

MISCELLANIES  
OF  
REV. THOMAS E. PECK,  
D. D. L. L. D.

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MISCELLANIES

OF

REV. THOMAS E. PECK,

D. D., LL. D.,

PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY IN THE UNION THEOLOGICAL  
SEMINARY IN VIRGINIA.

*COMPLETE IN THREE VOLUMES.*

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VOL. I.,

CONTAINING HIS MORE POPULAR WRITINGS AND LECTURES,

SELECTED AND ARRANGED BY

REV. T. C. JOHNSON, D. D.

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## PREFACE.

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1. *Our plan contemplates three volumes.* For a long time many of the friends of truth in the Southern Presbyterian Church, and particularly many of those who have had the privilege of sitting at the feet of Dr. Thomas E. Peck in the theological class-room, have been wont to mourn over his having written so little. It had been supposed that with his death the great mass of his thought, save as expressed by those who had taken impress from him while he lived, would cease to affect the destiny of his beloved church and the world; nor can he be acquitted of the charge of having written less than he ought. The Almighty had endowed him with remarkable powers for discerning the truth and comprehending how it might be applied in practical life. He had filled his soul with a glorious affection for the truth. He had bestowed upon him a masterful command over language in which he could set the truth forth. Dr. Peck cannot be cleared, therefore, of recreancy to duty in not having used his pen with greater constancy.

Nevertheless, a hasty examination of his literary remains was sufficient to reveal the fact that they were considerable. In his earlier years he was more prolific than in his later. He has left behind him many discussions, review articles, lectures and sermons; and as he was a precocious youth—a man who matured early—his early articles are generally

marked with all the ability by which his later productions are so obviously characterized.

Our public does not need to be advised that these remains are very valuable. It was a well-known characteristic of Dr. Peck that he gave himself to the study of questions of moment. He cared little for the mint, anise and cumin in the gardens of history, theology and philosophy, in which he wrought. The small questions of a day were never allowed to fill the field of his vision. They were never anything but small questions in his eyes. Hence, what he wrote is, for the most part, of perennial importance. The subjects which engaged his thought and pen were subjects of general and abiding interest. We venture the assertion, that the reader will, in running his eye over the table of contents of the present volume, be struck with the timeliness of most of the articles. The reason is evident: they will always be timely.

But not only are these articles valuable for their subjects and their development, they are to be admired and esteemed for their spirit. Dr. Peck was a spiritual child of Abraham. He had the patriarch's absolute confidence in God's word: the church must receive her creed from God; she must hold her polity at God's hands; she must worship as God indicates; the Lord is King in Zion. No Covenanter ever gave to God a higher place in religion than did Dr. Peck. He was the very embodiment and illustration of those grand principles to which Christ has summoned our church to bear witness. Several years before the Southern Presbyterian Church had an independent existence, in answer to the question, "Whose children have a right to baptism?" he wrote: "We ought to feel continually that the pastoral office

is a *trust*, and consequently that our only concern is to be found faithful. We have no right to preach our own gospel, or administer our own ordinances in our own way. We are not ministers plenipotentiary, but ambassadors with definite instructions, which we dare not transcend. If we are abused by foolish men for doing our duty, and refusing to yield to their humors, let them look to it. We serve the Lord Christ, and to him alone must we finally render our account. The smiles of such a Master will be an ample compensation for the frowns and curses of a world." Thirty-five years later, in controverting the theory of the moral obligation of the tithe, and speaking for voluntaryism, he says: "As to the fears that voluntaryism will not yield sufficient revenue, it may be said, that if voluntaryism is God's way, it will yield enough, and all fears are begotten of unbelief." The attitude toward what God says about the baptism of children, about the support of his cause, etc., is of a piece with his attitude toward what God says about everything. Almost every page of his writings betrays the precious fact. He saw how poor it was, he despised, and he hated, the wisdom of man when it arrayed itself against God. He had the holy daring which prefers to take God at his word in everything; the splendid and Christ-like faith which carries a cross to Golgotha and hangs on it, to help on the kingdom, if God order so, rather than seeks the advance of the kingdom through some easy and brilliant cross-cut of devil-worship. He may be thought narrow by the superficial, for his strict constructionism of the Bible; but only by the superficial. The broadest man is the man who walks in nearest accord with the mind of the Infinite.

This spirit of absolute fealty to God is one that every age, and ours not less than others, needs to have exemplified. The love of truth and, its inseparable accompaniment, the hatred of evil, by which these writings are characterized in so remarkable a degree, are bound to have a most happy influence upon the reader.

The reader who has a grain of discernment will see, too, that while our author hates intensely false principles and wicked men viewed as the enemies of God, he yet loves even the wickedest of men with the love of benevolence, and would win them to Christ. No man has spoken more strongly against Roman Catholicism, and many have condemned his spirit toward them as severe and harsh; but few of those who have thus condemned him have prayed, longed, and labored half as much for the conversion of Roman Catholics to the truth. He was, indeed, a redoubtable polemic against the damning currents of that paganized church; but his polemics were intended as means of rescue for those who otherwise were to remain in the grasp of those currents. The article in this volume entitled, "Sermons on Romanism—The Virgin Mary,"<sup>1</sup> well illustrates his posture toward Romanism. The article was prepared with the purpose of exciting a more general endeavor on the part of Protestants to win the Roman Catholics away from creature-worship to the worship of the Creator.

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<sup>1</sup> Notwithstanding this article is more than three-fourths quotation, it is put into this volume that again the books of Seymour *versus* Roman Catholicism may be commended to our Presbyterian people, and that our polemics against that body may, from this time on, carry more and more upon their face the evidence that we are not condemning for condemnation's sake, but that we may win to a knowledge of God's saving truth.



These writings, valuable thus for their spirit as well as for their matter, our public may have if it wishes. Our plan contemplates three volumes, of which this is the First. The Second Volume is to contain discussions in the realm of church polity (exclusive of those already published in the *Ecclesiology*), discussions in practical psychology, on important points in church history and theology, and some sermons. The Third Volume is to contain a brief memoir and his work on the Acts, which includes his fully-written commentary on the first seven chapters, his exegetical notes on the remaining portion, and his better briefs and sermons on any parts of the Book of Acts.

2. *The arrangement of the articles in this volume.* The articles in Volume I. have been selected as specially adapted to influence happily the intelligent "lay" reader. It is hoped that this volume will be widely circulated.

The arrangement of these papers has been a matter of more difficulty than is apparent on first sight. We have no hope that the arrangement effected will give universal satisfaction, but believe it will prove satisfactory to that class of readers worthiest of regard—to that class, namely, which will not become offended because of some supposed defect in an earlier article of a group, and throw the book down, to be read no more; but which is willing to hear such a man as Dr. Peck from start to finish, in the order in which his views are the easiest set forth. Had we followed the method of placing first the most attractive papers in a group, it is not improbable that some readers would accord to the collection a higher merit; but these papers have certain inter-relations, in part chronological and in part those of *development* of the general

subject of the group, and it is according to these relations that we have seen fit to group them. Hence the reader will find that nothing, according to our arrangement, is presupposed in any one article which has not been brought out, if necessary, in a preceding article.

3. *Two fragments* have been put into this volume, not because of any scarcity of material (we propose to leave unpublished material enough to make, perhaps, more than another volume, equal in size to these), but because these two fragments seemed each to have a distinctive value, and to be in nature a substantive addition to the contents of the other papers with which they are respectively grouped.

4. *Our work as editor* has been, as respects this volume, hardly more than nominal. Aside from selecting and arranging the articles, correcting an occasional *lapsus*, making the references to authors quoted more definite, transferring the matter of disfiguring parentheses here and there, and reducing them to the form of foot-notes, we have done little. When it has been necessary to do more, the words of the editor have been distinguished from those of the author by enclosing them in [brackets], and accompanying them by a foot-note of warning.

5. *To Mrs. Dr. Peck* the thanks of the church are due for her urgency in setting this enterprise agoing, and for her faithful and most efficient help in getting the copy ready. This fit consort for our beloved teacher, when she could no longer minister to his mortal well-being, after having wafted his soul on his journey to the eternal home by her outbursts of triumphant praise to the Redeemer, turned at once to the task of securing an abiding influence for her husband on the

church; and though, after a time, she was about to falter in the task single-handed, a very little encouragement gave her renewed strength, so that she has wrought on till to-day, doing all the needful copying, making helpful suggestions, and throwing withal an energy into her work that has infected our own fingers.

Thanks are due, too, to many ministers of the church for encouraging words and for promises of financial aid. Among these are to be named Drs. B. M. Palmer, P. D. Stephenson, and particularly the Rev. Theron H. Rice, who offered to pay for sixty copies single-handed. Helpful suggestions in handling the material have been graciously offered more than once by Dr. C. R. Vaughan.

THOS. C. JOHNSON.

HAMPDEN-SIDNEY, VA., *June 29, 1894.*

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# MISCELLANIES

OF THE LATE

THOMAS E. PECK, D. D., LL. D.

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OUR MOTTO: "TRUTH, LIKE A TORCH, THE MORE  
IT'S SHOOK IT SHINES."<sup>1</sup>

THE present publication will, perhaps, be deemed of too little importance to be in danger of any "*envious Juno*" sitting "cross-legged over its nativity," but as it happens, in one respect, to realize the dream of the mother of the founder of the Inquisition in being born with a *torch* in its mouth, it may not be unnecessary to meet, at once, the apprehensions of those amiable and excellent people who may be disposed to regard it as a monster, and, therefore, the better "burnt or sunk into the sea." It may be well to show that not all discussion and controversy are wrong; that not every torch is the torch of the inquisitor or the incendiary. The leading purposes which this Journal is designed to accomplish have been frankly avowed in the opening article of this number; and among these is *agitation*, but not agitation for its own sake. God will curse and all good men abhor the agitation

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<sup>1</sup> This article appeared in the first number of the *Presbyterial Critic*, that able and scholarly monthly review, which, during the years 1855 and 1856, was "conducted," as the title-page informs us, "for an association of gentlemen, by Stuart Robinson and Thomas E. Peck." As the motto seized upon for that enterprise is one which he might have adopted for almost every enterprise of his life, and as the spirit which Mr. Peck manifested in his writings in the *Critic* was one which, with shades of difference, he continued to manifest till his death, his explication here given of "Truth, like a torch, the more it's shook it shines," has been thought an appropriate exordium for all his works to follow.—ED.

which has any other purpose than the discovery, illustration, and progress of truth, the glory of Christ and the best interests of man. Our aim is, by discussion, and, if need be, by controversy, to explain and vindicate the great principles of Christianity, with special reference to the life, posture, and active operations of the Presbyterian Church. So far as bitterness and asperity may be mingled with our work; so far as we may fall, through the infirmity and sinfulness of our nature, into the error of those sons of thunder, who, in their ignorance of "what manner of spirit they were of," would fain have invoked the fire of heaven upon the enemies of their meek and lowly Master; so far we trust we shall be willing to submit to the admonition of our brethren, while we ask forgiveness of him who spareth us "as a father spareth his own son that serveth him." It is our desire, however, and by the help of God we hope to be able, to abstain from giving just occasion of offence to any human being, and particularly to any who love our common Lord. We cannot promise not to be in earnest, and, it may be, vehement; but we trust it will be according to a distinction which has been made, the vehemence of *sentiment*, not the vehemence of *passion*. The torch shall be shook only that it may shine.

So much for our purpose and the manner in which we hope to fulfil it. But some people object to all controversy as of doubtful expediency, if not positively wrong; and in this country, where, happily, no established religion exists to be the engine of tyranny; where every man has the right, civilly and politically, to think as he pleases, under a responsibility to God alone, controversy seems to wear (if we may be allowed so to express it) an unconstitutional aspect, as if we attempted to abridge the liberty of a brother, when we refute his opinions. The idea was happily expressed in a sermon by a minister of the South a few years ago, when he said that "in this country *diversities in religion are estab-*

lished." A man may hold his own with any degree of tenacity, but he must not meddle with other people's. "The conscience of every individual is recognized as the only tribunal before which a religious volition, sentiment, or act can be justified or condemned. Thus the men of Babylon make Succothbenoth, and the men of Cuth make Nergal, and the men of Hamath make Ashima, and the Avites make Nibb haz and Tartak, and so on. Now, if the men of Israel say, our God hath made us and all things that are made, it may be endured; but if they proceed to testify 'that our God is the *only* true God, and there are *no* gods that are made with hands,' then the men of Israel violate the religious rights of the men of Babylon, of Cuth, of Hamath, etc., and by *their exclusive* religion put themselves without the pale of the general toleration." It cannot be denied that there is some truth in this quaint statement: that there is a general disposition to bury differences, or, what amounts to the same thing, to *establish* them. In our own denomination, debate is dreaded in church courts and public journals, as if it were in itself injurious to religion, and that, too, with the history of the first Synod at Jerusalem, where there was "much disputing,"<sup>1</sup> before our eyes. The evil concomitants of controversy are confounded with the essence of it. It may be well, therefore, to indicate, in a few sentences, the necessity, together with some of the advantages, of controversy.

In the first place, then, controversy of some sort is a necessary element in every inquiry after truth, in what the logicians call "contingent matter." There are certain judgments of the mind which are primitive, universal and necessary, fundamental laws of belief, the very conditions of thinking or intelligence, which philosophers have ably illustrated, but which, as fundamental and primitive, cannot be made the object of controversy. They cannot be recognized in this character and at the same time denied, without, as Sir

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<sup>1</sup> Acts xv. 7.



William Hamilton expresses it, reducing all philosophy to zero. Then there are the truths of mathematics, which are also necessary. If a man denies, he lands himself in absurdity as well as falsehood; there is a contradiction, a violation of a fundamental law of thought, a condition of thinking, and the result again is zero. There can be no controversy here. As soon, however, as the mind emerges from the regions of intuition and demonstration controversy begins, and must begin. In probable reasoning there is a balancing of weights; a state of equilibrium is a state of doubt; the preponderance of one scale or the other is presumption, opinion, conviction, moral certainty, according to the degrees of preponderance. It is in the region of probability that we live, move and have our being, that we are educated and disciplined for honor, glory and immortality. And yet the moment a man begins to think in this department, that moment his mind becomes a battle-field of contending probabilities, an array of evidence and argument on one side, and a mass of difficulties and objections, soluble and insoluble, on the other. It is often a protracted conflict; and many a frail body, worn down by the ceaseless excitement of the mind, the agony of doubt, the alternations of light and darkness, has perished under its severity before the victory has been obtained. It matters not whether one debates with himself or another; there is *discussion*, a shaking of the mind, a shaking of the object-matter about which it is employed, a shaking it away from the difficulties, a shaking of the torch of truth from all that may choke and hinder the purity and brilliancy of the flame.

Various *discussions* tear our heated brain;  
 Opinions often turn: still doubts remain;  
 And who indulges thought increases pain.

The pain which the poet describes is not the result merely of a conflict of probabilities, but of the disturbing influence of the passions and prejudices which beset us in our fallen

state. We have mutilated the limbs of truth in our rebellion against the Father of lights; and it is the Nemesis of truth that we cannot gather her scattered members without ceaseless and exhausting search, or retain the possession without ceaseless vigilance against the assaults of doubt and falsehood. The inquiry of truth, according to Lord Bacon's famous saying, is the love-making or wooing of it, and, with an offended mistress, the course of love cannot be smooth.

After all allowance, however, has been made for the discomfort arising from the tyranny or occasional insurrection of the passions and the importunate intrusions of doubt, the law which God and the constitution of our nature impose upon us in the discovery of truth by discussion and controversy is not oppressive in its operation, but, on the contrary, is the source of some of our highest improvement and purest pleasures. And on this point we will quote the words of one who is as competent a judge in such matter as any man who has lived since the days of Aristotle, though in doing so we must enter our *caveat* against what he says of the comparative value of truth and the search after truth in its application to the department of human duty: "If the accomplishment of philosophy imply a cessation of discussion, if the result of speculation be a paralysis of itself, the consummation of knowledge is the condition of intellectual barbarism. Plato has profoundly defined man the 'hunter of truth'; for in this chase, as in others, the *pursuit* is all in all, the *success* comparatively nothing. 'Did the Almighty,' says Lessing, 'holding in his right hand *Truth*, and in his left *Search after Truth*, deign to proffer me the one I might prefer, in all humility, but without hesitation, I should request *Search after Truth*.' We *exist* only as we energize; *pleasure* is the reflex of unimpeded energy; energy is the *means* by which our faculties are developed, and a higher energy the *end* which their development proposes. In *action* is thus contained the existence, happiness, improvement and perfection

of our being; and knowledge is only precious as it may afford a stimulus to the exercise of our powers and the condition of their more complete activity. Speculative truth is, therefore, subordinate to speculation itself, and its value is directly measured by the quantity of energy which it occasions, immediately in its discovery, mediately through its consequences. Life to Endymion was not preferable to death; aloof from practice, a waking error is better than a sleeping truth. Neither, in point of fact, is there found any proportion between the *possession* of truth and the *development* of the mind in which they are deposited. Every *learner* in science is now familiar with more truths than Aristotle or Plato ever dreamt of knowing; yet, compared with the Stagirite or the Athenian, how few among our *masters* of modern science rank higher than intellectual barbarians! Ancient Greece and modern Europe prove, indeed, that the 'march of intellect' is no inseparable concomitant of the 'march of science'; that the cultivation of the individual is not to be rashly confounded with the progress of the species." That the illustrious author lays great stress upon the *process* which we are forced to employ in the search after truth in its relation to the discipline of the mind appears also in his conclusive argument against mathematics as an instrument for this purpose, the mind being passive rather than active in tracing the connection among necessary propositions. There is little development of energy.

What has been said of the necessity of discussion and controversy for the progress of the individual is true also for the species, in a larger degree than some people seem to be aware, or are willing to acknowledge. To say nothing of philosophy and science, no man can deny that theology, as contra-distinguished from religion, has made great progress in the lapse of centuries. We yield to none in our abhorrence of the theory of "development" as held by Romanists and Tractarians; a theory which forbids all controversy, be-

cause it necessitates a negation of thought; a theory which makes the word of God of no effect, and compels its rejection by every man who has not resigned his understanding to the dictation of a priesthood, whose wickedness is equalled only by their ignorance of the gospel; but there has certainly been a development of the relations of the truth contained in the Scriptures. That truth has been shaken a thousand times in the storms and tempests which have beat upon the church, and has not only not been extinguished, but has burned and shone more brightly for them all. The promise of the Saviour has been amply and gloriously redeemed; the Comforter has been the dwelling-place of his people in all generations, or rather they have been his dwelling-place; he has, under all combinations of circumstances, led them into "the whole truth" of Scripture suited to their emergencies; has instructed, animated, sustained, and given them the victory. And, however long it may please her adorable Redeemer that his coming shall be delayed; though many tedious years of suffering and blood may elapse before her warfare shall be accomplished, the church may always be assured that the heaven-kindled torch which she bears aloft in the midnight darkness of the world will shed a clear and steady light upon her path. The diversities of opinion, the discussions and controversies among brethren, will all conspire to demonstrate the perfect purity of the precious jewel entrusted to her charge, and to bring her forth, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.

A living writer who has never been remarkable for his love of truth, either in speculation or in practice, does homage to truth in the following words, an homage the more valuable as coming from an enemy: "It is, in fact," he says, "the beauty and the perfection of truth, that it should stand the action of the most varied tests. It is only an impure ore, which, while it resists, perhaps, the action of one or two reagents, will, in the end, yield before the energy of a third,

while the pure metal will defy the action of every successive test. Truth may be compared to a gem without a flaw, which may be viewed in different lights, which, though held up to the eye on any side, and without artificial assistance, shall always present the same beauty and purity." The effect of controversy has been, in every variety of method, to test the reality and genuineness of truth; and the testing process has been a purifying process. The word of the Lord is as pure as silver seven times tried. The most violent and protracted agitation of the water of life has stirred up no sediment; it is clear as crystal still. While, therefore, we deplore the bitterness, the angry passions, the numberless evidences of a carnal mind, which is enmity against God, that the history of religious controversies presents, we rejoice in the sovereign providence of him who overrules all for the glory of his name and the progress of his truth. Jesus came to send not peace, but a sword, and yet he is the Prince of Peace, and peace will be the consummation of his reign. The solution of the difficulty is that the peace will be the result of *conquest*, of absolute and universal conquest. He shall put down all rule and authority and power; consign all liars to the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; set up that kingdom which rests upon the foundation of truth, and transform the torch into a blazing sun. Meanwhile, his servants must fight, must endure hardness as good soldiers. Conquest implies war. Only let us remember that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual; mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, and the subjugation of every thought to the obedience of Christ.

If we descend from this general survey of the history of the church to an examination of particular periods, the result is the same. Take the age of Apologetics, of Polemics, of Scholasticism, of Systematic Theology; or the periods when (according to the division which pleases some writers)

the Johannine, the Petrine or the Pauline types of doctrine respectively prevailed, and it will be apparent, in the language of Hall, "that the evils of controversy are transient, the good, permanent." And in our own beloved church in this country, which has often been shaken by debate, and more than once torn asunder in consequence of it, we are able to perceive even now, and shall see more clearly hereafter, how wisely and mercifully these storms have been ordered by him who holdeth the stars in his right hand and walketh in the midst of the golden candlesticks. If the "brothers of charity," as they were then called, "who constituted the *vis inertiae*, the power of standing still," had had their way in the last great struggle, what, in all human probability, would have been the posture of the Presbyterian Church now? Alas! let the condition of the New-School body and of the Congregational churches which sympathized with them answer this question. That glorious deliverance had to be fought for; it was the result of the blessing of God upon the *arms* of his people, "contending," agreeably to his command, "for the faith once delivered to the saints." Further, it is plain to any man who has his eyes open, that many of the great principles contended for from 1830 to 1837 have not yet been fully recognized, at least in some of their applications; that these principles are still working and must work till the *fulness of time* shall come, when they will again appear upon the field and assert their right, perhaps in scenes as stormy as any that have been witnessed before, to the homage and obedience of the church. "A bright and blissful reformation," sending "a sovereign and reviving joy into the bosom of him that reads or hears," while "the sweet odor of the returning gospel imbathes his soul with the fragrancy of heaven."

