated by Him as guilty, that he is no longer subject to sin's penalty, that for him there is no condemnation. Hence justification is rightly called a *forensic act*; it is a declaration that man's state as a believer is one of acceptance before God. In so doing God acts judicially, and is not regarded as infusing righteousness into the person of the saved individual. When Roman Catholic theology defines justification as the infusion of righteousness, there is evidently a confusion of justification, which is an act, with sanctification, which is a continued work or process. The Romish doctrine makes man's acceptance with God depend on the essential holiness of the new nature, whereas God justifies *sinners*, and then by His Spirit sanctifies those whom He has already justified. In the era of the Reformation, Osiander (1498–1552) propounded a doctrine of infused or essential righteousness in his theory of justification,

which though strongly anti-Pelagian, was in some respects very similar to the Romish view. According to this way of viewing the matter, justification was regarded as consisting in essential righteousness, so that the believer's personal condition and character rather than his state as one of forgiveness before God is made the primary fact in the account given of the new life. Justification then should rank under the previous section as a change in the person rather than here as a change of state. In opposition to this, we define justification as a declaration by God of the forgiveness of the sins of those who believe in Jesus. Those who have undergone the *personal* change by receiving into their hearts the spirit of faith, being now believers are justified in God's sight, stand before Him as accepted.

The doctrine of *Imputation*, set forth in the words on which we are commenting, involves the rejection of that theory of infusion of righteousness to which we have referred. The term imputation, as used in theology, does not mean simply a charge upon or against one, but rather the making of such a charge in terms of law and justice. We speak of the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, the imputation of man's sin to the second Adam, the imputation of Christ's righteousness to those who believe,—the imputation in each case being made in terms of the covenant of grace. Under the express conditions of that covenant, sin and righteousness respectively are regarded as of right belonging to the parties referred to therein. The ground of the sinner's justification is the work of Christ, the merit of which is attributed to us on condition of our believing in Him. The friend of another man's debtor says to his friend's creditor, put that debt to my account; when this proposal is accepted, the debt is imputed to me, who before this imputation was not chargeable with it, and he who was before a debtor is now in the state of one against whom the creditor can no longer advance a charge. Thus by the imputation of the sinner's guilt to Christ, the sinner who believes is justified.

That which is imputed to the sinner for his justification is

described as Christ's perfect obedience to the law and satisfaction on the cross unto justice. This embraces the whole work of Christ, His active and passive obedience, His doing and suffering, His life and death. Like the changes of state in the believer enumerated in this section, these distinctions in regard to the work of Christ are not to be viewed as successive and temporally separable parts of Christ's life, but as two aspects illustrated throughout its entire course. He suffered in doing and He did in suffering. In His passion, which began in the first stages of His humiliation and was only consummated on the cross, He was not passive in the sense of merely submitting to a superior power: no man took His life from Him, but He laid it down,—not merely suffered it to be taken, for He had power to lay it down (John x. 18). The ground of our justification lies not in the death of Christ upon the cross alone. Christ's whole life of obedience unto death is that upon which we must depend for our justification.

2. Not only the guilt of sin, but also the enmity of sin is removed. The term justification may be reserved for the state that results from forgiveness, and the term reconciliation may be used to describe the state that results from the removal of the enmity. The *Sum of Saving Knowledge* employs the terms in this manner. This whole section deals with the effects of Christ's life and death for us. The Spirit reconciles the elect and *makes them friends to God, who were before enemies to God*. This might have been more conveniently joined with the former division:—He justifies and He reconciles them. It is quite correct to say that the active obedience of Christ or His perfect righteousness of life is more particularly the ground of our acceptance and title to blessedness, that is, of our reconciliation to God; and that Christ's passive obedience or vicarious sufferings are the more immediate ground of our forgiveness, that is, of our justification before God. The term justification is commonly used to include all that is here expressed by justification and reconciliation. This is approved, and indeed insisted upon

by Principal Cunningham. In some places Calvin seems to restrict the terms in the same way as is done in our text. If we do distinguish them, we must ever remember how very closely they are related together. The imputation of Christ's righteousness, His active and passive obedience, is the condition of the remission of our sins and our acceptance before God,—the whole ground, therefore, of our justification and reconciliation. The Apostle speaks of reconciliation in this sense (Rom. v. 9, 10),—as sinners we are justified by Christ's blood, and as enemies we are reconciled by the death of the Son. The term reconciliation might indeed be applied to the change in the persons of the elect as the removal of that enmity which they had originally entertained toward God. The word, however, is employed by Paul to describe the removal of the divine wrath or displeasure against sin; and with him reconciliation, or peace with God, follows justification, or the freedom from sin, as a joint result of believing in Jesus Christ.

3. Those who are thus justified and reconciled unto God are further treated by Him as occupying a position of peculiar privilege, into which the Spirit introduces them:—*He adopts them, that they shall be no more children of Satan, but children of God, enriched with all spiritual privileges of His sons.* The state of believers in the Lord Jesus is not only that of justified and reconciled persons, who are simply not guilty and not liable, but it is also described as a more positive relation of sonship; they are not only not enemies, but actually sons; God not only removes His anger, but reveals His fatherly love. Here again we distinguish the state of adoption and the spirit of adoption; the latter is an element in the regenerate nature, developed in the progress of sanctification; the former is a consequence of justification, and is implied in the new mutual relations of God and the justified sinner (comp. Rom. viii. 15 and Gal. iv. 6, 7). This is a blessing enjoyed in the covenant of grace, where provision is made for bestowing it. 'It is a state of membership in the family of God,' says the late Dr. Candlish, 'the blessed

result of union and communion with the Lord Jesus in His Sonship. As justification is union and communion with Christ in His righteousness, and sanctification is union and communion with Christ in His holiness, or His holy character and nature, so, by parity of reasoning, adoption must be held to be union and communion with Christ in His Sonship : surely the highest and best union and communion of the three.' Justification is the ground of adoption. The declaration of the state of adoption implies the actual presence of the image of God in regeneration. The new birth gives to those who pass through it the right or power to become sons of God (John i. 12). The adoption is the divine recognition of filial relationship.

4. There might properly be distinguished only two states after that of nature and condemnation ; the state of grace and the state of glory. The three states of justification, reconciliation, and adoption, of which we have spoken, might be grouped together under the general designation of the state of grace. There remains then as co-ordinate with this first group the state of glorification. We have seen that justification, reconciliation, and adoption, like regeneration, believing, repenting, and beginning the life of sanctification are simultaneous—distinguished in order of thought, not of time. But the state of glory is successive to the state of grace. *After their warfare in this life is ended, He perfects the holiness and blessedness.* During this life the justified do not fully appropriate the benefits and enjoy the blessedness to which they are called. They are not perfect in holiness, and therefore they are not perfect in blessedness. The imperfectness of their personal change renders their state imperfect. When the personal change is complete, when the germ of the new life brought by the new birth has through the life of sanctification been brought to full maturity, then shall everything that militated against the blessedness of the justified be removed, and grace shall give way to glory. There is a true sense in which Christians may be called perfect even now in this life. Thus Paul speaks of those who are perfect—that is, all who have the

right end of their being set before them. This is true of all regenerate ones who like Paul are pressing to the mark ; but in respect of state no one does in this life perfectly attain unto the end of perfection.

We have further to treat in order of the Last Things, or the doctrine of Christian Eschatology. Perfection in holiness and blessedness is reached in respect—*first of their souls at death*. This is a clear statement of the Christian doctrine of the immortality of the soul. The souls of believers not only exist after the death of the body, but it is only then that they reach their true perfection. Not that the body as material is viewed as necessarily evil. This was a thoroughly pagan notion, fostered by such systems of morality as that of Stoicism. A false spiritualism that depreciates the body, and the life in the body, has often appeared within the limits of Christianity ; but its teaching is utterly opposed to the fundamental principles of the Christian doctrine of man. Indeed, the perfection of the soul apart from the body is not its ultimate perfection ; it is only as perfect as a separately existing soul can be. The statement before us affirms the immediateness of the transition of the soul into a higher life in the hour of death. This is a repudiation of the notion of the sleep of the soul. In the third century some entertained the belief that the soul slept with the body till the resurrection, when they were raised together. In the Middle Ages this idea found currency in Arabia, and during the Reformation it was adopted by the Anabaptists. Calvin wrote in the year 1534 a treatise entitled *Psychopannychia* directed against this idea. The Scriptures represent the justified as after death passing in among the spirits of the just made perfect. He that is holy, when death overtakes him, is issued into eternity a soul made perfectly holy.

Then in the resurrection this perfection is shared in by the body as well as the soul, when they are joyfully joined together. The fact of a resurrection of the body is a doctrine of Christian revelation. It was unknown to heathenism ; even those who had

some belief in the immortality of the soul could not dream of the rising again of the body (Acts xvii. 32). It is not explicitly stated in the Old Testament, but the figurative use of the idea of a bodily resurrection by the prophets (Isa. xxvi. 19 ; Ezek. xxxvii. 1-14, etc.) showed that the conception was not foreign to them as to the sages of the Gentile world. The fact stated is further for the Christian made yet more sure by the pledge afforded him in the resurrection of Christ. We are not told, however, how the dead are raised up, and with what body they shall come. Some characteristics of Christ's risen body are given, and Paul says that the body of our humiliation shall be fashioned so as to be conformed to the body of His glory (Phil. iii. 21). All that Scripture affirms is the essential identity of the resurrection body with the body laid down in death, which itself during life had been the subject of continuous change. It is not constructed of particles of corruptible matter ; for it is incorruptible. Each soul shall have its own body, and that a spiritual body (1 Cor. xv. 36, 42, 44). By this redemption of the body (Rom. viii. 23) the perfection of the whole man in holiness and blessedness is consummated.

The day of the resurrection of the body will also be the day of final decision,—the day of judgment, when a complete separation will be made between the righteous and the wicked. Death really marks the end of probation for man : from the hour of death the destiny of the individual for eternity is fixed. Some think that the abodes of the righteous and wicked between death and the final judgment are temporary or intermediate. The one, however, is in glory, though it may be not the highest and ultimate state of glory ; and the others are shut out, though it may not be in the place appointed as their eternal abode. Hence Protestants, relying on Scripture, ought not only to reject the idea of Purgatory, but also that of prayers for the dead. 'As the tree falleth so it lies,' as regards its position in eternity for weal or woe. The position of true believers is one of perfect blessedness, in which the assurance of absolute per-

manence is an important, an essential element. They are ever with the Lord.

'Tis but a little while and He shall come again,

Who died that we might live, who lives that we with Him might reign :

Then, O my Lord, prepare my soul for that glad day ;

Oh, wash me in Thy precious blood, and take my sins away.

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