If these things be so there is no choice left us. We tell our brethren that there is *no standing still*. Stagnation is corruption. Life is motion. Motion is progress. Not the pro-

gress of the canting madman who would reform by universal destruction, but that progress which consists in the development, illustration, and application of great principles, the eternal principles of truth and righteousness, which were before all earthly things and will survive them all. We must choose against truth and error; they lie together in this world so complicated and commingled that patience, vigilance, and skill are required to separate them;<sup>1</sup> to receive the whole mass is to receive the error along with the truth; to reject the whole is to reject the truth along with the error. The separation of the wheat from the chaff, the precious from the vile, is the result of the sifting winds of controversy. We are to prove all things; to hold fast that which is good. An idle acquiescence in the opinions of our fathers, natural or ecclesiastical, will never do; we must have some better reason for our faith than a Turk or a Hindoo has. We are responsible to God, and, therefore, must use our reason, with prayer for the illumination of the Spirit. "We may purpose, indeed, to live on what others have done, the mighty men of the days which are past, the fathers or revivers of our faith; and we may count that their gains will as much enrich us as they enriched them. But this will not prove so indeed; for it is a just law of our being, one of the righteous compensations of toil, that what a man wins by his labor, be it inward truth, or only some outward supplianc of his need, is ever far more really his own, makes him far more truly rich, than aught which he receives or inherits ready-made at the hands and from the toils of others. And they of whom we speak *earned* their truths by toil and by

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<sup>1</sup>See a passage in Milton's *Arcopagitica* (Bohn's London Ed. 1848), p. 67 of Works, Vol. II. : "Good and evil we know in the field of this world grow up together almost inseparately, and the knowledge of good is so involved and interwoven with the knowledge of evil, and in so many cunning resemblances hardly to be discerned, that those confused seeds which were imposed upon Psyche as an incessant labor to cull out and sort asunder were not more intermixed."

struggle, by mighty wrestlings till the day broke; watering with the sweat of their brow, oftentimes with tears as of blood, yea, with the life-blood of their own hearts, the soil which yielded them in return an harvest so large. So was it, and so only, that they came again with joy, bearing their sheaves with them. And would we do the same, let us first indeed see that we let nothing go—that we forfeit no part of that which we inherit at their hands. But also with a just confidence in that blessed Spirit who is ever with his church, who is ever leading it into the truth which it needs, let us labor, that through prayer and through study, through earnest knocking, through holy living, that inexhausted and inexhaustible word may render up unto us *our truth*, the truth by which we must live, *the truth, whatsoever that be, which, more than any other, will deliver us from the lies with which we in our time are beset, which will make us strong where we are weak, and heal us where we are divided, and enable us most effectually to do that work which our God would have done by us in this the day of our toil.*"<sup>1</sup>

But these results cannot be reached without controversy. We may be idle, but the enemy never is. We must either do or die.

The allegation that religion loses more than she gains by controversy, we will answer in the words of Dr. Mason, that thunderbolt of war: "This allegation," he says, "with an allowance for the mismanagement of unskilful advocates, is a direct censure of her champions, and a surrender of her cause. Are they who espouse such an opinion prepared for its consequences? Are they willing to say, that when the world was lying in ignorance, in wickedness, and in woe, that the introduction of light from above produced more evil than good? That the gospel is a plague and not a blessing, because, through the malignity of its foes, it has often brought a sword instead of peace? That it would have

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<sup>1</sup>Trench's *Hulsean Lectures*, 1845, pp. 84, 85.



been better for men never to have 'known the way of righteousness' than risk opposition in following it? That reformation of religion was a senseless scheme; that the martyrs died like fools; and that all the heroes who have been 'valiant for the truth,' all the 'ministers of grace' who have explained and established it; all the 'apostles, prophets, and wise men' whom the wisdom of God commissioned to reveal it; and that wisdom itself in the person of Jesus Christ, were disturbers of human tranquillity, and spent their time in no better labor than that of 'turning the world upside down'? If you start at these things, what do you mean by asserting that 'religion suffers from controversy'? For all, prophets, apostles, wise men, and the Redeemer himself, fought her battles, and yielded their latest breath in her defence." \* \* \* "Had apathy like ours enthralled the spirit of our fathers, we should hardly have been able, at this day, to distinguish, in religion, between our right hand and our left." Religion would long ago have perished, or, at least, "betrayed and insulted, her banner thrown down, her weapons shivered, her lips sealed, her limbs bound in affliction and iron, would have been laid at the feet and left to the mercy of her enemies, in testimony of *the respect and attachment of her friends.*"

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. John M. Mason's Works, Vol. III., pp. 7, 8, 9.—Ed.

## THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THE POOR.<sup>1</sup>

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WHEN John the Baptist sent his disciples to Jesus with the question, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" the answer was, "Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and *the poor have the gospel preached to them.*" These were the credentials by which the divine mission of Jesus of Nazareth was authenticated; these the evidences upon which the trembling faith of the prisoner's messengers might confidently lean for support, and the wounded spirit of the prisoner himself—if peradventure it had been too much shaken by the sudden and disastrous termination of his public ministry—rest itself in peace. In order to comprehend the full import of this remarkable statement of our Lord, it will be necessary to remember that his miraculous works were designed not merely to authenticate his mission, but also to reveal its nature; they were "signs" not only of a special divine interposition, but of a divine interposition for a beneficent purpose; striking and overwhelming proofs that there was something more than mortal in that power whose results were exhibited to the eye, something more than mortal in those accents which fell upon the ear, a power wielded by infinite compassion, and accents uttered from out the depths of a love which would spare no sacrifice, however costly, to gratify its measureless yearnings over the victims of sin and the children of woe. How different the wonders which inaugurated the ministration of the law, of condemnation and death, from

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<sup>1</sup> This article appeared in the *Presbyterial Critic*, October, 1855.—*Ed.*

those which introduced the ministration of righteousness, grace and peace! Moses the servant, commanding the reverence of the people in circumstances of terror; Jesus the Son, attracting the love of mankind by voices and deeds of mercy! It had been easy for him to establish his claims, so far as mere evidence of divine authority was needed, by smiting men with blindness, lameness and leprosy, or the stroke of death, as was done by messengers of God under the dispensation of law; but he chose rather to proclaim the spirit and nature of his mission in the very acts by which he demonstrated its divinity, in giving sight to the blind, soundness to the lame, health to the leper, ears to the deaf, and life to the dead. When two of his disciples, Sons of Thunder, in their indignant but ill-considered zeal in his behalf, desired to invoke the fire of heaven upon his enemies, in imitation of the stern representatives of the law, he uttered that memorable rebuke, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of."

Another circumstance, noticed by Lord Bacon<sup>1</sup> in connection with the last, as characteristic of our Saviour's miracles, is the fact that they were all "consummate about man's body, as his doctrine respected the soul of man. The body of man needeth these things: sustenance, defence from outward wrongs, and medicine; it was he that drew multitude of fishes into the nets, that he might give unto men more liberal provision; he turned water, a less worthy nourishment of man's body, into wine, a more worthy, that glads the heart of man; he sentenced the fig-tree to wither for not doing that duty whereunto it was ordained, which is to bear fruit for man's food; he rebuked the winds that threatened destruction to the sea-faring men. No miracle of his is to be found to have been of judgment or revenge, but all of goodness and mercy, and respecting man's body; for as touching riches he did not vouchsafe to do any miracle, save one only,

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<sup>1</sup> Med. Sac. 2.

that tribute might be given to Caesar." Here again the wonderful works of the gospel are in strong contrast with the wonderful works of the law; in their sphere as well as in their spirit; the one being mainly in the outward frame of nature, "signs from heaven"; the other in the bodies and outward estate of men.

To apply these principles, let it be observed that the preaching of the gospel to the poor is mentioned along with the miracles of our Lord as constituting part of the evidences of his Messiahship. It was certainly not a miracle in the same sense as opening the eyes of the blind, and giving life to the dead; yet it resembled a miracle in being a striking departure from the established customs of mankind, and especially from the customs of those teachers who were in the highest esteem among the Jews. The practice of the Pharisees was to teach the common people, as Gideon "taught" the men of Succoth with thorns and briars, with rites and ceremonies very grievous to be borne; holding, perhaps, like their modern successors, that ignorance is the mother of devotion, that is, devotion to priests and ecclesiastical masters. The feeling of their hearts was, "This people, which knoweth not the law, are cursed," fit only to be squeezed, crushed, plucked and peeled. But these common people heard Jesus gladly; the voice of tenderness sounded strangely in their ears, sympathy with their sorrows evoked the better feelings of their nature, and they were led captive in chains of affectionate respect by him whom the Pharisees despised. No wonder that it had the effect of persuading them that there was something extraordinary and celestial in the person and mission of the lovely Nazarene. It had never before been so seen in Israel; the records of history, immemorial tradition, afforded no parallel. Great men had condescended to receive the admiration and applause of the undistinguished multitude; they were willing to use them as means and instruments in the acquisition of

wealth or power; but they knew nothing and cared nothing for their sorrows, their temptations, their ceaseless struggles, their miserable lives and unlamented deaths. Good men there had been, who had not refused some words of consolation and encouragement. But here was one whose very vocation it was to proclaim glad tidings to the poor, the poor in health, in estate, in the furniture of the mind, in that righteousness which hides the nakedness of the soul, adorns it and makes it beautiful to God, in that peace and joy and hope without which life is a weariness, and death but an entrance into a wider and deeper sphere of degradation and despair. Was it strange that they should ask, "Is not this the Christ?" How glorious the contrast with those who boasted that they were the peculiar people of the Lord!

Now, as Christ was, so are his people in this world. They have been organized into a visible church on earth for the very purpose of proclaiming glad tidings to the poor; to instruct, to encourage, to comfort all who need instruction, comfort, and encouragement; the doing of this work is their testimonial to the world that they are Christ's, and just in proportion as they do this great thing faithfully, earnestly, and constantly, do they show themselves to be his. The church's whole work is comprehended in this, and all her furniture and armor given her of God to make and maintain her conquests have reference to this end. The poor she has always with her, and will have till the coming of the Lord; the poor within her own pale, the immense masses of the poor all around her in the world that lies in wickedness, bankrupt in knowledge, righteousness and liberty, under the curse of God. This is the grand object of her Home Missions, her Foreign Missions, of all her schemes of benevolence. Hereby shall the world believe that she is sent of God.

Thus far the term "poor" has been considered in its large sense, as including those who are destitute of that which constitutes the true riches of human nature as well as the

poor in worldly goods. But it is evident that, whether we consider our Saviour's statement as evidence merely, or as revealing the nature of his mission, it must have special reference to the "poor of this world," the poor with respect to this world. The evidence of miracles was *sensible* evidence; it was addressed to the senses, and the evidence afforded by the preaching of the gospel to the poor, it should seem, must have been of the same sort: a visible preaching to a visible poor. If, on the other hand, we consider this statement as an illustration of the spirit and nature of our Lord's ministry, the same conclusion is reached. His disposition and ability to heal the diseases and infirmities of the soul were indicated by his disposition and ability to heal the diseases and infirmities of the body. Some of these infirmities affected the whole body, others only certain parts and organs; sometimes sensation was destroyed, sometimes the power of motion; here there was a case of partial, there a case of total, paralysis. But all these affections of the body, whether general or specific, adumbrated the morbid conditions of man's immortal part; and the power to cure the one was proof of power to cure the other. The connection between the two is sometimes beautifully brought out, as, for example, in the healing of the paralytic who was let down through the roof: "Whether is easier, to *say*, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to *say*, Arise, and walk?" It was doubtless easy for any man to *say* either; but to do either was impossible to all. It was easy for the Saviour to say both, and do both; for with him it is only to "speak and it is done, to command and it standeth fast." But the grand difference was, that the doing of the one was visible to men, the doing of the other, not. He adds, therefore, "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (then saith he to the sick of the palsy), Arise," etc. The seen became witness for the reality of the unseen. It should seem, then, that the harmony of the statement re-

quired that the poverty referred to should be literal poverty as to the outward estate, as the blindness and lameness were real affections of the body. If it should be said that, in this case, congruity required that the Lord should have made these poor rich in this world's goods, as he gave bodily vision to the blind, the answer will be found in the very able paper read by Dr. Chalmers before the Royal Institute of France, on "The Distinction, both in Principle and Effect, between a Legal Charity for the Relief of Indigence, and a Legal Charity for the Relief of Disease."

This view of the passage has been the more earnestly insisted upon, because it is alleged, in defence of splendid churches from which the poor are practically excluded, that our Saviour refers here, as Isaiah did in the prediction concerning him from which the phrase is borrowed, to the spiritually poor; and that, as the rich are often among the poorest in this respect, the condition is fulfilled in preaching, even exclusively, to them. But in addition to what has been said, let it be remembered that the majority of Christ's people are poor in this world, that they are poor in the sense of being subject to affliction and temptation, that they are in pressing need of the glad tidings to console and animate them, and that *these* poor are excluded from such churches. They live in lanes and alleys, and cannot be allowed to confess their sins with those who live in avenues.

The preaching of the gospel to the poor of this world, we are therefore warranted in asserting, is at once an evidence of its divine origin and a glorious illustration of its nature and design. It is a remedy for sin, and all the evils which have followed in its train, personal, social, temporal and eternal evils. It is a grand scheme of restoration, provided for man by the eternal God, illustrated in its tendencies by the effects of the Saviour's personal ministry on earth, and by the ministry of the church, so far as she has apprehended aright her true mission and faithfully labored to perform it;

destined to be fully and gloriously illustrated, when its divine Author shall return to earth, and the tabernacle of God shall dwell with men, and he shall be their God, and they shall be his people, and there shall be no more pain, nor sickness, nor sorrow, and he shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. A consummation which the whole creation has long groaned for, which modern philosophy has endeavored to achieve in vain, which has fired the imaginations of poets and nerved the arms of philanthropists, but a consummation which has been reserved to grace the triumph of the Man of Sorrows, the Second Adam, the Lord from heaven. The true posture of the church, if she would be a witness and an earnest of this restoration, her highest duty, is manifest from this view of the subject. "As the larger portion of mankind will ever be found in the classes of neglected and restricted education, to despair of the poor and of the many is virtually to despair of the well-being of the race." So did not Jesus Christ. "Unlike all others who despised the people, despaired of them, he addresses himself to the poor and the ignorant. It is the mass of the nation he hopes first to reach. But what are his arts of persuasion with the people? Does he hold out the lure of wealth, or earthly honors, or pleasure? Is he slipping the leash of law and order from the passions of the multitude, and cheering them on to the prey that is before them in the possessions of the wealthy? He honestly assures his auditory that they must expect to lose all in following him, that his poorest followers must become yet poorer, and that his disciples are doomed men, bearing their own crosses on the way to death. He writes no books. He forms no plots. He meddles not with political strife, nor interferes with religious sects, but to denounce them all, and to turn their combined enmity on his single and unsheltered head. And the weapon by which he is to foil all his enemies, and to subdue the world to the obedience of the faith, is—hear it, O heavens, and be astonished, O earth—the



foolishness of preaching, the plain tale of man to his fellow-men concerning God and his Christ. By the preaching of the word, and especially to the poor, Christ is come to change the face of society. Jesus Christ was, indeed, the discoverer of these two great truths, that all reformations must begin with the lower classes, and that preaching is the grand instrument of changing the opinions of a nation. The latter had, indeed, been used in the older dispensation, but its applicability to such a scheme as that of the world's conversion had never been suspected. Yet how well established are both now become. The man who, in endeavoring to heat a mass of water, should build his fire above the fluid, would in physics be but as absurdly employed as the man who in morals looks to the highest points of a corrupt society as the first to be reformed. As in the heated liquid, the lower stratum when warmed passes upward, and gives place to another still colder, which in its turn is penetrated with heat, and then displaced by the descending of yet another; so in the moral world the only efficient reforms are the reforms that begin at the lower portion of society and work upward. It was so in the first preaching of the gospel. It was so in the English Reformation. It was so in the religious influence that followed the labors of Wesley and Whitefield. And Jesus Christ first discovered and first applied this great but simple principle, that to the poor the gospel should be preached."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Williams' Miscellanies*, p. 229. The author, in a note, quotes the following extract from the correspondence of Voltaire with D'Alembert, to show how the "Father of the Faithful" (Infidels) regarded the masses. Would that the infidels of the present day would let the "rabble" alone! "Let us bless this happy revolution that has within the last fifteen or twenty years taken place in the minds of all *respectable* people (*tous les honnetes gens*). It has outrun my hopes. *As to the rabble, I meddle not with them; the rabble they will always remain. I am at pains to cultivate my garden, but yet it will have its toads; they should not, however, prevent my nightingales from singing.*"

To the poor the gospel is to be *preached*. We do not underrate the importance of the press as an instrument in the diffusion of the words of eternal life; we rejoice in those winged messengers which fly through the length and breadth of our country, and silently alight in the abodes of the ignorant and degraded; but the spirit of the living creature is in the winged words, spoken with all the accompaniments of manner, and the adaptation to the state of persons addressed, which are necessary to make them effectual. "A word spoken upon its wheels<sup>1</sup> is like apples of gold in pictures of silver;" the spirit of the living creature is in the wheels. A tract has but one voice to utter, and if that utterance happens to be unsuited to the case of the person who reads, there is no help for it. "As vinegar upon nitre, so is he that singeth songs to a heavy heart." Whether the reader be a conscience-smitten, penitent sinner, who is thirsting for peace and consolation, or a hardened reprobate, or a cavilling sophist, or a sincere inquirer after truth, the tract or book knows not. The living minister can change his voice, and, in the name of God, proclaim the thunders of the law, or whisper the sweet promises of the gospel, as the nature of the case may require. The tract has no power to demand or to entreat the attention; it may lie long or lie forever upon the shelf. Not so the word conveyed by the living preacher. And then there are thousands of the poor who cannot read; and the tract is a dumb messenger to them. The living minister is the cheapest of all instrumentalities; he is many books in one, can travel further and last longer than any book or tract. In short, the *preaching* of the gospel, the rightly dividing of the word of truth, giving to each his portion in due season, this is the ordinance of God for the salvation of men; it has the birthright and is entitled to the blessing; it was before writing, before printing, in the order of time; it is before them now in point of power and effi-

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<sup>1</sup> Proverbs xxv. 11, in the margin.

ciency. With all the ceaseless working of the press, and the millions of pages it showers upon the world, the necessity is importunate as ever for prayer to the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth more laborers into his harvest.

Among the poor that have a special claim upon our regard are those who crowd our cities. It was in the towns and cities of the Holy Land that our Saviour chiefly exercised his ministry. Towns and cities were for centuries the strongholds of Christianity, as the term *pagan* bears witness. They are the great centres of influence, the hearts whose pulsations are felt to the very extremities of the social body, the *foci* in which all human activities of mind and body burn most fiercely, where the highest virtue and the deepest vice are alike to be found; the great fountains of good, the prolific sources of all monstrous, all prodigious things, abominable, unutterable. Who can fail to perceive that they are the great missionary fields? that the obligation resting upon the church to take possession of them is immense and superlative? The encouragement to do so is also great. When men are congregated in great numbers, the same amount of labor will tell more widely and powerfully than when expended upon a scattered rural population; and if the blessing of God should accompany these labors, and genuine conversions take place, the same intense activity which pervades all things else, and which produces such a rapid development of character in all departments of human life, will be felt also in the church and in the development of Christian character.

Finally, this subject appeals to us as lovers of our country and its free institutions. The best method in which we can "widen the area of freedom" is that of widening the area of religion, of the fear of God, among that vast multitude which constitutes the basis of the state. To extend our institutions without extending the knowledge and character upon which they rest is to commit the folly of building wider than the

foundation. The great dangers which beset us are superstition and infidelity; a superstition in intimate alliance with political tyranny; an infidelity in intimate alliance with political licentiousness. An intelligent and cordial reverence of the word of God, an intelligent and ardent love of regulated liberty, a liberty regulated by law, a law free enough to allow the amplest scope for the development of all that is good and true and noble and exalted in our nature, strong and stringent enough to restrain and hinder all that is bad and false and low—these will enable us to steer clear of Scylla and Charybdis. But it is among the poor that the elements of mischief are chiefly to be found. It is low down beneath the surface of the earth those fierce fires are kindled which finally flame out at the summit of the volcano and spread their desolations over the surrounding plains, sleeping in the sunshine, and unconscious of their danger. The reign of terror was the outbreak of what had been long smothered in the secret clubs of Paris. And what nests of sedition, revolution and anarchy may now exist among us, who knoweth? The gospel of the Prince of Righteousness and Peace is a remedy for all.

## THE RELIEF OF THE POOR.<sup>1</sup>

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THIS is the great social problem of the age; a problem which has often been solved, to their own satisfaction, by philanthropists seriously concerned for the welfare of their race and appalled by the enduring and obstinate calamities which make its cry continually go up to heaven; by professional expounders of political economy anxious to vindicate, as by a crucial experiment, the validity, dignity, and practical value of the science; by socialistic philosophers forced to grapple with it by all that determines the specific direction of their labors; but all the solutions have failed in the one capital point of providing a remedy adequate to the evil. It has been clearly demonstrated, in mood and figure, that poverty ought not to exist. Statistical figures that cannot lie, parliamentary reports and society reports, make a melancholy exhibition of the idleness, improvidence, dissipation, and general wickedness of the laboring classes so called; they prove to us that there is no need, in ordinary seasons, for such a pressure of the means of subsistence upon the wages of labor; that in Great Britain, for example, the amount annually expended by the working classes, out of their earnings, for spirits, malt liquors and tobacco, is equal to the whole amount of the profits of capital in the hands of their employers, that is to say, "they waste annually as large a sum as their employers annually save," and, consequently, "if the operatives saved like their employers, the annual addition to the fund out of which labor is remunerated (the available capital of the country) would be at once doubled."

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<sup>1</sup>This article appeared in the January number, 1856, *Presbyterial Critic*.—Ed.

And many other such like things they tell us. But the hydra-headed monster continues to rear his front and bid defiance to speculatists, philanthropists and statesmen. Whether it be an undiscovered fallacy in the theory, or an invincible obstacle in the way of its application, the fact is certain that the evil is growing. The furrows on the brow of the wise man become deeper and the heart of the good man becomes sadder, as the gloomy problem is revolved.

It is not worth while to discuss the question whether poverty can, by any means, legal, moral or religious, be prevented. The condition of human nature, as well as the clear statements of the word of God, may satisfy us that it must be a permanent element in the social economy of the race. The ignorance and general incapacity of some, the improvidence and prodigality of others, the low state of morals among the masses in most countries, and, above all, the sovereign constitution of him who does all things according to the counsel of his own will, setting up one and putting down another, and producing those great diversities of condition which practical atheism ascribes to chance or fortune, conspire to assure us that the poor shall always be with us, that they shall never cease out of the land. If men generally could be thoroughly indoctrinated with the lessons of political economy, and be made to understand the inexorable laws which govern the relations of capital and labor, we should doubtless have fewer disastrous strikes, and a more satisfactory distribution of the necessaries and even the comforts of life; and it is unquestionably the duty of every member of society to use his abilities for this end. Still, this can be only partially done, even with the most heroic effort; and where it is done the infirmity and sinfulness of our fallen nature will, in great measure, defeat the beneficent purpose. Evil passions and habits will be found too strong for argument. But poverty is not confined to the ignorant and the vicious. There is a large class of cases which has always

baffled, and will always baffle, the shrewdest philosophy which leaves the wise sovereignty of God out of its calculations. Until the day dawn and the day-star arise upon the world, we may, therefore, expect to continue our struggle with this omnipresent calamity. The great question is, how shall the evil be mitigated, the sufferings of the poor be relieved?

1. If there be a man in whose breast the fountains of compassion have been wholly dried up, and who will assert that the poor deserve their fate and ought to be abandoned to it, we have nothing to say to him, as it is not likely that these pages will ever meet his eye. We have no fear, indeed, that, in any civilized nation, the poor will not, after some fashion, be cared for. Public policy, if nothing else, will prevent a total neglect of them; and the spirit of Christianity, which pervades with more or less power all modern civilization, is our security that what is done will be done, not in concession merely to stern social and political necessity, but in a good degree, also, under the promptings of humane and generous impulses. Whatever the voice of nature, stifled and perverted by the selfishness of sin, may say, the voice of God in his word is clear and explicit. There can be no manner of doubt as to our duty: "If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him naught; and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless

thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto. For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land." Such is the language of the law of Moses, that law which some men would have us to believe is the distilled spirit of austerity and harshness. Would that the spirit of this law pervaded more completely the whole frame-work of society now!

We turn next to the patriarch of Uz, whom the Lord himself pronounces to be a perfect man. With what satisfaction does he reflect, in the hour of heavy calamity, upon his kindness to the poor! With what confidence does he invoke the vengeance of the Almighty if he had been guilty of oppressing the helpless and despised! The recollection of his charities sent a thrill of joy through his heart while he sat in sackcloth and ashes, stripped of property, children and friends, with the terrors of the Almighty arrayed against him and the poison of his arrows drinking up his spirit; for he regarded them as tokens of the past favor of God, and they encouraged him to hope that his righteousness, though now enshrouded with darkness, should yet be revealed as the noon-day; that he who bestowed such rich grace would not always chide, nor keep his anger for ever; that the night of weeping should, sooner or later, be succeeded by a day of rejoicing. These charities revealed to him his conformity in character to the Son of God, whom, with the eye of faith, he saw standing at the latter day upon the earth, preaching good tidings to the poor, binding up the broken-hearted, proclaiming liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to the bound. "When the eye saw me, it gave witness to me: because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I was eyes to the blind,



and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out. And I brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth." (Job xxix. 11, &c.) See, also, the striking passage in chapter xxxi. 16-22. We offer no apology for asking our merely literary readers to turn to a book which even Shelley and Byron kept constantly upon their tables to excite their poetic inspiration. But space would fail us to quote one-tenth of what the *gloomy* Old Testament contains of a like import.

When we open the New Testament we find our Saviour, in one of the earliest of his formal discourses, exhorting his disciples to imitate their Father in heaven in the largeness and comprehensiveness of their charity. We find him sustaining and enforcing his instructions by a life of unparalleled devotion in the relief of human suffering, and, though supported by charity himself, requiring his followers to keep a fund for the necessities of the poor. And as if it were not enough that he had chosen the condition of poverty as his own, and thus dignified and exalted it, he condescended to make the poor the representatives, as it were, of himself, after he should have left the earth, in those memorable words, "Ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always." (Compare Matt. xxv. 40, 45.) He places almsgiving foremost amongst the acts of *worship*, concerning which he gives direction in the Sermon on the Mount. He solemnly warns the Pharisee that, with all his punctilious ritualism, nothing can be "clean" to him if he fail "to give alms of such things as he had." He represents alms to the poor as the rental, so to speak, which is at once an acknowledgment of the rights of the great Proprietor of all, and the indispensable condition of the Pharisee's own right to enjoy. (See Luke xi. 41, and compare 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5.) And in the last hour, amidst the excruciating agonies of the cross, expiring under the frown of God, in testimony of a love as

comprehensive as the world, he did not forget to commend her who bare him to the affection and care of him who had leaned upon his breast.

After our Saviour's ascension into heaven the promised gift of the Comforter was bestowed; and as it is his office "to take of the things of Christ," to show them to his people, and to transform them into his image, we are not surprised to find that one of the first and most impressive exhibitions of the new life communicated to the church consisted in liberality to the poor: "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul: neither said any that aught of the things which they possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need." On so grand a scale was this primitive liberality that it became necessary to ordain officers whose whole time should be given to the business of distribution. And the deacon is, to this day, an essential element of every regularly organized church.

But these benefactions were confined to the Jews. After the Gentiles were incorporated into the church, the middle wall of partition having been broken down by the Man Christ Jesus, an interchange of kindly offices took place between those who had once been enemies. The grand idea of "fellowship" came more fully out; the idea of a common nature, a common blood, a common misery, a common salvation, a common Father, and a common inheritance, swallowed up all national prejudices and put to shame all hereditary alienation of feeling and interest, so far as these circumstances had the effect of annihilating natural human sympa-

thies, and Jew and Gentile contributed to the necessities of each other. God had long ago made a powerful appeal against the oppression of the poor, upon the ground that it involved a reproach upon himself as the Maker of all men; that the poor as well as the rich bore his image, and that the true dignity of a man should be estimated by this consideration, and not by the number or splendor of adventitious distinctions; but now is gloriously brought out the related truth—a truth which had been overlaid and concealed by the Mosaic institute in its practical effect—that men were *brethren*, were the children of the same family, and therefore bound, as bearing at once the image of the same Father and the image of one another, to have all things in common so far as necessity might require.

But we cannot dwell longer upon the direct argument from Scripture. Enough has been said to show that the poor are never forgotten of God; that he takes them under his peculiar care, blesses those who do them good, curses those who oppress, or refuse to relieve them, and uniformly represents himself as their advocate, ready at all times to maintain and vindicate their cause. The conscientious performance of our duty to this unhappy class of our brethren, therefore, is the only *safe* course under the government of such a God as the Bible reveals to us. It is our highest interest as well as our indispensable obligation; and woe to the man who lives only to be “ministered unto,” who “liveth to himself.”

This whole subject, in the aspect in which we have endeavored to present it, affords a beautiful illustration of the power of Christianity in subduing the consuming selfishness of the human heart, and thereby promoting the exercise of those affections upon which the comfort of men’s social condition almost exclusively depends. Writers on morals make a distinction between duties of *perfect* and duties of *imperfect* obligation: the former embracing that class of duties

which imply corresponding rights on the part of others to enforce a performance; the latter constituting that class which do not imply such rights. This distinction, of course, has reference only to our social relations with one another; in our relations to God all obligation is perfect. Now it is important to observe that while duties of the first class are indispensable to the *being* of society, and therefore are the great objects to be secured by human law with its apparatus of pains, penalties, and disabilities, those of the second class are indispensable to the *well-being*, the comfort of society. Truth and justice, to adopt the common division of the social virtues, are secured by law, so far as the existence of the social state demands; benevolence lies beyond the reach of law, as do the virtues of gratitude, filial affection, and reverence for worth or age. But what would society be without these? Society is not a mere juxtaposition of human beings; there is no society in hell. There must be a pulsation of sympathy, heart with heart; benevolence on one side, gratitude on the other. The true idea of society was illustrated in the famous apologue of Menenius Agrippa, and still more beautifully in the twelfth chapter of Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians. A chartist, an agrarian, a socialist, will doubtless assert that aid to the poor is of the nature of a right which the poor may demand; and we have heard some unwary people, who abhor chartism and agrarianism, take the same ground in their zealous pleadings for the poor. But this is all wrong; benevolence must not be confounded with justice, in the nature either of God or man. The poor have a right before God; that is to say, God has a right to require those who have more to help those who have less, and the man who refuses to acknowledge this obligation makes himself obnoxious, as we have seen, to the displeasure of his Maker; but this is a very different affair from the right of the poor to exact. Property is an institution of God; let the rights of property, therefore, be sacred,

always and everywhere; but let those who hold it be mindful of their abiding responsibility for the use of it, and beware lest their poor brethren "cry unto the Lord against them."

We cannot conclude the illustration of this part of the subject without alluding to a consideration intimately connected with the statements in the last paragraph, and which may serve as a motive to activity in the whole business, at least to all who value the stability of society. The systematic relief of the poor diminishes the danger of revolution and agrarian violence. Providing for them by *law* will not do it, as we shall see; nor will voluntary associations, with paid agents, answer the purpose, for the reason that they are practically liable to the objections which lie against legal methods of relief. The poor have, in most communities, a majority; they will one day have it in ours. In most countries they are restrained by military force, and are destitute of political power. Here there is no such force, and the ballot-box is in their hands. It is well known how anxiously great statesmen have studied the question, whether and in what manner the right of universal suffrage can be made to harmonize with the safety of a commonwealth governed by law and not by an army. Further, the feelings of envy, jealousy, and even hostility, commonly entertained towards the rich by the poor have been the occasion of serious convulsions. These feelings have been particularly strong in populous communities, the large cities, for example, because the contrast between the two conditions is more obvious and striking; because the poor are more conscious of their numbers and strength; and because the social affections, which are our greatest safeguard, in their existence and operation, against popular violence, are weaker in cities, being more divided, on account of the number of objects on which they are to be exercised, being thwarted by the selfish passions commonly vigorous in commercial places, and not fortified,

to the same extent as in small towns, by the beneficent influence of *home*. *Verbum sat*, etc.

2. Having dwelt so long upon the duty of aiding the poor, we have space only for a statement of the leading points under the other topic upon which we had intended to enlarge, which is, the *method* in which this aid should be afforded.

That method is the best which shall most effectually subserve the great *moral* ends of that constitution of society which creates the necessity for any aid at all. There are wheels within wheels in the vast scheme of providence; there are connections, gradations, and dependencies; there are forces, mechanical, chemical, vital, and moral; and these in their order, rising one above the other, all conspire to declare the glory of God in the restoration of man, and in his preparation, by a course of wonderful discipline, for the destiny before him. Inorganic matter is subservient to the uses of vegetable life, and this, in its turn, subserves the interests of animal life, and all are subordinate to the purposes of the immortal spirit. All social relations have the same end. Husbands educate their wives, and wives educate their husbands; parents their children, and children their parents, and so on through the whole round, and during our whole lives, down to the last gasp, we are educating one another. God has made individuals dependent upon one another in the same political community, and by this mutual dependence maintains the feeling of brotherhood. He has by diversity of soil, climate, and other conditions made nations dependent upon each other, and thus created commerce, which, next to Christianity, is the most powerful instrument of civilization, the most effectual means of developing the sentiment of brotherhood among the various branches of the family of man, and of preparing them for their final union under the Man Christ Jesus. In like manner he has ordained that the rich and poor shall exist together, and side by side; that

in the exercise of kindly offices on the part of the one, the feeling of compassion, of sympathy, springing out of a common nature, may be drawn out and strengthened, may emerge from the condition of a mere impulse, or passive sensibility, into the condition of a permanent, active, moral habit; that, by the reception of these kindnesses on the part of the other, the sentiments of gratitude and humility may be excited and confirmed; and, on the part of both, that the feeling of dependence upon God, and of thankfulness for his mercies, may be enlivened and invigorated.

Now apply these principles, as a rule of judgment, to the methods of relief most commonly employed: 1. All *poor laws*, it will be perceived at once, are open to the objection that they are out of harmony with the above-mentioned *moral* ends of poverty. A poor tax, like all other taxes, is paid, if not with grumbling, at least without cheerfulness; no feeling of compassion is brought into play; and the taxpayer is none the better man for it. The poor, upon whom the bounty is expended, know no benefactor but the abstraction called the state, or the corporation, or the stern business man who represents it, and who is the proximate almoner of its bounty. All legal "out-door" relief is beset with this additional disadvantage, that it increases the evil it is designed to remedy. All public institutions for the relief of mere indigence, as Chalmers has clearly shown in his able paper on this subject, give encouragement to idleness and crime. The history of the operation of the English poor laws is positively frightful in its details. The essay of Chalmers, just referred to, is entitled "The Distinction, both in Principle and Effect, between a Legal Charity for the Relief of Indigence, and a Legal Charity for the Relief of Disease." It is founded upon the example of the Saviour, who never, but on two occasions, worked a miracle to *feed* men, and yet never, on any occasion, refused to heal the infirm and the diseased. Anything is a sore evil which discourages men

from work; but men will not cut off their hands or legs in order to be sent to a hospital. The "in-door" relief, it may be added, furnished in our almshouses, can only be defended upon the ground that, in regard to the able-bodied paupers, it is a relief in the way of work, and is, therefore, in a manner, a method of correcting or punishing vagrancy; and, in regard to the infirm and helpless, is of the nature of hospital care. The policy of these institutions is, in some measure, justified by the very great repugnance the poor feel to going there, and their anxiety to get away.

2. *Voluntary Associations.* *First*, The church is a voluntary association, in the sense that all its members are such without compulsion or constraint from human authority. In another and a higher sense, all men are bound to be members of it—such being the command of God. It is a part of the church's duty to care for the poor. Now, we must bear in mind that the temporal necessities of men are only among the subordinate things that the church is to provide for; that this department of her liberality has been entrusted by God to officers of his own appointment, elected by the people, ordained by the spiritual officers to their work, and responsible to these spiritual officers; that the bounty of the church is to be dispensed for spiritual ends, being itself a part of the worship of God; that it is intended chiefly for its own poor, as a testimony of the fellowship and communion of all the members of Christ's body, one with another, in and through him. Let these things be remembered, and it will be seen that this method of relieving the poor *does* fulfil the moral ends before stated, and yet is not exposed, as a public charity, at least in any great degree, to the perils incident to such charities. But it cannot reach all the poor; and we must, as members of society, resort—*Secondly*, to voluntary associations, in the common sense of that term. These associations may either be permanent, with paid agents, or temporary and occasional, as the exigencies of the poor may



demand. The objections which lie against legal relief lie in almost their full force against associations of the first class, such as "The Associations for the Improvement of the Condition of the Poor," in Baltimore and other large cities; and besides, they are very expensive. According to the Sixth Annual Report of the Baltimore Association, which lies before us, nearly twenty-five per cent. of the whole amount contributed was expended on "salaries, office-rent," etc. Now, if the agents of this society are qualified for their office, they are men who could take care of themselves without this salary in some other employment; and yet they absorb nearly one-fourth of a charitable fund! More than this, it is our deliberate judgment, from not a little observation and information, that the really "deserving poor" would be better taken care of without this association. At the same time, we judge its affairs to be as well managed as those of any other similar institution in the country. We blame the system, not the men who administer it. As to associations of the second class, occasional and temporary, such as the Baltimore institution was substantially at first, whose object it is, by dividing the population into districts small enough to be visited and personally examined in order to a judicious and *kind* distribution of alms, and by some common bond or medium of communication with other districts, to equalize the burden and the relief; in a word, the combination of the "*charities of the neighborhood*," the charities of the weeping eye, the tender heart, the open hand, which build up the benevolence of the giver and the gratitude of the receiver, bind each to other as of one bone and one flesh, and from both make the incense of thanksgiving ascend unto the Giver of all—these constitute the surest reliance of the poor.

## HERODIAS AND JOHN THE BAPTIST; OR, THE DANCE AND THE MURDER.<sup>1</sup>

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Mark vi. 17-28.

A CELEBRATED preacher of the French Reformed Church, to whom I am indebted for a good deal of what I now propose to say, calls attention, in a sermon on this text, to the marvellous simplicity of the style of the biographers of our Lord. One would suppose that men who were so deeply interested in John the Baptist, men who had as profound a reverence for his character and his mission as they undoubtedly had, would not have recorded so atrocious a crime as that of Herod against him without some expression of their own sentiments in regard to it. A man putting to death the greatest prophet of the age, a prophet of whom our Saviour says that a greater had never been born of woman, and for no other offence than for simply reminding him of the law which he had so flagrantly transgressed, I say one would think that these evangelists would not have suffered the record of such a crime to pass without some expression of their indignation against the wrong, and yet we find nothing of the sort from the beginning to the end of the narrative. It is simply a plain statement of facts. And this has been often noted as a characteristic of the style of these evangelists throughout. They suppress all their emotions ;

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<sup>1</sup>This sermon was delivered in the chapel of Union Theological Seminary, March 12, 1882. It was reported by one of the students of the Seminary. Dr. Peck, having revised the manuscript, consented to its publication, at the request of the students. Accordingly, the Presbyterian Committee of Publication, at Richmond, Va., issued the sermon in pamphlet form.—Ed.

they never tell us how they think or how they feel in reference to the matters they record, although they are matters generally which might stir the souls of men to their very depths. Now how can we account for this? It certainly cannot be accounted for upon any other supposition than that they were penmen of the Holy Ghost. There is no surprise expressed here, because nothing can surprise God; there is no exhibition of the wickedness of the human heart that can surprise him who knew man from the beginning, and who had for thousands of years been testifying that "the thoughts of the imaginations of man's heart were evil, and only evil, continually." But while all this is so, while this is the most prominent characteristic, perhaps, of the style of these evangelists, yet it ought not to hinder us from endeavoring to derive those lessons which these facts were evidently intended to teach; nor ought it to hinder us from cherishing those emotions of indignation against outrage with which our better nature inspires us. This appalling revelation of the human heart, as we find it here in Herod and in the abandoned woman that he had taken to be his wife, is a lesson which God has left in his word for our learning, that we may, as in a mirror, behold ourselves and repent betime, and flee to that fountain which has been opened in the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness.

I. And in the first place, it may be observed that the Herod who is here mentioned is he who is commonly known as Herod Antipas, a son of Herod the Great, one of the most atrocious villains that ever wielded the sceptre of government. But this man does not seem to have been altogether as bad as his father. We cannot even conceive of his father having been impressed, as this record tells us Herod Antipas was impressed, by the preaching of John the Baptist. A man who could slaughter so many innocent infants at a venture in order to be sure, as he thought, of one vic-

tim, must have been at that time utterly abandoned of God, judicially abandoned to infatuation of mind and hardness of heart. But this Herod, it seems, feared John, feared him not on account of any physical power that he had; there was no reason to fear him on this account, as the event showed it was very easy for him to arrest John and place him in prison and put him to death. It was the moral power of this austere prophet from the wilderness that impressed the conscience of this man, deeply sunk as he was in all the vices of the times. He feared John, and even "heard him gladly," a very remarkable expression in reference to such a man as Herod Antipas. He not only heard this prophet, but he heard him gladly. No doubt he was impressed by John's preaching as sometimes reprobate men are impressed now when they hear the glad tidings of salvation; when they not only hear the command to repent, but hear, also, that it is possible to obtain repentance; that God, in giving this command, has at the same time given the promise that he will bestow this repentance upon those who ask him. There was some transient relish, no doubt, in the mind of Herod of the good things which the gospel proclaims to save sinners from despair. There seem to be moments in the life of the very worst men in which the filth of their nature sinks to the bottom, as it were, and leaves a space above which is clear, which is for a little while transparent, through which the light of truth may shine; and possibly it was so with this man. Like the stony-ground hearers of the parable, he was temporarily impressed, and not only so, but he did many things. This impression was not so transient as that it was only regarded for a moment after it was made, but it even led to action on the part of this not yet abandoned wretch; he did many things. From these expressions it would seem that at that time Herod was not utterly given up of God, as he seems to have been soon afterwards. Truculent in his nature, as the members of that family gene-

rally were, bloodthirsty, tolerating no obstacle in the path of his ambition, always ready to do anything or dare anything in order that any master lust might be gratified, yet we find that his mind was not wholly barred as yet against the influences of heaven. And yet you see how this man acts: he takes to wife a woman whom, according to the law of Moses, he ought not to have dared to marry; not only according to the law of Moses, but according to the law of nature, for he not only is guilty of adultery, but incest, wresting from the bosom of his brother one who was his married wife and appropriating her to himself. This brother whom he robs of his wife was a Herod, but he does not seem to have been so fierce as the men of that family usually were. He seems to have been an exception to the rule in having a very mild and retiring temper, a man who would rather see himself wronged than assert his rights by any very energetic or violent means.

Well, now, John the Baptist comes to Herod the tetrarch, and says, "It is not lawful for thee to have her." This stern prophet, who came in the spirit and power of Elijah, who never feared the face of man, comes to this proud king upon his throne and says, "It is not lawful for thee to have her." It might have been suggested to John, possibly may have been suggested to him by some of his friends, that it would be a very useless thing to speak to such a man as Herod about such a matter as that: "Does not Herod know perfectly well already that he has violated the law of Moses? Can you hope to reach that man's conscience, when he has deliberately transgressed the law which he professes to observe in order to gratify an imperious lust? What is the use of it? And then, John, you see that you are limiting the career of your own ministry; that you are putting yourself, in all probability, beyond the power of doing any good. Why, you have been preaching but for three years; you, a man in reference to whom wonderful prophecies went before; you, whose birth was so miraculous that all men pondered

the circumstances of it in their hearts and inquired what this child should become in Israel! Are you going to cut short your ministry, as you are almost certain to do, by exasperating the wrath of such a tyrant, bringing yourself to an untimely end? Don't you see that Herod has been impressed by your preaching; that he fears you; that he has some reverence for you; that he has heard you gladly, even gladly; that he has done some things at your instance, the like of which he was never known to do at the instance of anybody else? John, you have Herod more under your influence than any man in Palestine; you are the only man that can possibly do him any good; now do you intend deliberately to sacrifice all these prospects of usefulness in order to tell him a thing which he knows just as well as you can tell him, and in which he is determined to continue?"

Now, my brethren, that was very plausible reasoning, and reasoning, perhaps, which would influence a great many ministers of the gospel, but it did not influence John. John's reply would have been: "I have been commissioned as a preacher of righteousness; I have nothing to do with these considerations in reference to my future usefulness or in reference to the peril to which I expose myself when I undertake to rebuke such a man as this. I have but one thing to do, and that is to be faithful to my calling, to preach the preaching which God bids me; and as God has given me the commission to rebuke sin wherever I find it, then I must rebuke it in him who is the highest in the land." And, besides, he might have said, "The very fact that I have this influence over Herod makes it the more incumbent upon me to tell him about his sins, for he is likely to hear it from no one else. These kings are so unfortunate as to be in a position never to hear of their own faults. They are surrounded with an atmosphere of flattery and lies; they are surrounded with a set of sycophants and parasites who never think of anything but their own interests, and therefore will never offend him who

is the fountain of honor, of influence and of emolument. I am independent of all these things, and it is especially incumbent upon me to tell this high-handed sinner about his sins, because no one else will be likely to tell him." John would have replied "That as to the way in which Herod may receive my message, that is none of my concern. It may please God to send the arrow to his conscience and convict him and lead him to repentance. It may be that it will only aggravate his condemnation by making his rebellion against God more flagrant and more inexcusable; it is none of my concern. Success is a thing over which I have no control; it is my business, my sole business, to be found faithful as an ambassador of God and a witness for God." This is the spirit which all the ministers of the gospel ought to cultivate. They are sent to men as men, without reference to any social or adventitious distinctions. To a minister of the gospel a man is a man, and a sinner is a sinner, whether he is clothed in purple and fine linen and fares sumptuously every day, or whether he is a beggar lying at the gate with the dogs licking his sores, for the man in purple and the man in rags are equally responsible to God. They have both sinned and they both need salvation.

II. Notice, in the next place, how this rebuke of John's was received; of course very reluctantly received, very unwillingly submitted to, by either Herod or the infamous woman who claimed now to be his wife. But there is evidently this difference between the malice of Herodias and the malice of Herod: Herodias never seems for one moment to have repented; never for one moment to have lost sight of the purpose which she intended to accomplish in some way or other, that is, the death of John the Baptist. She was not only a very wicked, but evidently a very shrewd woman, and with a very determined will. She was determined to sacrifice everything to her malice in order to secure the death of this prophet. She was watching and waiting; watching and waiting,

we do not know how long, but she never lost sight of the purpose; she waited until a "convenient day," a day suited to her purpose to arrive, and then she put her plan into execution.

But now let us pause to inquire what this woman could hope to gain by putting John the Baptist to death. He had never troubled her at all except with the word of the law; he had never done her any wrong; he had never seen her perhaps at all, not even on the occasion when he said to Herod, "It is not lawful for thee to have her." He had done her no wrong whatever, except the wrong which was involved in telling the truth, in delivering a solemn message from God. What, then, could she expect to gain from his death? If she was in the wrong, as she must have known she was, his death would not alter the case; if he was right, and if her trouble had come from the fact that it was God's word that John had announced, if John were put out of the way it would not put God out of the way; if John's head was taken off it would not silence the voice of God, which was ever ringing in the ears and in the hearts and in the consciences of men!

But why, brethren, say these things? Do sinners sin because there is any reason in it? Do they execute the purpose of their malice because there is anything really to be gained by it? Could anything be gained except the mere transient satisfaction of having gratified the passion? For it must be conceded that there is this much pleasure in sin: that it involves the gratification of some appetite of passion; and the gratification of a passion or appetite is the cause of a temporary satisfaction, whether the gratification be lawful or not. Herodias in this case was just like us all, and the picture which is held up to us here is a picture of ourselves, and this is the thing which we ought to endeavor to impress upon our hearts. God has ordained these things that we might be warned by the sins of those who



have gone before us. It proves nothing at all that you are not conscious of any wickedness such as that of Herodias. When the prophet told Hazael what horrible atrocities he was going to perpetrate upon Israel, he exclaimed, "Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?" And there cannot be any doubt that Hazael was sincere, that he really thought at the time that he was utterly incapable of doing such things. He did not know himself, and so we do not know ourselves; we do not know the depths of sin within us, and hence these facts are an exhortation and a warning to us to watch and pray that we enter not into temptation. Herod evidently vacillated a good deal. And here let me call your attention to the explanation of the apparent discrepancy between the account of Matthew and the account of Mark in regard to this matter. In Matthew it is said that Herod wished to kill John, but he feared the people. In Mark it is said that he kept John: "Herodias could not kill him because that Herod feared John and kept him safe;" guarded or defended him. He kept him from the malice of the woman, defeating all her plans. That is the way that Mark has it. Now the infidel says, Here is a contradiction; one of your evangelists says he wanted to kill him, and the other says he saved him from being killed. How do you reconcile these two things? There is no difficulty at all in reconciling them if you only suppose that Herod was inconsistent with himself, that he at one time wanted to kill John and did not do it because he feared the people; and at another time when he was in a very different mood he saved John from the malice of his wife. This is a very simple explanation. There is hardly any man who is uniformly every day and every hour and every moment a bad man in deliberate intent; the man is bad, his nature is bad, and he may at any time be inflamed by temptation and exasperated to do any sort of wickedness. But sometimes the nature of the tiger or the hyena seems to be asleep. Herod was not at every mo-

ment meditating something bad, and there were some moments when he heard John gladly, and did many things; when he "feared" him, and at these times he kept John from the malice of his wife. And as has been justly observed, the Scriptures are very often charged with inconsistency in the accounts which they give us of men, simply because they are so perfectly true and faithful. Take the case of Zedekiah and Jeremiah. The King of Judah in the prophecy of Jeremiah is spoken of sometimes as taking care of the prophet against the malice of his courtiers; and then again he is represented as persecuting the prophet. Now if Zedekiah, the persecutor, had had his history recorded by one man, and Zedekiah, the protector of Jeremiah, had had his history recorded by another man, the German infidel would have said, Why, here is an inconsistency—a contradiction; but it so happens that these accounts are found in the same history and in adjoining chapters. The Bible is true and faithful in the account that it gives us of men, and therefore these accounts must appear inconsistent because the men are inconsistent with themselves. Why, what is any man but a bundle of inconsistencies? You never knew a man that was altogether good or altogether bad; you never knew a man that did not have two sides to his character, and if you had seen him altogether on one side you would have said that the man is bad. If you had seen him on the other side you would have said the man is a perfect saint and ready to be translated. Consistency is not the privilege of anybody on earth, and much less is it the privilege of men of violent tempers and passions like Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee. So that the evangelist Matthew, under the guidance of the Spirit, gives us one aspect of Herod's character in respect to John, and the evangelist Mark gives us another aspect of the same man. Herodias on the whole found it would be very difficult to wreak her malice upon John the Baptist, and yet she could not give up the

darling project of her heart, and with the patience of determined malice, as well as with cunning and sagacity, she waited until the convenient day should come, a day convenient for her purpose, and it arrived. It was Herod's birthday. He had all the lords and chief captains, mighty men, and the chief estates of Galilee assembled at a grand feast, and now is the time, says Herodias. Now is the time to get rid of John the Baptist!

Here, again, is something very strange. Is a festival, when people have come together to enjoy themselves and to enjoy good cheer, is that a good time to commit murder? Is that a convenient day, O Herodias, for the accomplishment of such an infernal purpose as thine? A time of feasting and of good cheer! Such times as these in the East, and especially in kings' courts, or in the courts of those who were the representatives of kings, were times for the manifestation of grace, of favor, on the part of rulers. It was a time when the king would manifest the generosity and nobleness of his nature by pardoning some great criminal, by letting out of prison somebody who had been condemned to death. As we find at the passover, Pilate says to the Jews, "I must release unto you one at the passover; now which will you have, Barabbas or Jesus?" So that on all sides it seems strange that this woman should think a festival was a convenient day for the execution of her purpose of murder against the prophet of the Lord. But Herodias knew human nature a great deal better than we do, if we think it strange. She knew very well that such feasts as Herod was in the habit of holding in his palace were feasts in which the lusts of the flesh had full swing. She knew perfectly well that such a banquet as he proposed to give was an occasion on which there was an utter forgetfulness of God. She knew that people came together at that time in all the pomp and circumstance and parade of wealth or of high official position, and all the pomp and circumstance of fashionable life, in

order to enjoy themselves, as they called it. They did not come together to do justice to anybody; they did not come together to do favor to anybody; they did not come together for any purpose on earth other than simply to enjoy themselves and gratify their passions. They were lovers of pleasure, and the lovers of pleasure have been uniformly hard of heart. Nobody knew that better than Herodias. She had experience in courts; she was brought up according to the most approved methods of fashionable life, and if she knew anything, she knew that these people, who were devoted to fashion, were people who had no heart; that if there is a place in the world where selfishness reigns with unbroken dominion, it is in the bosoms of those who think of nothing but fashion and folly. She knew, also, that the wine would flow freely; she knew the intoxicating revel that would take place on an occasion like that. Herodias, in other words, knew that it was a convenient day; that it was the most suitable season of any that could be had for the murder of a prophet of God. There was not anything in the heart or in the life of John the Baptist which was not directly contradictory to the spirit of all the people who should be assembled there; they were diametrically opposed the one to the other; the one fearing God, the other forgetting God; the one looking upon the kingdom of God and his righteousness as the supreme object which every soul ought to pursue, the other losing sight of God's kingdom entirely in the splendor and glory of the kingdoms of this world; the one knowing that there was no power that would last except the moral power of righteousness and holiness, and the other believing in no power at all but the power of lust and of brute force. And has it not always been so? Has not this been the uniform connection of things? Where was there ever a line of monarchs that made pleasure their chief end to the same extent as the line of the Roman emperors, men who spared no expense in order to multiply the instruments and appli-

ances of luxury? And, of course, all who were able to do it followed the example of the court. Now, what was the character of these people, these lovers of pleasure, these people who lived for nothing but to gratify themselves? What was their character as to cruelty? Why, feeding the fishes in their fish-ponds with the flesh of their slaves! But worse than that, if possible, we find the virgins and matrons of Rome assembled in the vast amphitheatres, which would seat from 100,000 to 150,000 people, and assembled to witness for their amusement what sort of spectacle? Oh! my God, for their amusement! Hundreds of men slaying one another before their eyes, saturating the sand of the arena with their blood. This for the amusement not of the masses only, but of those who were the *élite* of that Roman world. The sham fights and sham deaths of the ordinary theatres could no longer satisfy the craving for excitement. They must have a real fight and a real death. The jaded eye could only be made to light up by the sight of real blood flowing from the wounds of dying gladiators. Now there—there is the picture of human nature! How true it is, those words of Milton, “Lust hard by hate,” “Lust hard by hate!” This is not the only instance in the history of the world which illustrates the same thing. When was the Bartholomew massacre conceived and executed, that atrocious crime by which from fifty to one hundred thousand of the purest people of France were put to death on the instant without a moment’s warning? old men and infants at the breast mercilessly butchered because they refused to bow down to a wafer and worship it as a god. That was all their crime, and when, now, I repeat, was that infernal butchery contrived? During the marriage festivities of Henry of Navarre! That was the time, because it was a time of feasting; it was a time of revelry; it was a time when everybody was thinking of gratifying himself, regardless of anything but his own desires. Herodias knew her man; she knew man; she knew

what human nature was, and she knew that this fashionable revel was the very place for murder. It was the place where hardness of heart reigned, for self-indulgence, hardness of heart and cruelty go together.

And now notice, she is willing to make still further sacrifices. She sends her daughter, Salome (Josephus tells us the name of the girl), she sends her daughter into this banqueting-house to dance before this assembled mass of lords, high captains and chief estates of Galilee! You cannot well conceive how great degradation and disgrace this whole thing was unless you remember the customs and habits of those times. They did not know anything at all about the promiscuous dancing of modern times. No such thing was ever heard of in those days as a respectable, marriageable, but unmarried girl dancing with a man! It would have been considered by these Romans the very last disgrace. The only kind of dancing which was recognized was professional dancing; the performance of people who made dancing a profession, just as they made acting a profession. And here was the degradation to which Herodias, who was a queen, submitted when she would put her own daughter into the condition, the disreputable condition, of a professional dancer! And that, too, before a set of men who were half drunk, and no doubt in that costume that was no fuller than some of the costumes which are worn by the modern members of that profession.

My brethren, she knew her man and she knew the men that she had to deal with. So eager was she to get the head of God's prophet, to get that testimony extinguished, to make it certain that John the Baptist's voice should no longer be heard telling her of her sins, that she was willing to submit to all the indignity and loss of reputation which she might otherwise incur. She knew that the passions of these men would be inflamed by the spectacle! She knew into what passionate outbursts of admiration they would break when

they saw this girl going through the intricate mazes of her dance, and she knew that such would be the admiration that Herod would be willing to grant her anything that she should ask. Just as it is with the fools of modern times who will express their admiration for people of the same sort in the most extravagant and in the most fantastic way. Given up to idolatry, they are also given up to worship the basest of idols, as the French of the revolution made a woman of that sort their god and the representative of their religion. So she, counting upon these depraved passions of the guests of Herod, knew that she would get what she wanted. She was not admitted to the feast; her daughter, Salome, was not admitted to the feast; there was no rare dish for either of them provided. Now she determined to have *her* dish, which is John the Baptist's head, and she was successful! Herod, heated with wine, intoxicated with admiration for this miserable girl, says, "Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee." And then in a moment, with that profaneness which characterizes such people, swore unto her, "Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee, if it is the half of my kingdom!" There, it is done. And the girl comes out immediately and asks her mother, "What shall I ask?" It was not necessary to ask that question. She knew very well what her mother wanted. There was not an instant's delay at any rate in the answer; it was short and terrible: "John the Baptist's head!" And the dancing-girl trips back into the banqueting hall and says, "I will that thou give me, immediately, John the Baptist's head in a charger." Immediately! Her mother had no doubt instructed her upon that point. Herod may relent when he finds out what he has unwarily promised. He may relent, and he may try to get out of it, therefore say *immediately!* And Herodias is successful; she is victorious; she is triumphant when the executioner comes back with the head of God's precious prophet in a dish.

Now, is not this dreadful, my brethren? Does it not make our blood run cold? Does it not make our flesh creep? And yet it is my deliberate conviction that it was nothing but what might have been expected under the circumstances of the case. There was nothing there that might not possibly occur to us in this country and in this generation of the world, if there was such a man as John the Baptist alive. There never was but one, there never shall be another. But, then, there are men who, at a great distance from John the Baptist in dignity, are still faithful; men who lift up their voice in warning to sinners, no matter how they are found dressed, how they are found housed, in palaces as well as in hovels, clothed in purple and fine linen as well as clothed in rags. There are men in this world whom God enables to determine to keep a good conscience, come what will; men whom he inspires with courage to denounce the wickedness, not only of their generation in a mass, but to denounce the wickedness of this man and that man; and I do not honestly think that it is beyond the bounds of probability that before all of this generation shall pass away God may call some of his people to suffer unto death in this country, in these United States, the boasted home of liberty! God has been unmasking men and things to us in a very appalling way in the last few months. He has been showing us what is possible, and no man has a right to say that proscription and persecution for political opinions may not be followed by proscription and persecution for religious opinions.

One of the things which looks that way—one of the things which, it seems to me, is preparing for that state of things, which is breaking the way for it—is this insane pursuit of pleasure on the part of the people of this country, as if that were the chief thing for which mankind and womankind were made; and it is not only the people of the world that do it, but church members, and the members of the Presbyterian Church, the martyr-church of the world; the church which has furnished more victims for the stake, for the dragonade,



for imprisonment, for the howling wilderness, for the dens and caves of the earth, than any other church since the outbreak of the Reformation. Oh! "tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon," that the members of this martyr-church are among the foremost in this insane pursuit after the pleasures of the world.

Now, my brethren, when the standard-bearer faints, we begin to think that the cause is almost hopeless; and here is this church of ours, which God has made now, during three centuries at least, the standard-bearer against the hosts of the kingdom of darkness and death. When this Presbyterian Church begins to faint; when she begins to relax her solemn sense of the testimony which God has entrusted to her; when she begins to ape the fashions of the world; when, in spite of the protests of General Assemblies, Synods, Presbyteries, Sessions, we find the children of this church rushing into these amusements, what can we expect of the rest? Not only has the Presbyterian Church testified against these things, and warned her children, but the Episcopal Church has done it in her solemn Conventions, and the Methodist Church in her solemn Conferences; and even the papal body itself, in its most solemn Councils, has issued its warnings against these perils; but all in vain, for the only visible effect has been to chafe the torrent and to make its impetuosity the more conspicuous as it rushes madly on to hell, in spite of all the barriers which ecclesiastical councils and conventions have endeavored to erect. The time was, beloved friends, when a member of the Presbyterian Church would have said: "I don't see the evil of these things; my conscience is not convinced that they are wrong; but I can make so small a sacrifice as that for Christ. I can make so small a sacrifice as staying away from the ball-room or theatre for Christ's sake." But where are the people now who say it? There may be some; I hope there are, I believe there are. But it is perfectly plain that there is a great multitude who do not. They say: "I will gratify myself in that feeling, in spite of general as-

semblies and councils! What right have they to talk to me? What right have they to dictate to me how I shall enjoy myself?" That is the language of such; it is the language of the lover of pleasure; it is the language of her who liveth in pleasure, and who is, therefore, God being witness, dead while she liveth.

I cannot go any further, my brethren. There are some other interesting things in this narrative, but I cannot detain you longer. Now, the lesson which I wish to impress upon you, the lesson which this solemn narrative impresses upon all, is the indispensable necessity of watching and praying if we are to be delivered from temptation—watching and praying. It has been very well said that this is a thing which cannot be done by the lover of pleasure. The young woman who is dressing herself for the ball is not watching, and she never thinks of praying; and in the midst of the scenes of revelry, and in the intoxicating dance, she is far less inclined to watch and pray, and has far less opportunity than she has at other times. When she comes home in the small hours of the night, weary of the dance, intoxicated with the adulation and flattery which she has received, there is still less of a disposition to pray. She has forgotten God, she has been absorbed with the world and its vanities, and prayer is out of the question. Oh, the blind minds of men! Does it not seem strange that Christian people, those who profess to be Christian people, cannot see these things? Is it not strange that they should not recognize the fact that there is an utter—an utter—contrariety between such scenes and the spirit of the gospel and the spirit of one who professes to be a stranger and a pilgrim on the earth? Do they ever hear these words of the apostle: "Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what is that good and perfect and acceptable will of God"? Now, lay these things to heart; watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.

## LITURGIES, INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC AND ARCHITECTURE.<sup>1</sup>

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THE Presbyterian Church in the United States of America is, we believe, one of the purest branches of the church of Christ on earth, and we desire to give thanks continually to God for his wonderful goodness to it, and the distinguished post he has assigned to it, in the arduous but honorable warfare against the powers of darkness and of evil. But it cannot be denied that the same unbelief which has made other branches of the church drift gradually away from the great principles of the gospel, and seduced them to put their trust in an arm of flesh, is working in her also, and threatens her spiritual, which is her only true, prosperity, by beguiling her and corrupting her from the simplicity that is in Christ. She is in danger perpetually of a practical denial of her glorious confession, with her voice acknowledging God, in his word and by his Spirit, to be the only source of light and strength, and herself to be nothing except as he enables her, but in her heart, and with her hand, going after the idols of men who have their portion in this life. She finds it hard to cling to the ordinances of her invisible Head, and to maintain her assurance of faith in his ability to make the weak things of the world confound the things which are mighty, and the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and things that are base and despised, and things that are not, to bring to nought things that are. It is easier to go into Assyria, or down into Egypt, the house of bondage, and to trust in horses of flesh and chariots of iron, than to look to the God of Israel, who hideth himself, or trust in those horses of fire and chariots' of fire which are

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<sup>1</sup> This article appeared in the November number of the *Critic*, 1855.—ED.

visible only to the eye of faith. We build the altar and arrange the wood, but cannot, like the majestic old prophet of the law, wait for the flame from heaven to consume and accept the sacrifice; much less can we pour the water over the work of our hands to make it all the more evident that ours is the God that answereth by fire.

These reflections have been forced upon us by the innovations which have been made or proposed in our forms of worship; and the signs of the times seem to indicate the possibility, at no distant day, of another rupture in the Presbyterian body upon the ground of worship, analogous to those which have already taken place upon the grounds of doctrine and order; for we cannot believe that our church can always patiently endure a mass of corruptions which hamper and trammel her. Her constitution is too full of vitality and vigor to allow any excrescence to remain long enough to exhaust or utterly to poison the living blood that courses through her veins. Her whole history teaches that she *must* slough off when the morbid incumbrance reaches such a degree of virulence as seriously to endanger her existence or her distinctive vocation. Nor can her unity ever be, for a great length of time, a mere external unity, a thing of brass or iron. The Church of Rome, considered in its relations to God and to the eternal destinies of mankind, is but a congeries and aggregation of a multitude of putrid parts, kept together by the pressure of outside hoops and bands. There is no spiritual life, no organic action, no "body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part," but a decomposed corpse, ready to crumble into a thousand pieces when the ligaments and cerements of authority shall be removed. But such the Presbyterian Church can never be; she must be one in life, one in principle, one in aim, as well as one in external organization. When she ceases to have this real unity, it will not be long before the

rupture will betray itself in open separation. Does any man imagine that if a liturgy were substituted for the *Directory for Worship* in half our churches, the other half, adhering to the *Directory*, would long continue in nominal unity and communion with it? The whole genius and history of the Presbyterian body everywhere forbid it. This question, therefore, of liturgies, and the affiliated questions of instrumental music and ecclesiological architecture, deserve to be considered in time, as their solution may involve the question of the integrity of our denomination. Our people have hitherto said little and thought little about them, because they judge the disease to be sporadic and easily prevented from spreading by the conservative intelligence of the church; but when it shall become apparent that the disorder is an epidemic, or, at least, that the predisposition to it is widespread and general; when the issue is openly made between resisting these rags of popery and abandoning all the distinctive features of our system, then will come a storm in which either the church or the innovations must perish. The danger is not an imaginary one. The article on liturgies in the July number of the *Repertory*, and that on architecture in the number for October, together with the doings of St. Peter's Church, Rochester, still in nominal connection with the General Assembly, show that it is not. Even the *Presbyterian* objects to the last-named article as savoring too much of an ecclesiological spirit; and surely such restless agitators and church disturbers as we are may be pardoned for doubting whereunto these things may grow, especially when we remember that solemn lesson of history, that the most enormous corruptions in the church have arisen from the smallest, and apparently the most harmless, beginnings. Our readers will please give us their indulgence, therefore, while we throw out some hints for their reflection upon this subject. As there is nothing which God, in his blessed word, defends with more exquisite jealousy than his wor-

ship; as there is nothing that he rebukes with more severity than the impertinent assumption of man to determine forms of worship for himself; as there is nothing in which, notwithstanding, man has been more prone to intermeddle than in this very thing, it is of vital importance to us to ponder it. If we know our own hearts, we are seeking no paltry party ends, but the glory of our common Lord, whose sovereign prerogative we believe to be invaded, and the true welfare of that church which is the mother of us all.

What we have to say will be directed, for the sake of brevity, chiefly to the subject of liturgies; but the general principles will, for the most part, be equally applicable to instrumental music and ecclesiological architecture.

1. It ought, in the first place, to excite our suspicion about these things that they have been generally thought of only in a time of spiritual declension in the church. When the Spirit of grace and of supplication has, in a measure, withdrawn himself, and the people lose that lively sense of God's majesty and mercy, which once found expression in spontaneous adoration and thanksgiving; when there no longer exists, except in a very feeble degree, that profound conviction of their needs as creatures and as sinners, which pours itself out in constant confessions and petitions; when love waxeth cold towards their brethren, and they feel no promptings to importunate intercessions in their behalf; when, in a word, there is no gift and no spirit of prayer, then they seek for a form of devotion "to be said or sung." Instead of crying mightily to him who has "received gifts for men," and is more ready to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him than parents, who are evil, are to give good things to their children; to him who is able to bless the barren ordinances, and quicken their languishing souls into life, they resort to their own inventions, and make a Holy Ghost of the work of their own hands. Being unable to rise to God, they would fain bring God down to themselves. In the first three cen-

turies of the Christian era no such crutches of devotion were needed, and none were employed, for the church was kept near to the fountain of life by the rough discipline of persecution. It was only when she began to enjoy the insidious favor of the world, and was committed to the deadly nursing of Constantine and his successors, that she began to crave forms of devotion ready made to her hand, and to make up, by the splendor of outward signs, for the departing glory of spiritual fellowship with God. The only gift of prayer which in the course of time was needed was the gift of knowing how to read; and finally, it came to pass that all prayer became the business of the priesthood, and was done in an unknown tongue. The whole of religion became a thing of proxy, and had well-nigh perished from the earth. When the Reformation came, and along with it a sense of personal responsibility; when men were made to feel their tremendous consequence as individuals under the government of God; that they must believe, repent, grow in grace for themselves, they also felt that they must pray for themselves. The Spirit that made intercession for them with groanings which could not be uttered refused to be confined by the meagre, stale, flat, and unprofitable forms, in a foreign tongue, which they had been repeating with parrot-like intelligence and devotion. The new liberty of the sons of God demanded something more. The foreign tongue was laid aside, that the worshippers might at least know what they were praying for; and doubtless all forms of prayer in public worship would have been laid aside, if the leaders had not been afraid of producing an insurrection against the great truths of the gospel by a sudden change in the forms to which the people had been used. They argued that as the people knew the forms, and could not judge of the doctrines, and as the doctrines after they were received would gradually give life to the forms, if not entirely do away with them, it was better, in all the circumstances, to preserve the forms, translate and purge them.

But it was a deep conviction in their hearts that these forms were inconsistent with, and destructive of, those gifts of the Holy Ghost which had been showered, in almost Pentecostal profusion, upon them. Liturgies are felt to be tame things in a revival of religion.

We are not at all surprised, therefore, at the following remarks of the writer on "Church Architecture," in the *Repertory* for October:<sup>1</sup> "Protestant Christendom finds no art to its hand. It has been *hitherto above art*. It has been doing battle for the truth; and in the meantime has gone into the Roman cathedral, into the oriental basilica, into the pseudo-Greek temple, into plain houses, and even into barns and caves to worship, scarcely stopping to see whether the tower, the dome, the plain ceiling, or the rafter were over its head. But now, as the strong man in the period of his vigor finds it well to go back to the poetry of his youth, even so has the Protestant church arrived at that point of progress where she may stop to recover the beauty which she was constrained to pass by in the warfare of her early progress." There is a very sad meaning in all this; and more truth than the writer in his chase after figures of rhetoric took time to see. It is because we have given up contending for the faith once delivered to the saints that we have time for art. The world, the flesh, and the devil are not done with the truth of God, but we are; they have not given up their assaults upon it, but we have given up defending it. The battle is all on one side now; we have put off the harness, we have conquered a peace, and now for architecture, music, and the arts of peace. The time was when Protestantism was "above art"; the sphere in which it moved, the work it had to do, was lofty; it soared and gazed upon the sun; but not so now; its wings are clipped, and it has fallen to the earth, and is ready for the plastic arts which work with earth. The time was when it dwelt in the thick darkness upon the mount

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<sup>1</sup> Page 625 of the year 1855.



with God; but now it has come down to make the golden calf in the vale below! "The poetry of its youth!" Would to God it might return to it! For that poetry is found in the Acts of the Apostles; and its sublime vocation was to testify against the shrines and the temple of the Great Diana of the Ephesians, and to point, with unspeakable sadness, to the glorious structures of Athens as monuments of apostasy from that God who dwelleth not in temples made with hands! Said we not truly, then, that these things spring out of a declension of religion? They are the funeral of faith.<sup>1</sup>

2. In the next place, however, the question of liturgies may be decided upon its merits—to that point we shall come hereafter—it ought not to be considered an open question in the Presbyterian Church in the United States. And so with instrumental music.

It may be well, at this point, to state what that question is, as there is a prevailing misapprehension in regard to it. The question is not, whether a man may compose or select a form of prayer for his own private use, or for the purpose of family worship. Whether he may lawfully do this or not will depend upon circumstances, of which his conscience alone, in the sight of God, is to judge. He may find it better for his own edification, or the edification of his household, to read prayers. But in public worship, the edification

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<sup>1</sup> As it is quite common to sneer at those in our church who oppose the tendency to Romanize our worship, as if they were the mere victims of vulgar prejudice, fanatical iconoclasts—albeit they stand upon the platform of the *Confession*, and the testimony of the great Presbyterian body from the beginning—it may be well to say that we do not object to the adoption of a style of architecture which is suited to the purposes of the Presbyterian worship, nor do we think it wrong to consult and conform to the general principles of the art in building our meeting houses. We agree with the writer in the *Repertory*, that the Gothic style is not suited to our purposes; we meet for something else than to burn wax candles, and to practice postures and impostures. It is to the principles upon which he urges the creation of an art, the symbolical idea, the ritualistic spirit of the whole article, that we object, as unsound and dangerous.

of all the worshippers is to be consulted, and the mode of conducting the worship must be made the matter of a covenant, either expressed or implied, among themselves, subject always to the authority of the word of God. In a particular church, for example, there may be many who, in their private devotions, assume a standing posture; more are in the habit of kneeling; some few, perhaps, as Richard Cecil tells us was once his practice, walk backwards and forwards while they pray. When they all come together, some one mode must be agreed upon; it would be a violation of decency and order for each man to assume the posture to which he is most accustomed in the closet. They must all stand, or kneel, or walk, or sit. For the last two modes there is no example in public worship in the word of God; and the choice lies between standing and kneeling, which are both recognized postures of reverence. It would be an indecent thing for one part to be kneeling, and the other standing, though both postures are scriptural. What is true of postures is true of the method of prayer. In like manner, a Christian may find it to edification to use a musical instrument in his private or domestic worship, as the sweet singer of Israel seems to have done, and as Martin Luther did; but it is a very different affair to introduce apparatus of this sort into the public worship of God. Before it can be done, there must be a covenant to do it; and before such a covenant can be righteously made, the word of God must be consulted; a thing it would be well for those to do who laugh, in the fulness of their self-conceit, at their brethren for seeing any *principle* in the matter.

It appears to us that this statement, if it be a just one—and we cannot see how it can be denied—is itself argument enough to show that such innovations in worship are contrary to our standards, and involve the sin of covenant-breaking. Suppose all the Presbyterian people in the United States—we mean, of course, those connected with

our General Assembly—to be assembled in one house for worship, to make to the world an exhibition of their unity, what sort of exhibition of unity would there be, if each section, as it now exists, were to worship according to its accustomed mode? Here, in one corner, is an organ blowing, the performer, perhaps, an ungodly infidel, who is laughing in his sleeve at the simplicity of the saints, and his bellows-blower, it may be, a pious negro, who is prevented by his occupation from joining in the praises of God; there, in the body of the church, an immense throng, *singing* forth their joy, in a volume of sound like the roar of many waters; here, in another corner, a collection of violins, little and big, with flutes and “soft recorders”; there, in another, an ambitious little thing called a melodeon, whose squeaks can be heard high above the vocal noise that accompanies it; here, in a nook, almost invisible, is heard the intonation of a liturgy; there, from the vast body, breathes the ready, reverent, and fervent supplication, under the influence of the interceding Spirit; here, some are standing; there, others are kneeling, in the same act of devotion, and others still, even lazily sitting, in the act of addressing the King of kings; what a glorious unity is this! And yet this is no exaggerated picture of our church, as it actually is, with the single difference that it does not, because it cannot, meet in the same place. Her doctrine is that the church is one (see the note on Chapter XII. of the *Form of Government*),<sup>1</sup> and as physical ne-

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<sup>1</sup> The radical principles of Presbyterian church government and discipline are: That the several different congregations of believers, taken collectively, constitute one church of Christ, called emphatically *the church*; that a larger part of *the church*, or a representation of it, should govern a smaller, or determine matters of controversy which arise therein; that in like manner a representation of the whole should govern and determine in regard to every part, and to all the parts united; that is, that a *majority shall govern*; and, consequently, that appeals may be carried from lower to higher judicatories, till they be finally decided by the collective wisdom and united voice of the *whole church*. For these principles and this procedure, the example of the apostles, and the practice of the primitive church,

cessity demands that she should be broken up into particular congregations, yet to preserve and exhibit this general idea of unity, upon which her whole government is built, the *Directory for Worship* has been framed; a covenant has been struck between the different congregations, analogous to that which we supposed to be necessary between the members of a particular church, to secure uniformity of worship; not the dead uniformity of a liturgical service, which degrades all to the level of the class which has no gift but that of reading; but a uniformity which affords ample scope for the exercise of spiritual gifts in their boundless variety. So that how far soever a Presbyterian sheep may wander from his own immediate fold, within the limits of the United States, it is the benevolent intention of our church that he shall find, not only the same sort of pasture, but the same habits and order in the flock, with which he was familiar at home. How shockingly this benevolent design has, in many places, been frustrated, it is needless for us to say. Are there not many churches in connection with our Assembly in which a plain Presbyterian man would feel no more at home than if he belonged to a different denomination? Here, again, we see the deadly influence of independency among us, blinding us, and making us insensible to the distinctive glory of our ecclesiastical organization. No wonder the Congregationalists of the North presume to call themselves Presbyterians; they have an ample apology for doing it, in the practice of some of our congregations, which have added to the covenant, and thereby annulled it, and virtually declared themselves independent. As to the horror expressed about the doings of the St. Peter's, Rochester, we have only to say, that it has done violence to no principle which is not violated at this moment by a hundred of our

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is considered as authority. See Acts xv. to the twenty-ninth verse," *et al.* *The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.* Phila. 1840.—ED.

churches, about which no fuss is made. They have framed a book of their own, and frankly abandoned that of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. Others have quit our book, without announcing their deed formally to the world.

3. Once more, for our space is nearly exhausted, the introduction of the forms and usages in question being, as we have shown, a violation of our Presbyterian covenant, is for that reason an intolerable act of tyranny; intolerable in principle, and oppressive in operation. Supposing all the members of a particular church in our communion to be in favor of a liturgy, or an organ; to introduce either, according to the principles already illustrated, would be *pro tanto* a virtual declaration of independence. But, in point of fact, there probably never has been a case in our church in which there has not been opposition to such an innovation when attempted; nor many in which the opposition has not been decided, and even violent. More than this, the opposition has generally been manifested by those members of the church whose religious profession was most intelligent and consistent; and the innovation has been carried by the influence of those who, if not men of the world, were, at least, not remarkable for their crucifixion to it. So that here we have vanity and folly oppressing the freemen of the Lord; those "dear children" for whom Christ died, and, by his death, delivered from all other commandments but his own, put under the intolerable yoke of the commandments of men! Oh, shame! But it may be said that these weak people, who cannot keep pace with us in our progress and improvements, have the privilege of going elsewhere. Yea, verily; the citizen who resists an outrage upon the constitution of his country has the privilege of expatriation and exile, of leaving the dust of his fathers, and the consecrated scenes around which cluster all his earliest, tenderest, and holiest associations; the captive in the hands of a band of

pirates has the privilege of walking the plank if he prefers that to lying in his blood upon the deck. The non-conformists, when they refused to submit to *imposed* forms and ceremonies, had the privilege of leaving their homes, with their wives and little ones, or even, if they preferred it, of going to jail, and rotting there. An inestimable privilege, truly, and one which, no doubt, ought to furnish ample consolation to all who, after they have labored hard, and prayed long, for the prosperity of the church of their choice, are at last driven out by those who felt nothing of the burden and heat of the day, but are willing to enter into other men's labors. "It must needs be that offences come, but woe unto that man by whom they come." But it is not the will of our Father in heaven that one of his little ones should perish. Let them look to it, who walk about in the house of God, and issue their commands, as if they were sovereign there. He who scourged the money-changers out of the temple still lives.

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES TOUCHING THE WORSHIP OF GOD.<sup>1</sup>

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THE argument in our last number on "Liturgies, Instrumental Music, and Architecture" was addressed chiefly to the officers and members of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and, we think, was perfectly conclusive upon the point that it is not an open question in this church whether, in its stated public worship, liturgies and organs may be lawfully used or not. These things were put together because they are naturally and historically connected, are parts of one system, and the outgrowths from one root. Accidental hindrances may prevent the full development of the system; but, where no such hindrances exist, popery is the inevitable result. It was also shown that the introduction of such forms of worship, being a violation of covenant stipulations, was, both in principle and in fact, an intolerable tyranny; and, consequently, that they are the true defenders of Christian liberty who stand by the federal constitution in the strict construction of it. We rejoice to know that the argument referred to has met with the hearty approbation of some of the ablest and soundest ministers in our church; and it is, therefore, no presumption in us to hope that our General Assembly—the writer on "Church Architecture" in *The Repertory* to the contrary notwithstanding—is not quite ready to convert the chair of Polemic Theology in its seminaries into a chair of Presbyterian Art.

We propose now, by way of illustrating still more fully the general question, to state, as briefly as the demands of perspicuity will allow, the principles of the word of God in regard

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<sup>1</sup>This article appeared in the December number of *The Critic*, 1855.—Ed.

to it. We earnestly beseech our brethren to consider them. The sovereign authority of our Lord Jesus Christ is concerned in them, and his epistles to the seven churches show with what jealousy he regards any encroachment upon that authority on the part of his people. The purity of the faith is involved in the purity of worship, and the history of the church tells a fearful tale concerning the corruptions in doctrine which follow innovations in worship. Oh, that our faith might stand, not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God!

What hath God the Lord spoken? We open the Bible at the Ten Commandments, that comprehensive and perpetual rule of duty, and we find the first four prescribing with the greatest precision, and under the most solemn sanctions, the principles which should regulate our worship; the first forbidding the worship of all false gods, that is, of any other gods than Jehovah, the one only living and true God; the second forbidding all false worship of the true God, that is, any other worship of the true God than that which he himself has prescribed; the third forbidding any abuse or irreverent use of the rule he has given to regulate our intercourse with himself, such as straining, wresting, explaining away, adding to or taking from, or in any way perverting, the rule; the fourth forbidding the neglect or abuse of that day which he has specially consecrated for his worship. But the warnings against tampering with the integrity of the rule, and consulting our own wisdom, are everywhere explicit and abundant: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it; that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you." "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it." "Add not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." "They have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn



their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart." "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." "Every plant which my Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." (See, also, Rev. xxii. 18, 19; and, for exemplifications, Lev. x. 1-4; Josh. xxii. 10, etc.; Judges viii. 24, etc.; 1 Sam. xv. 21, etc; 1 Chron. xv. 13, *et mult. al.*<sup>1</sup>) The reader will pardon this old-fashioned way of quoting Scripture; it is a habit we have got, and we know not what better we can do, even in this enlightened and progressive generation. We are ready, however, to give it up when anybody will show us a more excellent way.

Now that these passages clearly teach that the church is bound by the written word, in the sense that she is not only to do what God has enjoined in the matter of his worship, but to abstain from doing what he has not enjoined, is almost the unanimous faith of the Reformed churches. And we hazard little in asserting that in as far as any branch of the Reformed church hesitates to accept this interpretation, in so far it still needs to be reformed. "The sins forbidden in the second commandment," says the 109th Answer in the *Westminster Larger Catechism*, "are all devising, counseling, commanding, using, and anywise approving any religious worship not instituted by God himself; . . . all superstitious devices, corrupting the worship of God, adding to it, or taking from it, whether invented and taken up of ourselves or received by tradition from others, though under the title of antiquity, custom, devotion, good intent, or any other pretense soever; . . . all neglect, contempt, hindering,

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<sup>1</sup> Lev. x. 1-4: Nadab and Abihu, for offering strange fire, are burnt with fire; Josh. xxii. 10 ff.: the Israelites under Joshua would allow no altar of worship beyond the Jordan; Judges viii. 24 ff.: Gideon's ephod causeth idolatry; 1 Sam. xv. 21 ff.: Saul condemned because of his sacrifice at Gilgal; 1 Chron. xv. 13: the breach upon Israel bringing up the ark, because they "sought him not after the due order."—Ed.

and opposing the worship and ordinances which God hath appointed."

"Now," says old Dr. Owen, with a spice of satire quite unwonted in him, "men who, having great abilities of learning, are able to distinguish themselves from under the power of the most express rules and commands, should yet, methinks, out of a sense of their weakness (which they are ready to profess themselves convinced of when occasion is offered to deliver their thoughts concerning them), have compassion for those who, being not able to discern the strength of their reasonings because of their fineness, are kept in a conscientious subjection to the express commands of God, especially conceiving them not without some cogent cause reiterated."<sup>1</sup>

But, to accommodate the words of the learned vice-chancellor, lest the present exasperation of the spirits of our brethren who condemn our "high-churchism" and hair-splitting metaphysics should frustrate this expectation, let us consider what these Scripture testimonies mean. Can they mean anything less than that God is absolute dictator in this affair of worship; and, consequently, that every invention of man therein is a grand impertinence and wickedness? Will it be said that the prohibition in regard to things which have not been commanded extends only to those things which are inconsistent with express commandments? Then we ask, in return, what means this phrase, "adding" to the commandment? Does it mean, after all, nothing more than "transgressing," or "coming short of," a particular law of God? What should we say of a writ in law under a merely human government which could be interpreted in this wise? It directs certain things to be done, and to be done by certain persons, and in a certain manner,

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<sup>1</sup> "Discourse on Liturgies," *Works*, Vol. XIX., p. 440. We commend this masterly discussion to all who wish to understand the true doctrine of the "discretionary power" of the church, so much talked of in recent debates amongst us.

but its meaning is, that all other things can boundlessly be done, provided the authority of the writ be not denied, or its provisions be not contradicted. What would become of the liberties of this country if such principles of interpretation were allowed to be applied to its constitutions, general and local? We say that the command to add nothing is an organic part of the whole law, as law, and, therefore, that every human addition to the worship of God, even if it be not contrary to any particular command, is yet contrary to the general command that nothing be added. And so said those men of God who chose to meet bonds and death rather than submit to rites and forms *imposed* by men. So must the Presbyterian people of this nation say, or witness the destruction of that liberty wherewith Christ the Lord hath made them free.

But some will say this interpretation confines the action of the church within very narrow limits. Are we not adding to the law when we appoint a certain hour for public worship, when we elect a moderator of a church court, when we erect a synod covering such an extent of territory, when we appoint a chorister to lead the singing, or that chorister uses a tuning-fork to pitch the music? This question has been answered in the article on "The Wisdom of Man vs. the Power of God," in the July number of this work, p. 313,<sup>1</sup> and to that we refer the reader. We stand immovably by the first chapter of our *Confession of Faith*, in its obvious sense, and believe, *ex animo*, in the absolute sufficiency of the Scriptures as the rule of faith and practice. No foolish charge of bibliolatry from any quarter shall make us ashamed of this confession. We not only build the sepulchres of the glorious Non-conformists of the seventeenth century, in which many who sneer at their principles and ours are willing to join us, but we love their principles, and pray that God will make us

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 111 of this volume.

worthy to walk in their steps and enable us to contend to the very last extremity against any other voice being heard within the fold but the voice of him who has laid down his life for the sheep.

But our brethren who defend the innovations in question, and object to our stiff conservatism, may say again, "We join issue with you upon your own ground; we grant, for the sake of argument, that your interpretation of the law, stringent as it appears to us to be, is just; yet the Bible sanctions the very modes of worship you condemn."

1. As to liturgies: we find that our Saviour himself gave to his disciples a form of prayer to be used by them in their public devotions. We answer, *First*, That we are at a loss to conceive where the argument lies; where the connection is between a directory given by Christ, as to the matter of his people's prayers, and forms of prayer composed by men, who either make no claim to the possession of the "mind of the Spirit," or furnish very indifferent evidence to authenticate the claim. There is a great gulf fixed between the act of Christ and an act of Parliament, or even an act of an ecclesiastical convocation. *Second*, The Lord's prayer, as given in the Sermon on the Mount, seems to have been intended as a directory in *secret* worship, like the directions in regard to alms-giving and fasting, with which it is immediately connected in that sermon. And our business now, as before explained, is not with private and secret, but with social and public, worship. If it is said that, as given by Luke, it was designed for social devotion, we say again, we do not object to its being so used, but we cannot see how this proves that forms of human invention are also lawful. The burden of proof is on the other side; let them show that the Lord's prayer was designed to be so used; then let them show that any other form may be used, *because* Christ's may, and we give up the point. If it be said again, that the Lord's prayer was composed out of forms in common use among the Jews, we reply, let them

prove this, and then show that because a form made or selected by the great Prophet of his people may be used, a form made or selected by uninspired men may be used; and that the use of forms in an effete and carnal church justifies the use of them in a church replenished with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of grace and supplication. *Third*, "The Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." Even supposing, therefore, that our Saviour designed that prayer to be used as a public form by his disciples then, when they were so carnal as to be looking for earthly glory as the reward they should receive for having faithfully attended him, and to be unable to hear patiently of his ignominious death upon the cross, it does not follow that it must continue to be so used after his ascension into heaven, and the outpouring of the Holy Ghost with mighty power. And here is the strong point against the use of liturgies, that they are inconsistent with the promise of the Spirit, which is given to ministers to enable them for their work. Where is the necessity for *gifts* in a church in which everything but the sermon is put down in print, and the only requisites for a canonical performance of the worship can be obtained from the tailor and the common school-master? And as to the sermon, nobody needs to be informed of what sort that is, and what gifts are required to make one, in those churches where liturgies are "almost adored." The truth is, as we said before, it is only in the absence of gifts and grace that the need of a liturgy is felt. Then, indeed, it is one of those circumstances which are of the nature of a "necessary adjunct" of an action; for if the man is to pray at all, it must be by book. But what right has a man to thrust himself into the pulpit, and undertake to lead the people of God in their devotions, if he has no other gift than that which all the people, perhaps, have as well as he, to-wit, the ability to read? Suppose, for one moment, that the General Assembly should prescribe a form of prayer to be read in all the

churches, would not the ministry of the church speedily descend, as a mass, to the level of that portion of it which could read only? It would make the weakest the standard of the strong, and a degradation well-nigh universal would be the melancholy result. Gifts would cease to be valued, to be sought, to be cultivated; and a tame, heartless, gloomy formalism settle down upon us like the pall of death. Depend upon it, let men deride "gifted brethren" as they may, if we cease to have gifted brethren we are ruined. The task of those who defend liturgies, therefore, is to prove that a man endued with the Spirit and the promised gifts of Christ cannot pray to edification without such help. It is, in other words, to show that it is a necessary "circumstance" of the action in his case. If this be not done, then the whole tenor of Scripture teaching is against them. (See Eph. iv. 7-16.)

2. As to instrumental music, it is said "that it formed a part of the stated worship of the temple under the law, and that the frequent allusions to the harp, psaltery, etc., in the Psalms show that instrumental music may be associated with sentiments of true spiritual devotion." We remark: *First*, That it is a little singular that our brethren who have such a horror of Jewish bondage, and protest so earnestly against making the ancient people of God—who were not allowed to do what was right in their own eyes—an example for us who enjoy the liberty of the gospel, should not be able to find in the notices of public worship in the New Testament any traces of the use of instrumental music; but must needs go back to the days of bondage for their precedents. We hear of "*singing* the praises of God" in the church of the apostles; of "*singing* with the spirit and with the *understanding* also"; that is, so as to be understood, as the connection (1 Cor. xiv.) shows the meaning to be, implying that as the human voice is the only organ which can *articulate* sentiment, it is the only organ to be used; of "*teaching* and *admonishing* one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs";

but not one word about wind or stringed instruments, which can neither feel or speak. *Second*, Even upon the supposition that instrumental music was a part of the stated public worship of the temple, it does not follow that it is lawful under the gospel. The fact that it belonged to the temple service is a strong presumption that it was peculiar to the worship of the ministration of death. It seems to have been associated whenever it was performed with the *offering of sacrifice*; but Christians know no other sacrifice but that of Jesus, which has been offered once for all. Let the Papists, who believe in temples, priests and sacrifices, stick to their organs; let not the freemen of the Lord, who have boldness to enter into the holiest of all through the blood of the Son of God, who has passed into the heavens, borrow their pitiful machinery. We prefer the synagogue to the temple.<sup>1</sup> *Third*, But it is more than doubtful whether music of this sort ever formed any part of the stated public worship even of the temple. Upon this point we quote the following sentences from a short essay on Instrumental Music, by Dr. R.

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<sup>1</sup>We once heard a doctor of divinity in a "Free Conversation on the State of Religion" intimate that his faith in organs had been somewhat confirmed by reading that "Jubal was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ." An organ had been recently introduced into his own church, and we thought at the time that his conscience was in distress, and, therefore, ready to put into any port in the storm. We have heard of some people arguing for immersion from the phrase "*divers* baptisms" in Hebrew ix. 10; and though we do not think it possible that the readers of the *Critic* could attach any consequence to the text in Genesis as touching this quest'on, yet out of deference to the doctorate we will say: 1. That Jubal was of the children of Cain, who "went out from the presence of God." 2. That, by parity of reasoning, as "Jabal was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle," we ought to worship in tents and sacrifice cattle; and as "Tubal-Cain was the instructor of every artificer in brass and iron," we ought to use a brass band or brass cannon in our public worship.

We do not desire to call any man "father on earth"; but if we must have a metaphorical father, the line of Cain is about the last we should go to.

J. Beckinridge, first printed in the *Presbyterian Herald*, and reprinted in Baltimore three years ago. No attempt, as far as we know, has been made to answer the argument. Why, it is not difficult to divine :

“The very nature of the sacrificial system of the Jews was incompatible with the stated use of music of any sort in direct connection with it; and it is positively certain that instruments of music formed no part of the divinely-appointed means or utensils of the tabernacle or temple service; for everything lawful to be used in every part of that service by every person any way connected with it is expressly recorded in the Bible, and everything else is forbidden to be used or even made; and yet no musical instrument is ever mentioned as amongst them or connected with their use. We have four catalogues preserved by God in his word of everything made according to the pattern shown to Moses in the mount, catalogues embracing the minutest as well as the most important thing, but no allusion is made to any musical instrument. The temple service of the Jews, which was full of Christ to come, had no such machinery. As to the synagogue system—that system after which, both in its model and in its objects, the Christian church was confessedly and undeniably formed—it allowed no instrumental music. Probably in the tens of thousands of Jewish synagogues which have covered the earth during the whole career of that wonderful people, not one can be found in which a congregation of enlightened Jews, who adhered to the institutions of their religion and their race, allowed any instrument of music, much less an organ, to form any part of their system of the public worship of God.

“10 These statements may excite surprise in those who have not paid attention to the subject; and it may be demanded what are we, then, to understand was the exact position occupied by instruments of music in the religious system of the Jews. To this various replies may be made: 1. It is not at all material to the question now under discussion what position they occupied, the only thing needful to be shown being that they were not a part of the stated worship of God. 2. The greater the obscurity concerning



their proper place and use, the greater the absurdity of making their place and use in the Jewish system control the nature of the Christian system of public worship. 3. It is for those who cite their use to justify innovations on our established and covenanted ordinances to be able, at least, to show us clearly and certainly that the Jewish use they rely on was not contrary to our ordinances. 4. It is manifest that if this Jewish use could be shown, and, when shown, had the weight attributed to it, the argument would be far deeper and broader than merely to justify the proposed innovation in our churches, it would render that innovation an absolute and universal duty; for if God established amongst the Jews, as a part of his stated worship, the use of organs or other similar instruments, and if he has done nothing since to change that institution, then it is still universally binding. 5. But not to leave the point wholly in the dark as to the Jewish use of instruments of music in God's worship, I suppose that use chiefly as follows: *First*, On great and extraordinary occasions, such as the dedication of the temple, the bringing up of the ark of God, national rejoicings, national mournings, and the like. *Second*, On the occasions of the assembling three times every year of the whole Jewish people at Jerusalem to celebrate their great annual feasts, the tens of thousands of Israel in their vast processions through the city, chanting, as they ascended to the temple, the 'Songs of Degrees,' accompanied by the sound of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of harps, psalteries, cymbals, and the like. *Third*, In the meetings of the priests, Levites, and others exclusively devoted to a religious profession and service amongst the Jews, official meetings, so to speak, for prayer and mutual instruction, instrumental music connected with sacred praise seems to have been an object of special attention, and what is said in the two immediately preceding heads shows how natural and important this would be. *Fourth*, On the whole, the system of instrumental music for religious uses amongst the Jews was no part of their synagogue system and no part of their temple system, but seems rather to have been an offshoot, connected incidentally, but intimately, with their great sacrificial system, in its combined aspect as a system at once religious and national. And it is to be remem-

bered that it was not Moses nor the prophets, but it was David, who arranged the whole musical economy of the Jews, whatever it may have been; David the king, as well as David the psalmist—as the latter composing divine songs for God’s people in his own and all other ages, as the former suiting the use of instrumental music to them in the peculiar aspect of his own people considered in a religio-national point of view, and not as either, strictly speaking, temple worshippers or synagogue worshippers.”

It will be observed that the argument of this paper has been strictly confined to the point of the warrant of Scripture for the innovations in worship which some of our brethren are disposed to defend. Many pages might be written upon the desolating influence, in fact, of these corruptions, but all we want to know about anything is, that it is *bad*; its effects must correspond with its nature. As the tree is, so must the fruit be. Let our brethren on the other side distinctly understand that we are conservatives, and are acting on the defensive. They are bound to show cause why these imitations of Rome are to be tolerated in the Presbyterian Church, and a taste cultivated in our children which they must go to Episcopacy or Popery fully to gratify. We stand upon the platform of that great Westminster Assembly, “by the advice of whose leading members the Long Parliament passed an act declaring the use of organs in churches to be a part of idolatrous worship, and ordering every one to be removed.” What have we to do with the drums of Tophet? Alas! what madness is it to come down from that lofty elevation on which God and the blood of our martyred fathers have placed us, to go into the market and bid for men with the gew-gaws and follies of those who, we say, are totally apostate or only half reformed! Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts! Cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved!

## THE WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH.<sup>1</sup>

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THE general principles of the Old Testament worship, patriarchal and Mosaic, are :

(a), That God is conversable with man, and that worship is this conversation and communion. (b), That in this communion God is acknowledged by man as his Creator, Sovereign Proprietor, and all-disposing Lord, and that God offers himself to man as his all-comprehending good. (Heb. xi. 6 contains the whole rationale of worship: "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him;" the necessary being of God the fountain of all other beings, and the communication of God and his fulness as the reward, the satisfying portion, of "him who cometh unto God," *i. e.*, the worshipper.) (c), The internal worship consists in that state of the soul which corresponds with these relations, faith, obedience, or love, the principle of it, gratitude, praise, desire, etc.; that external worship (called *cultus*, when reduced to a system and embodied in a ritual) is the form or forms in which this ritual worship is expressed.

*First*, The earliest record of this *cultus* is in Genesis iv., where both Abel and Cain recognize their dependence upon God by offering a portion (and the best) of their *property*. This was a part of themselves, because their toil and care had been expended upon it, and their own lives were sus-

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<sup>1</sup>This is a lecture which Dr. Peek was accustomed to deliver to his classes in church history while holding that professorship. The lecture, however, was delivered in *extempore* form. The principles of the lecture were further developed and illustrated also in the discussion of the liturgies; but that part of the notes is too meagre to be satisfactorily presented.—Ed.

tained by it. It was, therefore, an appropriate symbol of the surrender of *themselves*, their own lives, which they knew well could alone be pleasing to God. This was the sign of their restoration from the fall. Man fell in the attempt to become a God; to make *himself* his all-disposing Lord and his all-comprehending good. Cain's sacrifice was not accepted for reasons that are obvious enough, but this was its meaning, so far as it had any: it was an offering of that which cost him something, and the representative of all he had and all he was.

This principle was still more clearly recognized in the Mosaic ritual. It is computed that the Israelites did not contribute less than one-sixth of their annual income to the service of God. In the animal sacrifices there was symbolized not only the surrender of the life as an expiation of sin and a propitiation of God (which we will notice afterwards), but as an offering which was due to God and acceptable to him (burnt offering), and also as the means of fellowship with God as *their* God and friend (peace offering.) In the vegetable sacrifices we find the same principle embodied. The offerings were not to be made of the wild or spontaneous products of the soil, but of flour, wine, and oil, upon which labor and care had been expended. These were acceptable to God as the symbol of good works, and of the devotion of the worshippers to his service. Besides all the regular *taxes*, there were free-will offerings in money.<sup>1</sup> When we come down to the New Testament times we meet the same thing.<sup>2</sup>

*Second*, The next thing to be noticed in the case recorded in Genesis iv. is that a *bleeding* sacrifice was indispensable. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts, and by it he being dead yet speaketh."<sup>3</sup> [Abel associated the death of the lamb which he

<sup>1</sup> See address on Systematic Beneficence, pp. 136, 137.

<sup>2</sup> See *Ibid.*, pp. 139 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Hebrews xi. 4.

offered with the hope of atonement and consequent victory over death. That association rendered his sacrifice acceptable. The grand reason of the singular place which in the writings of Moses is assigned to sacrifice by blood is, to adopt the language of Dr. Patrick Fairbairn,<sup>1</sup> fully brought out in Leviticus xvii. 11, which, according to the correct reading, runs thus: "For the soul of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to atone for your souls, for the blood atones through the soul." It is scarcely possible to mistake the general sense of this important passage, but its precise and definite meaning has often been obscured by not perceiving that the *soul* at the close of the verse refers back to the *soul* at the beginning, and expresses the principle or seat of life, not in him who is to be atoned for, but in the creature by which atonement is made for him. And the full and correct import of the passage is to the following effect: "You must not eat of the blood, because God has appointed it as the means of atonement for your sins. But it is the means of the atonement as the bearer of the soul. It is not, therefore, the matter of the blood that atones, but the soul or life which resides in it; so that the soul of the offered victim atones for the soul of the man who offers it. The ground upon which this merciful arrangement plainly proceeds is the doomed condition of men as sinners, and the purpose of God to save them from its infection. Their soul or life has through sin been forfeited to God, and as a debt due to his justice it should in right be rendered back again to him who gave it. The enforcement of this claim, of course, inevitably involves the death of transgressors, according to the sentence from the very first being over the commission of sin, denouncing its penalty to be death. But as God appears in the institution of sacrifice providing a way of escape from this deserved doom, he mercifully appoints a substitute—the soul or life of a beast for the

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<sup>1</sup>Fairbairn's *Typology*, Vol. II., pp. 304 ff.

soul or life of a transgressor, and as the seat of life is in the blood, so the blood of the beast, its life-blood, was given to be shed in death and served upon the altar of God in the room of that due to divine justice. When this was done, when the blood of the slain victim was poured out or sprinkled upon the altar, and thereby given up to God, the sinner's guilt was atoned (covered); a screen, as it were, was thrown between the eye of God and his guilt, or between his own soul and the penalty due to his transgressions. In other words, a life that had not been forfeited was accepted in the room of the sinner's that was forfeited, and this was yielded back to him as now again a life in peace and fellowship with God, a life out of death." Nevertheless, it was not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin,<sup>1</sup> "for the animal is not offered by a voluntary act of its own; its life is no real equivalent, and the substitution derives no validity from any natural and necessary bond of union and communion. Hence the sacrifice of the animal could not win forgiveness by its own inherent power, but merely serve as a shadow and type of the sacrifice of Christ, who, being God and man," poured out his soul unto death,<sup>2</sup> and whose sufferings and death possess infinite value and eternal<sup>3</sup> validity.]<sup>4</sup>

The theory of Bähz and others<sup>5</sup> is, that the slaying of the animal was only in order to procure the blood, which, as containing the life, was offered as a symbolical expression of the surrender of the life of the worshipper. This contra-

<sup>1</sup> Hebrews x. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah liii. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Kurtz's *Sacred History*, Schaeffer's translation, seventeenth edition. Philadelphia. 1883. Cp. Fairbairn's *Typology*, Vol. II., pp. 306 ff., sixth edition. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.

<sup>4</sup> The matter enclosed in the [ ] is an attempt to present Dr. Peck's idea and comply with the following imperative which stood in his text immediately after the quotation of Heb. xi. 4, viz.: "For the principle of the blood, see Lev. xvii. 11, and Fairbairn and Kurtz upon it."—ED.

<sup>5</sup> Fairbairn's *Typology*, and Hodge on the Atonement.

dicts not only the exposition given in the law itself, but the exposition of the typical significance of the ceremony in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The great truth expressed there, a truth for all time, is the necessity of expiation and propitiation. A life must be surrendered to God in the place of the life of the worshipper, which has been forfeited by sin. This has been done adequately only by Christ, and we may rest assured that the *symbol* would never have been instituted by God if it had not been designed also to be a *type*.<sup>1</sup>

This mode of approaching God has always been held to be necessary in the church. Cain, in bringing an unbloody offering only, became the father of Socinians and other Deists. The nominal church, however, has erred, and erred grievously, in losing sight of the *completeness* of the bloody sacrifice of Christ, and has, through long ages, gone back to Judaism by pretending to *repeat* the sacrifice of Christ in the mass, and by making alms-giving and other good works to serve the purpose of expiating sin and of propitiating God. And this virtual repudiation of God's authority in the matter of a sacrifice, and the practice of will-worship, which

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<sup>1</sup>Speaking broadly, a *type* is a *prophetic* symbol; the difference between a *symbol* and a *type* may be brought out as follows: "A *symbol* is a material object, a transaction in the material world, or sometimes a number to represent some higher spiritual truth."—Barrow's *Companion to the Bible*, p. 554. A *type* is a symbol appointed by God to adumbrate something *higher in the future*, which is called the antitype. Since the type is "a shadow of good things to come," it follows that the antitype must belong to the *future*. A pure symbol may belong to the present or the near future. It may represent something that now exists or is coming into existence, in respect to which concealment is not necessary. The true type, on the contrary, reckoned from the time of its institution, looks forward to the distant future. The high reality which it foreshadows may be intimated by the prophets "as in a glass darkly," but the appearance of the antitype can alone furnish a full explanation of its meaning.—Barrow's *Companion to the Bible*, pp. 580, 581. The bleeding sacrifice referred to here by Dr. Peck set forth in *symbol* the fact that "A life must be surrendered to God in the place of the life of the worshipper, which has been forfeited by sin"; it set forth in *type* Jesus Christ sacrificed for us.—ED.

identifies them with Cain in his offering, has also identified them with Cain in his *persecuting* spirit.<sup>1</sup> It is the testimony of the saints to the perfect and exclusive efficiency of the blood of Jesus which has made their own blood flow like water at the hands of papal Rome, as it was their testimony to the majesty of a King higher and mightier than the emperor which made their blood to flow at the hands of pagan Rome.

*Third*, The principle to be noticed next is, that every act of worship is a *priestly* act. It does not, indeed, expressly appear in the record we have been examining (Gen. iv.) that there was a priest. But the probability is, that Adam, as the head of his household, was both king and priest. This was the rule in patriarchal times, both in the line of the church and of pagans.<sup>2</sup> The first separate order of priests divinely ordained was that of Aaron. Whether Adam was the priest or not, the whole analogy of the history shows that there must have been a priest; and if Adam was not, Abel was. After the Aaronic priesthood was established, its rights were very jealously regarded, and signal punishment was inflicted upon any one who usurped its functions.<sup>3</sup>

All this was typical of the inalienable prerogatives of Christ the only true priest under the gospel. The church has held fast to this doctrine of the necessity of a priestly intervention in the worship of God. But here, too, a large portion of the nominal church has gone back to Judaism,

<sup>1</sup> Compare Gal. iv. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Compare Gen. xiv. 18, and Anius in Virgil, *Æn.* 3, 80: "*Rex Anius, rex idem hominum Phœbeque sacerdos.*" Compare Job i. 5; Gen. viii. 20, where the same person is called a messenger (compare in the Hebrew Mal. ii. 7; Eccl. v. 6), a *nuncius* or *internuncius*, an "interpreter" (2 Chron. xxxii. 31; Isa. xliii. 27), "one among a thousand" (*i. e.*, of a family or clan, Judg. vi. 15; Num. i. 16; Micah v. 2). *One* of a thousand may be first, or chief, or head, or ruler of a thousand. (See *Kitto Cyc.*, sub vab. "Priest.")

<sup>3</sup> Num. xvi.; 2 Kings xv.



and made an order of priests to offer sacrifices for the living and the dead. The New Testament doctrine is that Christ is the only priest; that he still discharges the priestly functions in heaven, and that *all* his people alike are priests in the sense that they offer spiritual sacrifices, as they are all temples in the sense that they are the habitations of the Holy Ghost.<sup>1</sup> The humblest believer, in the most private station, is as much a priest as the most eminent minister of the gospel; they both have a privilege which was denied to the high priest of old, that of access to the holiest of all every day, every hour, every moment. When ministers, as such, assume to be priests, and the assumption is tolerated, the church is apostate.<sup>2</sup>

*Fourth*, All true worship is *divinely ordained*. Abel's worship was offered in *faith*. This implies an expression of the will of God that it should be done, together with a promise of acceptance and blessing (Heb. xi. 4), and it may be justly questioned whether the offering of a *bleeding* sacrifice to God would have suggested itself to the mind of man without some previous intimation of the divine pleasure. That God should regulate the whole matter of his own worship is evident: (*a*), From his absolute sovereignty in all things, and the corresponding dependence and subjection of his creatures in all things. (*b*), From "*communis sensus*" of the human race in conceding to all monarchs the prerogative of prescribing the forms in which they are to be approached. Indeed, a similar prerogative is conceded to every head of a family in reference to the conditions upon which the society of the family is to be enjoyed. (*c*), From the fact

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<sup>1</sup> See 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9; compare Isa. lxi. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Note here: We are not concerned about the *name*. *Priest* may only be "presbyter writ short," though we should prefer to see the name disused. An officer whose business it is to offer expiatory sacrifices is the thing meant, or any one upon whose ministry in worship the acceptance of a believer's worship is made to depend. To make such a priest since Christ came is to be guilty of the sin of Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and Azariah.

that men are naturally incapable of knowing what forms of worship become the majesty of God, and especially what forms are suited to, and correspond with, the revelation he has made of himself at any given period. All worship is *significant*, and is intended to bring the truth revealed into contact with the mind and heart of the worshipper. Man, then, is incompetent to devise modes of worship, because he knows not what modes are best adapted to express the truth or the emotions which the truth is suited to produce. This is specially true of symbolical worship, the kind of *cultus* upon which men have been most ready to try their skill. The apparent fitness of a symbol will depend upon the knowledge, taste, and other qualities of individual men or of communities.<sup>1</sup> Hence we account for the vast variety of symbols in the religions of the world. Hence, also, we may account for the fact that changes in the forms of worship have always been associated with changes in the faith of the church. The corruption of the one is the corruption of the other; *e. g.*, the tinkering of the Lord's Supper by the wisdom of the church with a view to make it more impressive and significant was, in the first place, due probably to a decline in the church's love to her Lord, and afterwards resulted in a practical oversight, and even denial, of the very truth it was designed to set forth. So that in the mass we have an ordinance which no longer resembles the Eucharist, and which teaches, practically, that the death of Christ was an abortion no better than the sacrifices of the law, which were remembrances of sin rather than of grace. So the resurrection of Christ was the only event of his history which God required to be commemorated by the ob-

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<sup>1</sup> Compare the symbolization of the Orientals with that of the Greeks. The former consulted very little the sense of beauty in framing their symbols; the latter made beauty supreme. The Ephesian Artemis (see Acts xix.) was a monster; the Greek Artemis and the Roman Diana were models of female loveliness.

servance of a day ; but the church has gone on multiplying days, until the Sabbath and its peculiar significance has been lost sight of. The same iron hand of tyranny which enjoined the observance, upon reluctant subjects, of days which God had not enjoined upon them, also enjoined May-poles and the Book of Sports for the day which God *had* ordained.

I have said that men have generally been inclined to try their skill, in the way of improvement, upon the symbolical parts of worship. This may be accounted for in two ways : 1, These parts of worship express more emphatically than others the sovereign authority of God, because they are *positive*<sup>1</sup> institutions. The devil, therefore, aims his blows chiefly at them ; he thereby most effectually and speedily accomplishes his purpose, which is to seduce men into *rebellion*<sup>2</sup> against God. 2, It is a much more effectual way to corrupt the truth to tack on the corruption to an ordinance or institution which has an historical interest than to present it in a naked, abstract form. This is illustrated by the corruption of baptism and the Lord's supper into baptismal regeneration, denial of the efficacy of Christ's sacrifice, etc. So, also, the conversion of the Christian ministry into a priesthood and church buildings into temples ; and this is done more easily because done under the plausible pretext of making worship more impressive and more suited to the majesty of God.

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<sup>1</sup> A *positive* institution is one which expresses the will of him who makes the institution. It is distinguished from a moral institution, which is to be observed as essentially right—right independently of God's will.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Note the difference between *rebellion* and any other crime. It is an attempt to subvert the government itself, a repudiation of the very authority upon which all law rests.

## THE WISDOM OF MAN VERSUS THE POWER OF GOD.<sup>1</sup>

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THE Apostle of the Gentiles reminds the Corinthians that, from the very beginning of his ministry among them, his reliance for success was not upon the means upon which they were accustomed to rely for persuasion and conviction—the resources of logic and rhetoric—but upon “the demonstration of the Spirit and of power.” This does not mean merely a great or powerful demonstration, as if the Holy Ghost were only a mightier logician or a more eloquent orator than any man could be, that his words were weightier and more persuasive than “the enticing words of man’s wisdom.” The difference he signalizes is one of kind, not one of degree only. It is a demonstration of power, energy, physical force (we use the word “physical” simply in opposition to the notion of mere “moral suasion”), not only presenting the evidence for the truth, but opening the mind to receive it and appreciate it; not only proving Christ to be the only Saviour, the only satisfying portion of the soul, but purging and renewing the soul in order that it might embrace him and rejoice in him; in short, a demonstration which consists in “effectual calling,” “whereby the Spirit, convincing sinners of their sin and misery, enlightening their minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing their wills, doth persuade and enable them to embrace Jesus Christ freely offered to them in the gospel.”

The purpose of all this was that “the faith” of the Corinthians “might not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God”; that the faith of believers, as to the efficacy of the gospel and the successful prosecution of the work of the kingdom of God, might not stand in any devices of man,

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<sup>1</sup> Appeared in *Southern Presbyterian Review*, October, 1878.—Ed.

but in the power of the Holy Ghost energizing his own ordinances. This opposition between the wisdom of man and the power of God, in relation to the faith of the church, we propose to illustrate.

1. There is a sphere in which human wisdom and divine power are not opposed to each other. In the sphere of nature they are in entire harmony, we might say even coincident, with each other. The wisdom of man, so far as it is exercised in the production of mechanical results, has its foundation in the uniformity of nature, the order of established causes, the system of invariable sequences, in the material universe around us. The instinct of our intellectual constitution prompts us to expect this uniformity. We learn, by enlarging the sphere of observation and experiment, by accumulating a number of particulars, to distinguish between real and apparent sequences, and to determine the essential conditions in which one event succeeds another. Experience modifies and corrects our confidence in the stability of nature, but does not originate or strengthen it. Now, it is this confidence in the laws of nature which gives rise to mechanical skill; without it, the right hand would soon lose its cunning. The desired results are produced by accommodating ourselves to these laws, to the properties of things, and to the conditions under which these properties manifest themselves. We become the masters of nature by becoming her servants, and we lead her by following her. Hence the famous *dictum*, "Knowledge is power"; the wisest man is the strongest man. But whose power is this? Evidently, the power of him who is the author of the constitution and course of nature. We hesitate to adopt the statement, that what we call the laws of nature are only general descriptions of the divine operations considered as uniform and invariable, because it would seem to deny that there is any real power in "secondary causes." This we do not deny; we believe that fire has a power to burn. Yet there is

a sense in which these laws may be said to be the conditions under which the power of God is ordinarily exercised; and the highest wisdom of man consists, in this department of his activity, in the nicest accommodation of his instruments to these conditions. This power is really, though, perhaps, unconsciously, the ground of our faith when we trust in the elastic force of steam to drive our engines, or in the processes of agriculture and in the influences of sunshine and shower to provide our bread. In this aspect of the case, the wisdom of man and the power of God are in entire harmony with each other.

2. So far as the activity of man is concerned merely about physical laws, the result is always the same, under the same physical conditions, whether his moral character be good or bad, whether he lives in the fear of God, or lives only to himself. But in the affairs of common life the result often shows that there is no such necessary connection between means and ends. God will assert his own glorious sovereignty, and will have that sovereignty to be recognized; and, therefore, when the *moral* agency of man is concerned, the very wisest schemes are often baffled and confounded. M. Comte himself has again and again remarked, says McCosh, that the phenomena which are the most simple and general, and, therefore, the most easily arranged into a science, are those "which are at the furthest distance from man," and he has furnished the observations from which the conclusion has been legitimately drawn, that "man is impotent in regard to the objects whose laws he can discover, and that he is ignorant and dependent in regard to the objects nearest himself and with which he is most intimately connected"; in other words, that "man's knowledge is in inverse proportion to his power"; that his knowledge is greatest when his control is least; so that, while he can, with unerring precision, predict, centuries beforehand, an eclipse of the sun, he cannot tell whether he shall die a rich man or a beggar; nay, whether,

the next moment, he shall be alive or dead. The laws by which the world is governed are sufficiently general to lay the foundation for the exercise of prudence and foresight, but at the same time are variable enough in their results—whether through the necessary limitations of the human faculties, or the exercise of the divine sovereignty, it matters not—to show that man is not the architect of his own fortune and the arbiter of his own destiny. The race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill; but time and chance (the unknown or unacknowledged cause of these diversities) happeneth to them all. For man also knoweth not his time; as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare, so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them. Consider the work of God; for who can make that straight which he hath made crooked? In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: hath God also set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him? Even in the life that now is, then, God will have our faith to stand, not in the wisdom of man, but in his own power, who worketh when, where, and how he pleaseth. In the very midst of our mechanical and organic theories of the universe and of providence he rouses us from our Epicurean dreams by the frustration of our best-contrived plans and the disappointment of our most deliberate calculations.

3. But it is in reference to the life to come, and the manifestation of the divine glory in the conception and execution of the plan of salvation, that the opposition between the wisdom of man and the power of God comes out most impressively. Indeed, it seems to have been one of the chief purposes of God in the inspired record of the history of his church to establish and illustrate this great principle—that the faith of his people must stand, not in the wisdom of man,

but in his power. When the nation of Israel was about to be set apart as the witness of his existence and government, the dispensation was introduced and authenticated by *miracles*, by visible interpositions of the power of God, outside, if not in contravention, of the "laws of nature." A miracle is an effect produced by a direct and immediate exercise of power, and an effect palpable to the senses. Such an effect is always a divine *σημείον*, a sign of the presence and power of God, since all power but his is and must be exerted by means of law, indirectly and mediately. The agency of the Creator is concerned in the production of the grain from the seed by means of the ordinary properties of the soil and the influences of the atmosphere; it is concerned, also, in raining down manna from heaven upon his people in the wilderness; in the ministry of the ravens to Elijah at the brook Cherith, the most voracious of birds bringing him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; in sustaining the same prophet forty days and forty nights without food; in the multiplication of the widow's oil by the hands of Elisha, and the feeding of a hundred men by the same prophet with twenty barley loaves; and in the feeding of thousands by the Saviour with a few loaves and fishes. The power of God, we say, is exercised in all these cases. But how different the impression in the first case and in the rest! In the first case, the finger of God is not seen; in the remainder, it is palpable, and with more or less distinctness, according as the exercise of the power is more or less visibly direct.

If the Israelites had been fed by the harvest of their own hands, as the Egyptians were, how would the world have known that their God was other and greater than the gods of their enemies? But fed and clothed and defended and delivered *as they were*, the verdict rendered even by their enemies was that their Rock was other and greater. Now, why such a dispensation as this? Plainly, because the ancient church was to live by faith in the power of God



exercised in the way of an "extraordinary providence," and must be educated to that end. The faithless generation quailed and fainted at the report of the spies. God swore in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest, because they still argued and acted upon the principles of human wisdom and worldly prudence. "The giants, the sons of Anak, are there, and cities walled up to heaven; how can an undisciplined multitude like ours, encumbered with the care of women and children, hope to conquer a warlike race fighting for their homes and their altars?" Sound reasoning, truly, and commendable prudence in any other people, but not in men who had witnessed the plagues of Egypt, the drying up of the Red Sea, and the instantaneous discomfiture of an armed and disciplined host with the mightiest monarch of the world at its head; in men who were at the very time miraculously sustained by food from heaven, and surrounded on all sides by multiplied evidences that the God of nature and providence was on their side. They ought to have believed that those impregnable walls would fall down, if need be, at the very blast of their horns, and the stout hearts of those sons of Anak melt like wax at their approach, under the secret touch of him whose presence had made the solid mountain to smoke and tremble. They had not the faith which was indispensably necessary to qualify them for the rest of God in the land of promise, and were, therefore, excluded. They could not enter in because of unbelief. And many years rolled by, years of painful discipline, but discipline under the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, before the younger generation were prepared, by faith in the power of God, for the conquest and permanent possession of that country in which the dust of Abraham had long reposed, the pledge of Jehovah's faithfulness, and the memorial of his own.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The use the apostle makes of this history in the third and fourth chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews is very striking. In the case of

And how gloriously were these lessons renewed under the administration of Joshua and the judges, when, with the most contemptible weapons of war, the blowing of rams' horns, lamps and pitchers, the jaw-bone of an ass, and an ox-goad, the deliverance of Israel from oppression was accomplished and their victories achieved! And how certainly did disaster and disgrace befall them during their whole history when they forgot the King of Israel, who is spirit and not flesh, and trusted in horses and chariots for success in battle! Saul was one of the most conspicuous examples of confidence in his own wisdom, and, very naturally, was one of the greatest troublers of the people. He acted in the affairs of the Amalekites with the best intentions—*ad majorem gloriam Dei*; he saved the best of the spoil for the honor of the Lord. But how is his officious service received? "What meaneth this bleating in mine ears? and the lowing of the oxen which I hear? Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king." (See 1 Sam. xv., and compare, for the manner in which Saul executed his own vengeance upon "the priests of the Lord," 1 Sam. xxii. 17-19.)

But let us look a little more narrowly at some of the instances before referred to, and discover, if we can, the principles embodied in them, by eliminating the transient and accidental from the permanent and essential. It is not an

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the Jews we have: 1. A promised rest. 2. An extraordinary providence. 3. A faith in such a providence, contradicting the natural instinct of the mind, which prompts it to look for unvarying uniformity in the sequences of nature. In the case of man, under the gospel, we have: 1. A promised rest. 2. The righteousness of Christ imputed for justification. 3. A faith in that righteousness, contradicting the natural tendency to look to a personal, inherent righteousness as the ground of justification.

uncommon error, we apprehend, even among intelligent Christians, to suppose that, because the age of miracles is passed, the church of God stands in a totally different relation to his power from that in which it stood when miracles were wrought. If this supposition were well grounded, it is plain that the records of God's interpositions in the past by miracles would furnish little or no support to our faith, except as proofs of his omnipotence, and, therefore, of his ability to aid the church in the exigencies of her history. This assurance is, indeed, a great thing. But then the question must arise, Will God exert this power, and are we entitled to expect and pray for it? It is often said, specially in reference to the success of the ministry at home, and still more specially of the success of the foreign missionary work, that the church labors under the great disadvantage of not being sustained in her work by miracles. Now, to say nothing of the lessons of history in regard to the efficacy of miracles in the conversion of sinners; that human unbelief was obstinate enough to resist even such evidence; that Christ's own nation, the visible church of God of that day, not only disowned and rejected him in spite of all his splendid works of power and beneficence, but insulted him by ascribing those works to a collusion with the fiends of darkness; that the heathen, though so powerfully impressed by the miracles of Paul and Barnabas as to be with great difficulty restrained from offering them divine honors, were yet, a little while after, with no difficulty persuaded to stone them; not to dwell, we say, upon these lessons of history, it is sufficient to call attention to the fact, that the very purpose of the miracle is to reveal a power which is actually exercised and always exercised in the church by the Spirit of God. The miracle is simply a removing of the veil, that the church may see the reality behind it. The dazzling flash of lightning which illuminates for an instant the road and neighboring objects for a traveller in a very dark

night most certainly does not create those objects which it reveals. The bright light, bright above that of the meridian sun, which prostrated Saul and his companions on their way to Damascus, and the voice which came from the excellent glory, were tokens, indeed, of the presence and majesty of Jesus, but neither nor both constituted the power which melted and moulded Saul of Tarsus into Paul the apostle. That power was identically the same with that which every sinner has experienced who has passed from death unto life. The power of God alone can quicken a dead soul; and every instance of regeneration might be called a miracle, if the fact were palpable to the senses of other men. It is as really a miracle, with the exception just named (the capability of being recognized by the senses), as the taking of Jericho, or the defeat of the Midianites by Gideon—the two instances which we propose very briefly to analyze.

In both these instances we find, *First*, That all the circumstances are so ordered as to show that the whole efficiency is of God, and that the result is due to the direct and immediate exercise of his power. *Second*, That while means are commanded to be used, these means are not natural or physical causes, but conditions under which God, in a way of sovereignty, proposes to exercise his power immediately. *Third*, That the means are of a sort to require the activity of the church, to be used by the church. God's people must be "co-laborers" with him. The walls of Jericho might have been thrown down and the Midianites routed, as the army of Sennacherib was afterwards destroyed before Jerusalem, without the co-operation of the people; and the simple announcement beforehand of the certainty of the event and of the time of its occurrence would have been sufficient evidence of the presence and power of God. But God would not do the work *sine qua non*; and its exact mode was minutely prescribed. In this way, and in no other!

*Fourth*, That yet there is a natural correspondence, to a certain extent, between the means and the ends. The people were to compass the city in a certain order, in a kind of order of battle, and not as an unorganized mob. Everything was to be done with decorum, as became the people of God. The men who were chosen to overthrow the Midianites were picked men. An army of cowards, it might have been supposed, would suit God's purpose better, as it would make his power more conspicuous. Not so; the cowards were sent home to their wives and children. There was a correspondence between the nature of the work to be done and the character of the instruments to be employed in doing it.

We find the same principles recognized in the New Testament. It is in special application to his preaching that Paul, as we have seen, asserts that our faith is not to stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God. *First*, Preaching has been ordained as a means of salvation to sinners in order that the efficiency may be acknowledged to be God's and not man's. The treasure has been put in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God. Preaching is "foolishness" to the natural man; but to the spiritual man it is the occasion of revealing the power of God. *Second*, It becomes the occasion of revealing the power of God, because there is no natural efficiency in it to convert the soul. A dead sinner cannot be argued or persuaded out of his grave by any logic or eloquence of man or angel. God alone can raise the dead; and that, too, only by an immediate exercise of his power. Preaching is one of the conditions he has ordained in which this power is to be exercised. *Third*, This ordinance of preaching is to be observed by the church with the greatest zeal and fidelity, as an ordinance of God, and with a steadfast faith in the promised power of the Spirit. Earnest and unceasing prayer is to be made to him that the supply of ministers may be maintained and augmented, and that all who preach may "so speak that

great multitudes may believe." The church is never to forget that her great work in the world is "prophesying"—prophesying to the dry bones and prophesying to the Spirit; that she is a co-worker with God; that the means by which the victory is to be won is "the sword of the Lord, and of Gideon"; not the swords, but the "sword"; not the sword of Gideon and the Lord, nor even the sword of the Lord only, but "the sword of the Lord, and of Gideon." The power of God threw down the walls of Jericho in, with, and under the marching round of the church and the blowing of the horns. So Paul ventures to say to those same Corinthians whom he had so solemnly warned against the sin of making the wisdom of man or anything else save the power of God their trust, "I have begotten you through the gospel." *Fourth*, There is a correspondence, to a certain extent, between the nature of the end and the character of the means. Truth is the natural aliment of the mind. The good which the truth of God presents and offers to sinners is the only good in which the soul can rest and be satisfied. The presenting of this truth to men by men, and not by angels, is another instance of correspondence. Sinners can better secure attention from sinners in speaking of sin, and sinners saved can better secure the attention of sinners to be saved in speaking of salvation, by the operation of the principle of sympathy. Hence the immense importance of the cultivation of the ministry; its improvement in knowledge, in utterance, and, above all, in faith, love, and all the other graces of the Holy Ghost. That is a very striking and significant record concerning Paul and Barnabas, alluded to above, that when they came to Iconium "they so spake that a great multitude believed." The exercise of God's power is represented as determined, in some sense and to some extent, by the manner in which Paul and Barnabas spake; and the manner would be determined, of course, by the spiritual condition of these ministers at the time; and this, again, would be determined, more or less, by

their habitual spiritual condition. There is no special mystery in the statement. The very reason why God has chosen men as his ministers is a reason why some men are more efficient ministers than others, and why the same men are more efficient at one time than at another. The fact that all the real efficiency is of God is a reason why the church should take special care in the training of her ministers, and why her ministers should take special heed to themselves first and then to their teaching. The Quakers' conclusion from their doctrine of the Spirit as to the training of the ministry is, therefore, a gross *non sequitur*, even if the doctrine itself be true. Paul was an inspired man, and appointed to be the great theological writer for the church of all time; but he was an "educated man" before he became an apostle, and his inspiration did not, in his own judgment, absolve him from the obligation, much less extinguish the desire, of self-improvement by reading and study. When aged and a prisoner, and waiting for his departure and for his crown of glory, he begs Timothy, when he comes, to bring not only "the cloak left at Troas with Carpus" to keep his body warm, but "the books, and specially the parchments" (these last, probably, the *adversaria*, or common-place books, in which he had jotted down thoughts suggested by his readings and meditations).

We propose now to compare with these teachings of God's holy word concerning the relations of his ordinances to his own power and sovereignty, on the one hand, and to the agency of the church, on the other, some practices which have been authorized and tolerated in the church. These practices may be distributed under two heads: 1, Those which are clear additions to God's ordinances; 2, Those which involve a wrong use of God's ordinances.

1. As to the first, we remark that they are all self-condemned as additions. The doctrine of our *Confession of Faith* is as follows: "The whole counsel of God concerning

all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith, and life is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture, unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit or traditions of men. Nevertheless, we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the word; and there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God and government of the church common to human actions and societies which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the word, which are always to be observed." That this is also the doctrine of Scripture may be seen by consulting the passages cited by the *Confession* in the foot-notes. The "circumstances" here referred to are the necessary adjuncts of human actions as such. Time, place, decency, and order are such circumstances. If, for example, there is to be social worship, there must be, as in assemblies for any purpose, an agreement as to the time and place. Every deliberative body, whether of divine or human constitution, must have a presiding officer, if the business is to be done with decorum and dispatch. The fourteenth chapter of First Corinthians, as also the eleventh, which are referred to in this section of the *Confession* by way of proof and illustration, show what our book means by "circumstances." Under this rule the use of a liturgy or of an instrument of music in the public worship of God, under the Christian dispensation, is to be condemned. No trace of a written liturgy in the church before the fourth century has been found, nor of the use of an instrument in the service of praise before the ninth. Either, therefore, during all those centuries the church did not perform the offices of public prayer and public praise with order and decorum, or these additions, which have been made since, are unnecessary, are not "circumstances" in the sense of the *Confession*.



This definition of the discretionary power of the church is the only ground which we can hold against Rome. The Church of England, in limiting the discretionary power only by the *prohibitions* of the word, has found itself exceedingly embarrassed in defending itself and its Protestant character against the Romanizing party in its own bosom. And we may add that even "the Reformed Episcopal Church," noble as is its testimony for great and fundamental doctrines and against fatal errors, retains a germ of mischief and corruption in retaining the principle of a hierarchy in its government, upon the ground of its having been long in use in the church, and its not being prohibited in the word of God. It seems to us very much the same in principle to say that, as the word of God does not prohibit the government of the church by a graded hierarchy, we may establish such a government, and to say that, as the word of God does not prohibit the celebration of the eucharist without the cup, the "*communio sub una*" may be practiced. The results of that view of the church's discretionary power which limits it only by the prohibitions of the word ought to give pause to every man who loves the gospel and values the liberty wherewith Christ hath made his people free. True freedom consists in being the slave of Christ, and in emancipation from the bondage of "the commandments of men." The liberty, on the part of the rulers of the church, to make laws which Christ has not made is simply and really the liberty to put an intolerable yoke upon the necks of the people. It is true both of the Jewish and of the papal Pharisees, that "they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers." So truly does this spirit of cruel tyranny belong to the essence of this false principle, that we see its working even in the free Presbyterian Church. We have all heard of instances in which the organ has been introduced into a church against the wishes and protests of

some of the holiest people in it, people venerable for their age and services, and at the instigation of persons who were venerable neither for age, nor holiness, nor services. If the sufferers, whose feelings, and perhaps faith, have been outraged, remonstrate, it is considered a sufficient answer to the remonstrance to say that "it is unreasonable for people to make such an ado about so small a matter." It never occurs to these petty tyrants to ask, why, if it is so small a matter, *they* should make such an ado about it, and trample upon Christ's little ones for the sake of it? The question, here, is not whether the organ be lawful or not. Supposing it to be lawful, nothing can justify its introduction into a church against the wishes of any of the people of God but a clear command of Christ, either expressed or implied.

This instance suggests another most painful, and yet most instructive, feature of this power as it has been actually exercised. Some of the worst abuses that now exist in the papal body began with "the people," not the best and most enlightened, but the more ignorant and superstitious. After the establishment of the church under Constantine, a great influx of the heathen into it took place. They were unwilling to abandon all their heathenish customs, and asked to be tolerated in continuing to observe them. The better and wiser class of rulers recognized the evil and the peril; but they yielded from the fear "of driving off some from the church and of preventing others from coming in." They succeeded, no doubt. The heathen in the church were not driven off, and others came in. Some sinners were saved who otherwise, to speak after the manner of men, would not have been saved. But with what result in the long run? The so-called Church of Rome of to-day, a body utterly apostate, whose prevailing power, as we Presbyterians and Protestants generally believe, is destroying and not saving. Who can estimate the mischief wrought by this trust in the wisdom of man during the weary centuries of darkness, agony, and

blood from Gregory I. to Leo X.? Who can number the souls that have been sent to perdition by acting on the principle of "*οὐκ ὁσιονομία*," or, as the Jesuits express it, "that the end sanctifies the means"? Who can fail, when he considers what "this doing evil that good may come" has ended in, to sympathize with the indignant exclamation of the apostle, "whose damnation is just"?

But the rulers who, against their own judgment and convictions, yielded to the wishes of the people, and practically abdicated the authority with which Christ had invested them, what account can they render for preferring to follow the will of the people rather than the will of Christ? Will they say that the voice of the people is the voice of God? Will they say that to God's face? What better can they say than what Saul said, when called to account for not executing God's vengeance on the Amalekites: "The people spared the best of the sheep and the oxen to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God; the people took of the spoil," etc.; or than what Aaron said, when called to account for making the golden calf: "Let not the anger of my lord wax hot: thou knowest the people, that they are set on mischief. . . . So they gave it me; then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf"? But neither Aaron's plea nor Saul's availed them anything. Aaron is charged with gratuitous cruelty to the people in yielding to them; "with bringing a great sin upon them," and "with making the people naked to their shame among their enemies." Saul is informed that, as he had virtually abdicated his authority, according to his own confession, he shall be forced actually to abdicate the throne of Israel for one who will do all God's will, not his own or the will of the people.

2. The other class of abuses are those which involve a wrong use of ordinances which God has instituted. This is a notorious feature of the papal body, which has ventured to "frame the mischief by a law," to formulate the error into

an article of faith. The eighth canon of the seventh session of the Trent Council denounces an anathema against any one who shall say that grace is not conferred by the sacraments *ex opere operato*. The doctrine is, that the sacraments convey grace by the mere fact of the administration, provided the person receiving them opposes no bar to their operation by an intention to commit, or the actual commission of, mortal sin. An infant, for example, is always regenerated in baptism, because it is incapable of committing sin at the time of receiving baptism. In other words, the ordinances are not "means of grace" in the sense which we have before fully explained, conditions without which the exercise of God's sovereign power is not to be expected, and yet conditions to the mere performance of which the power of God is not tied;<sup>1</sup> but "laws of grace," physical causes, which produce their effects by a power inherent in themselves. As fire has the property of burning, so baptism has the property of regenerating. As the burning property of fire may be neutralized by the operation of some other law, so the regenerating property of baptism may be neutralized by the law of mortal sin. In the use of God's ordinances as means, we are obliged to acknowledge the sovereignty of his Spirit in the use of them as laws; that sovereignty is not recognized, but the Spirit is regarded (if regarded at all) only as the invisible nexus by which the physical cause is connected with its effect. Most men, in witnessing the production of a neutral salt by the combination of an acid and an alkali, do not think at all of the power of God which has given the properties to these substances, but only of the chemist whose manipulations have produced the desired result. So in the "christening" of an infant, most papists are thinking, we apprehend, only of the manipulations of the priest.

In formulating this doctrine the papal body has only formulated an impulse or instinct of our fallen nature, which

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<sup>1</sup> See *Confession of Faith*, Chap. XXVIII., 6.

prompts us, when we have failed to present to God the faith or other spiritual conditions to which his promises have been made, to rely upon the ordinance itself, as if God had so tied himself to it as to make the effect certain if the ordinance is observed. We have an instance of this perverse instinct at the very beginning of the history of our apostate race: "And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever," etc. (Gen. iii. 22.) This passage is sometimes interpreted to mean that God drove out the man from Eden in order to prevent him from acquiring an immortality in sin and corruption, as if the mere eating of the tree of life would have exempted him from the stroke of death. It seems to us in the last degree unreasonable to suppose that any creature could be invested with that life-giving power which God challenges to himself as his own sovereign prerogative: "Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The true meaning of the passage, in our judgment, is very different. The "tree of knowledge of good and evil" was so called because it was the symbol of God's supreme authority, which makes good and evil to man. Whatever God commands is good because he commands it, and whatever he forbids is evil because he forbids it.<sup>1</sup> Man, in eating the forbidden fruit, emphatically denies this great principle, and claims by his own will to know (or make) good and evil for himself, becomes "as one

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<sup>1</sup> It is hardly necessary, we trust, to inform the reader that we are not unmindful of the claims of "immutable morality." There are two questions which engage the special attention of the moral philosopher: One is, What is right? and the other is, Why are we bound to follow it—the nature of virtue, and the ground or rule of obligation? In answering the first, he appeals to the nature of God as the eternal standard of rectitude: in answering the other, he appeals to the supreme will of God. This will ordains to be observed things which are in themselves right and things which are in themselves indifferent; and the difference between these classes of

of us," or makes himself a god. The "tree of life" was so called because it was the sacramental sign and seal of the promise of life, which belonged to the covenant of works, and which would have been fulfilled to man if he had performed the condition of the covenant. If he had acknowledged God to be the all-disposing Lord, he should have had God for his all-comprehending Good. But man failed. He made his own will his law, and yet he attempts to seize upon the promise of life by stretching out his hand to its sacramental sign, as if the promise of life were so bound up with, or so inhered in, its visible sign and seal that the possession of the last necessarily implied the possession of the first. In short, the delusion under which he labored, and which God mercifully rebuked and defeated by putting the tree beyond his reach, was this very delusion of an efficacy in the sacraments *ex opere operato*. The history of the church is full of instances of the same delusion. The Israelites thought that, wicked and idolatrous though they were, they had God on their side, and must be victorious if they only had his ark with them. Their enemies seemed to be under a similar delusion when they got possession of the ark as a part of the spoils of war; they supposed that the God of Israel, too, was in their possession as a conquered divinity, until desolating judgments convinced them of their mistake. One of the commonest and one of the most crying sins of Israel, and one which the prophets constantly rebuke, is this sin of trusting in God's ordinances without God and against God. To such a pitch of infatuation and madness did they go in this sin that God pronounced the very sacrifices which he had himself appointed an abomination to him.

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things has given rise to the distinction between "moral" and "positive" commands. The obligation to obey a "positive" command, however, is moral; and a positive command is better fitted to express the idea of supreme authority, because there is no reason for obedience to a command of this sort but the expression of will; whereas in moral commands the inherent rightness of the thing commanded is an additional reason for obedience. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right."

Now, to this sin we are all inclined. The churches of Christ may not convert the abuse and abomination into a law or an article of faith as the papists have done. They may and do protest against it as a grave error; and yet practically act as if the error were not an error, but the truth. Does not many a young Presbyterian minister, just from the seminary, and with all "the arguments" at his tongue's end, feel as if no adversary could resist him? Does not many an experienced minister, who has found out long ago that "old Adam is too strong for young Melancthon," occasionally say to himself, when he has preached "a powerful sermon," "Surely they cannot resist that"? Does not many a church, when it has invited some "evangelist" or "revival preacher," and he has graciously accepted the invitation, say to itself: "Now we shall have a revival"? Meantime, there is no special seeking of God by prayer, by repentance, by humiliation, by lamenting the sins which have grieved away the Spirit of God. None of these things are felt to be necessary. The Spirit will come with the "evangelist." Now, what is all this but the delusion of *opus operatum*? And what other effect does the history of the church entitle us to expect, if we so dishonor the Holy Ghost, than that he will depart, and leave us to eat in bitterness of the fruit of our own way, and to be filled with our own devices? to leave us with our man-converted converts and our man-sanctified saints? with our backsliders and apostates become "twofold more the children of hell" than they were before they passed through our patent process of regeneration?

The foregoing considerations will enable us to form a judgment concerning two very common abuses in our own church; and we bespeak the candid consideration of our brethren who do not see them (or have not seen them) in the same light that we do. They and we, we trust, have the same grand end in view, the glory of Christ and the enlargement and edification of the church.

The first of these practices which we propose to notice is that of the use of "machinery" in "revivals." By "machinery" we mean all those "measures" over and above the means which God himself has appointed, which have been invented by "evangelists" or "revival preachers" for the purpose of awakening careless sinners, such as "the anxious bench"; "the altar" to which inquirers are invited in order to be specially prayed for; the reading of letters (which have been procured by solicitation) from young converts or from inquirers; "silent prayer" of the congregation; the calling on certain classes in the congregation to arise and separate themselves from the rest; the roaming over the congregation of certain persons for the purpose of making appeals to individuals; the calling upon certain descriptions of people in the audience to sing certain hymns, and the requiring of the rest not to sing; the demand for unusual postures in parts of the worship, as, for example, kneeling in singing, etc., etc. Measures of this sort are justly called "machinery." The use of them demands no spiritual gifts, no spiritual frame of mind, no piety, nothing, indeed, but the power of physical endurance and—*brass*. We do not deny that some of them have been used by good men, and with an earnest desire to do good; but there is nothing in their own nature which forbids their being used by men who have not one spark of genuine piety. Accordingly, we find that they have been successfully used by wicked men and hypocrites. They belong to the same class of things with the mummeries of Rome. The priest performs the ceremonies prescribed in the ritual, and the business is done. The character of the priest has nothing to do with the efficiency of the ritual. Whether he be a Hophni or a Zadok makes no difference in the result. The patient or recipient "gets through" alike in either case.

If this be a just view, if these measures are a sort of machinery, this is enough to condemn them. God's measures



are of a totally different sort. They are moral, not mechanical. They demand for effective use not only piety in the *habit*, but piety in *exercise*. Paul and Barnabas so spake at Iconium that a multitude believed. It is conceded that God has sometimes graciously made the preaching of unconverted men the means of salvation to sinners. But he has also sometimes made the repetition of a godly man's sermon by a mocking mimic the means of conversion to a boon companion. He has sometimes condescended to speak by the mouth of a Balaam, or even of an ass. People have been converted, we doubt not, at meetings where the machinery has been fully, and, we may add, shamefully, worked. But all this is nothing to the purpose. The question is not what means God may be pleased to use himself, but what he requires or permits the church to use; and if he has appointed means which demand, ordinarily, for their efficiency, high moral and spiritual conditions, then measures which may be as effectively used without as with such conditions cannot be supposed to have his approval; and the use of such measures is arrant will-worship, and betrays a larger faith in the wisdom of man than in the power of God.

We have said that this machinery may be referred to the same class of things with the mummeries of Rome. This suggests a more serious objection to it. The mummeries of Rome have an intimate historical and logical connection with the semi-Pelagian position of that body. It is not a question of vital importance which of the two was chronologically first, the abuse in practice, or the error in doctrine. If both belong to the same organism, it matters not whether the head or the foot came in first. It is enough, for our warning, to know that the head and foot are members of the same body; and that if one be admitted, the other will be apt to follow in time. No such ordinance as that which the papists call baptism could have a permanent place in a body which was not at least semi-Pelagian in doctrine. And so it may

be truly said that the machinery in question is thoroughly semi-Pelagian in its affinities. It was introduced in modern times by churches of that doctrinal tendency; it was worked *con amore* by the Pelagianizing party in the Presbyterian Church, and condemned by the Presbyterian Church at the time of the schism of 1837; and if not condemned again and put down, it will bring on another semi-Pelagian schism. It is altogether out of harmony with the doctrine of our church concerning man's condition as a sinner, and concerning the agency of the Holy Ghost in regeneration. One or the other must in the long run be given up.

This suggests another objection. The use of this machinery brings a multitude of unconverted people into the church who would not otherwise come into it. The appeal is made to mere natural sensibilities and sympathies; people, specially the young, honestly mistake this natural feeling and mere impressions on the imagination for religious conviction, or for the sentiments which result from religious conviction; and, without time for testing their sentiments and for manifesting their real nature and origin, they are hurried into the church and assume the irrevocable vow. A few months are sufficient to reveal the fact of self-deception to a multitude; but they are in the church; they commit, the greater part of them, no "offence" to warrant their excommunication, and they remain in the church and of the world. Hence, another fruitful source of apostasy from the faith. By the terms of the supposition, such church members have no spiritual relish for the distinctive doctrines of the gospel; in particular, there is nothing in them which says amen to the teachings of God's word concerning the desperate power and malignity of sin, and concerning the almighty and sovereign power of the Holy Ghost. The real problem of sin has never been anxiously revolved by them, and they are, consequently, unable to appreciate the Bible soteriology, whether of the Son or of the Spirit. The temptation to the preacher,

in ministering to such a people, is to say nothing on these topics, because the people are not interested in them; and from saying nothing about them, to proceed to direct assaults upon them. This is not an altogether imaginary description of a process of degeneration. If we have not misunderstood the history of Socinianism in the New England churches, its progress was, to a very great extent, due to "the half-way covenant" and other measures which filled the churches with unconverted people. A spiritual experience of the reality and power of the truth is the only security for its preservation. The world in the church!—this is the great peril. This is doing more to help the cause of Rome and of infidelity than all the crafty books that are circulated in their interest. This is the peril against which the church has been warned from the very beginning; and it is a peril into which the use of revival machinery is aiding to plunge us.

Once more, this machinery is not only unauthorized of God, and is, therefore, a sheer addition to his ordinances, as much so as the so-called sacraments of "penance" or "extreme unction" in the Roman apostasy, but they virtually sanction the *opus operatum* principle. Sinners are encouraged to believe that if they will only put themselves under the operation of the machine they will get through and be saved.

Finally, there is one argument which ought to prevail with all faithful Presbyterians against the use of these "measures," even if they are not convinced that the measures are in themselves wrong; and that is, that they are a clear addition to the covenant which has been made with one another by the congregations constituting the Presbyterian Church in the United States. This covenant is contained in our standards. We have agreed as to "what the ordinances in a particular church" shall be (*Form of Government*, Chapter VII.), and in the *Directory for Worship* the features of the worship to be observed in all our congregations are de-

scribed. No congregation has the right to introduce any other form of worship and at the same time remain a constituent part of that church to which these standards belong. It is not improbable that many machinery-using churches in our communion would be scandalized by the introduction into our non-machinery-using churches of a liturgy. But why should they? The covenant is violated, it is true; but the machinery has also broken it. We do not hesitate to say, that if the covenant had to be broken in one way or the other, we should consider the breach by liturgy much the least offensive and dangerous of the two.

The other abuse upon which we propose to extend a paragraph or two is one connected with another ordinance of God, the ordinance of giving of our substance to him. It is another clear instance of the substitution of "the wisdom of man" for "the power of God" as the ground of faith.

Let us recall, first, what the ordinance of God is, and what his design in it. From the very beginning God has ordained that he should be worshipped by the offering of that which cost the worshipper something. The first recorded act of solemn worship, that of Cain and Abel, was an act of this sort. Both of these persons made an offering of their property. Under the institute of Moses, not only were offerings of this sort continued on the largest scale, but the tabernacle, and afterwards the temple, the symbol of the presence of God and of his conversableness with his people, were built of materials furnished by the free gifts of the people. One of the grandest acts of worship ever performed by the church on earth was that which is recorded of the king of Israel and his people in the last chapter of the First Book of Chronicles. Those who deny that "giving" is of the nature of worship must admit that at least *this* act of giving was worship. It is no part of our purpose, however, to discuss this question now. It is enough if "giving" be conceded to be an ordinance of God, both under the Old Testament and the

New, and the essence of it to be the voluntary surrender of a portion of our substance to him.

As to the design of God in establishing it, it may be remarked, *First*, That it is perfectly clear it was not because he needed the property of his people. "All things come of thee," says David in the chapter just referred to, "and of thine own have we given thee." And in the fiftieth Psalm God himself asserts, against the preposterous error of the people, that he has no need of anything that they can give, because "the world is his, and the fulness thereof." *Second*, One part of his design is to furnish an appropriate method of acknowledging our dependence upon him as the Sovereign Proprietor of all, the Giver of every good and perfect gift, and of expressing our gratitude to him for what we have received. *Third*, As such an acknowledgment and expression, it would serve and was designed as an instrument of communion with him, and so of a growing conformity to him. *Fourth*, In all social and public acts of giving it was designed to be the means of communion with one another to the people of God, as in acts of social prayer or praise, and thereby to confirm their love one to another. *Fifth*, It was designed as a means of grace. This is implied in the uses already mentioned, but deserves an articulate statement. Faith, love, gratitude, and devotion are strengthened by a proper observance of this ordinance, as by the proper observance of the ordinances of prayer, singing, hearing the word, baptism, and the supper. But the ordinance of giving is a specific medicine for that most fatal and insidious disease of the soul, "the love of money," "the insatiable desire for more," covetousness. This is a view particularly insisted upon by Paul.

Now, let it be noted that, according to this view of the nature and ends of the ordinance, its whole value and efficacy depend upon its being an ordinance of GIVING. The very moment that the element of a *quid pro quo* is introduced into

it its whole nature is changed, and, of course, its whole tendency and effect also. It ceases to be the beneficent ordinance of God, and becomes the pernicious contrivance of man. Hence "fairs" and all other methods of raising money for the church which appeal to people to help the church in the way of helping themselves first to something which is offered to their appetites, bodily appetite or otherwise, are wrong in principle. A great deal might be said—it would require a much longer article than this to say it—upon the pernicious and disgusting "abuses" of these methods, abuses which in some places have almost equalled the licentious and frantic excesses of the heathen temples. It might be easily shown that these abuses are the natural results of the maxim that "the end sanctifies the means," and that the only natural limit to the application of the maxim is the limit of a human being's capacity and power to do evil. The descent to hell is easy. All that one has to do is to put one's self on the inclined plane and make no resistance, and the business is done. But instead of launching out upon such a sea, we content ourselves with pointing out the wrongness of the principle. If the principle be false, its working will be pernicious. Accidental circumstances may modify the manifestations of the evil, but the evil is there, and must in due time manifest itself.

But it is said that the persons who "get up" a fair or deliver lectures for the benefit of a church are real givers, and, it is contended, are the only givers. Surely there is no harm in pious men and women selling their wares and giving the proceeds to the church. This is plausible; and we are not disposed to withhold the credit or even the admiration which is due to the zeal, the self-denying zeal, of the Tryphenas and Tryphosas, the Euodias and Syntyches, who wear out their health and their lives in these labors. We doubt not that their good motives, their love to the Saviour, will be suitably rewarded by him. But we think a little considera-

tion will be sufficient to show that their plea will not stand. Why do they not sell their wares as their sisters, who make an honest livelihood by buying and selling, sell theirs? Why do they publish to the world that the proceeds are to be given to the church, and persuade the buyers that, in indulging themselves in ice-cream and strawberries at a fair, they are doing a pious act and glorifying God? Why such a display of the charms of their daughters or other young women at the tables? Is not this severe trial of that shrinking modesty which is the great charm of the virgin a trial to which these noble women would not dream of exposing their young friends for mere gain to themselves? Does God require, can he be pleased with, the sacrifice of that which stands so near to the purity of character in women? We say nothing of the monstrosities of pious women selling themselves for a promenade to the highest male bidder, and outrages even worse than these, which have been reported. We have in our mind, in this argument, the best regulated fair of which we have had any knowledge, and we affirm that our women allow themselves to do things "for the glory of God" which they could scarcely do for themselves without a blush. It is plain that a fair is not a mere method of getting money by a few persons in order to contribute the money as their money to the church. It is a different thing altogether; different in its nature, and different in its moral consequences. Then, too, it must be acknowledged by every candid observer of these fairs, and by every pious person who has taken part in the management of them, that there is a strong temptation to unfairness, much stronger than in any ordinary affair of buying and selling, too strong, in general, to be resisted even by those who could easily resist them, who would scarcely feel the temptation, where only their private interests were concerned.

It is said, again, that the money must be gotten, and it cannot be gotten in the way of a free gift. There is no other

way. Our first answer to this plea is, that it sounds too much like the maxim, "Make money; honestly, if you can, but by all means make money," a maxim which has drowned multitudes of souls in destruction and perdition. Dr. Johnson once rebuked a man for his dishonest ways, and the man's defence was, "Doctor, you know I must live." "I see no necessity for your living" was the blunt moralist's reply. The end of living is the perfecting of the man in righteousness, and to do unrighteousness in order to live is to sacrifice the end to the means. A church, above all, has no *raison d'être* but the promotion of righteousness; and to build or maintain it by unrighteousness, or even by questionable means, is to defeat its only end.<sup>1</sup> We answer, again, that the meaning of this plea is too often simply and nakedly this: A congregation in a city needs a house of worship; it has the means within itself to build one of a moderate cost, say \$5,000; but a house as handsome and attractive as its neighbors cannot be built for less than \$40,000. What is to be done? Honesty says, "Build a \$5,000 house, and wait until you can build a \$40,000 house." Vanity and unbelief say, "Build your costly house at once, go heavily in debt, and trust to your wits to pay for it." The counsels of vanity and unbelief prevail, the costly house is built, and the congregation enters upon a course of folly and worry which makes many a good man or woman in it wish that the foundation had never been laid. How different the building of the tabernacle and the temple of old! They could not have been built without an extraordinary spirit of liberality among the

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<sup>1</sup>This plea proceeds also on the supposition that a dollar is a dollar in the kingdom of God. This is a great and grievous error. The widow's mites, our Saviour says, were more than all that the rich men cast into the treasury of their abundance. They were more, not merely in proportion to the property possessed, but because there was expressed in her gift more of the grace which constitutes the kingdom of God—more of faith and of self-denying love. What immense sums have been cast into the Lord's treasury, through the ages, in consequence of that one act of the nameless widow!



people, it is true; but whence did that spirit of liberality come? From God; it was the power of his Holy Spirit which moved the hearts of the people to give back to him what they had received from him. This is David's own account of the matter as to the temple. (See 1 Chron. xxix. 10-18.) Are the gifts of the Spirit less abundant under this dispensation than under the old? The Scriptures are a very clear directory in every case where the means are in the congregation, but the people have not the heart to give. The power of God can give them the heart, and that power will be vouchsafed in answer to prayer, if the proposed work be for the glory of God and the good of the church. The wisdom of man may devise other means, and the means may be successful after their kind (for even the ostentatious righteousness of the Pharisees had its "reward," Matt. vi. 2, 5, 16); but no other faith than that which stands in the power of God can glorify him, or be of any real benefit to his church. The very fact that man's contrivances to get money for the church can be worked successfully without the power of God is against them, as we have already argued against the machinery used in "revivals." God's ordinances cannot be worked successfully without his Spirit, and, for this reason, unbelief does not relish them. They require faith, repentance, humility, prayer on the part of those who use them. These graces, again, are the gifts of God, and have to be sought for. God's way is troublesome to follow, and men prefer to follow their own. When his ordinances fail because they have not been observed in faith and prayer, then something must be substituted for them which will not fail, although faith and prayer be absent.

The use of all these methods of man's device must, for the reasons just assigned, tend to defeat the very ends for which God instituted the ordinance of giving. His people are not edified. Their sense of dependence upon his power and grace is diminished. Their covetousness is increased. They get so

much into the habit of relying upon methods by which others may be induced for "a valuable consideration" to part with their money that they almost cease to expect gifts. With the decay of faith in God's power as to the revenues of his kingdom is associated inevitably a decay of faith in his power to convert and sanctify the soul. Behold, on the other hand, the concomitants of "giving": "and the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul; neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all. *For* [see the Greek] there was not any among them that lacked," etc. (Acts iv. 32-34.) Here is a case of genuine revival by the power of the Holy Ghost. An entire absence of machinery, an entire absence of the *quid pro quo* methods! A fair seldom ends without heart-burnings or divisions. Here all that believed were of one heart and one soul. Oh, for a return of such blessed days to God's church!

In conclusion, let us never forget that the only source of the church's genuine life is the Holy Ghost. It is by his power that every sinner begins to live; it is by the same power that he continues to live. It is he who seals us unto the day of redemption. Let us not grieve him and so forsake our own mercies. We do grieve him when we cease to look to him for every spiritual blessing, and for every "temporal blessing" which is needful for the being or well-being of the church. We grieve him when we substitute our own inventions for his ordinances. We grieve him when we so act as to seem to say to the world that our God will not give us the things that are needed for the glory of his name and the prosperity of his cause; that our Rock is no greater than the world's rock. The Holy Ghost is the glory of the church; and when he departs, Ichabod may be in truth written upon her walls—the glory is departed.

## ADDRESS ON THE SUBJECT OF SYSTEMATIC BENEFICENCE.<sup>1</sup>

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IT cannot have failed to strike you, even in a cursory perusal of the New Testament, that very great importance is attached to this whole matter of contributions to the cause of God, and a closer reflection upon the subject, we are persuaded, will satisfy you that the Assembly were justified in taking the high ground presented in the foregoing resolutions, viz.: that the contribution of funds to pious uses is not simply an ecclesiastical measure, but a divine ordinance; not simply an act of philanthropy, but an act of religious worship; not prompted by an occasional impulse of generosity, but uniformly by devotional feeling; not done under pressure of special agency, but under the ordinary and stated use of the means of grace, as declared in the *Directory for*

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<sup>1</sup>This address was delivered to the Presbytery of Baltimore in 1854. The General Assembly, O. S., of that year had passed the following resolutions, viz.:

1. *Resolved*, That this Assembly hereby enjoin upon the pastors of our churches to give greater prominence, in the ministration of the word, to the doctrine of the Scripture as interpreted and set forth in our standards (more particularly in Chapter XXVI., Section 2, of the *Confession of Faith*; in Question 141 of the *Larger Catechism*; in Chapter VII. of the *Form of Government*; and in Chapter VI., Section 5, of the *Directory for Worship*), viz.: that "Saints, by profession, are bound to maintain an holy fellowship and communion in relieving each other in outward things, according to their several abilities and necessities, which communion, as God offereth opportunity, is to be extended unto all those who in every place call upon the Lord Jesus," "giving and lending freely according to their abilities"; and in conformity to this doctrine, recognizing as one of the ordinances established by Christ, in connection with the sermon, prayer and praise, a "collection raised for the poor and other purposes of the church."

2. *Resolved*, That the Presbyteries which have not anticipated the provisions of this action of the Assembly are most earnestly and affectionately

*Worship*, Chapter VI., Section 5, which thus directs the minister: "The sermon being ended, the minister is to pray and return thanks to Almighty God; then let a psalm be sung; A COLLECTION RAISED for the poor, or other purposes of the church, and the assembly dismissed with the apostolic benediction."

"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!" was the animated exclamation of the great Apostle of the Gentiles when he contemplated the relief afforded by the churches of Macedonia and Achaia to the necessities of the poor saints in Judea. The gift was doubtless small in itself, the gospel having been preached mainly to the poor and achieved its greatest triumphs in that, as in all subsequent generations, among the children of toil, sorrow and self-denial; but con-

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enjoined, 1st. At their meetings following the rising of this Assembly to take order that the ministers and church sessions in their bounds shall be directed to adopt some practical method by which an opportunity shall be afforded and an invitation given to all the members of their congregations to contribute regularly to the objects of Christian benevolence recognized by the Assembly in the organization of the boards of the church, and to such other institutions as to them may seem right. 2d. And at every spring meeting to institute a proper inquiry into the diligence of ministers and church sessions in executing the provisions of such method.

3. *Resolved*, That the Presbyteries are further enjoined to enter on record, and report to the next Assembly, their action on the first part of the foregoing resolution, and also to record at their next and all subsequent spring meetings the result of the inquiry prescribed, and report the same to the General Assembly with the usual Annual Presbyterial Report, stating the delinquencies and diligence of pastors and church sessions.

Whereupon the Rev. Messrs. Thomas E. Peck and Stuart Robinson were appointed a Committee of the Presbytery of Baltimore to prepare an address explanatory of the foregoing resolutions, and of the action of the Presbytery touching the subject of Systematic Beneficence, with a view of calling more particular attention to it. Agreeably to their instructions an address was prepared, and "submitted, along with the resolutions upon which it is based, to the candid consideration of all whom it might concern."

The address was the work of Mr. Peck. It was published at the time in pamphlet form, from which it is now reprinted.—Ed.

sidered in its causes, relations, and results, it was well entitled to the designation of "an *unspeakable* gift."

*First*, It was one of the fruits of the Spirit and of righteousness, "which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." "We do you to wit of the *grace* of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia, how that in a great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality," etc. (2 Cor. viii. 1, 2, etc.) Their living union with Christ was the spring of all, for "they first gave their own selves to the Lord," and after such a surrender they could not refuse to give their substance. They gave but a mite, but it was the "*widow's* mite," that is, "all their living." *Second*, It was a fruit of their union with one another as members of the same body. The same law of love which binds all the members of the system to the centre binds them to one another. The same law of gravity which keeps the stones in the living temple upon the foundation keeps them united to each other. And so in the natural body all the members have the same life; and if one member suffer, all the other members suffer with it. (1 Cor. xii.) Hence this contribution is called a "fellowship": "praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and the *fellowship* of the ministering to the saints" (2 Cor. viii. 4), the same word which is rendered "communion" in 1 Cor. x. 16, and is there intended to express the common participation of the body and blood of the Redeemer by all believers. How beautiful the exhibition of the communion of saints! "One body, one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all!" (Eph. iv. 3-6.) This communion is particularly striking and beautiful as being a communion of *Jews and Gentiles*; a glorious proof that the middle wall of partition had been broken down in Christ the son of Adam as well as the son of Abraham, and that true

“sodality” and brotherhood of nations established, which, even in the defective and distorted image of it, has inspired the imaginations and quickened the energies of the modern patriots of Europe. The first exhibition of Christian fellowship in this form recorded in the New Testament was confined to the Hebrews (see the first six chapters of the Acts); it was reserved for Antioch (where the followers of the Nazarene first received the honorable denomination of “Christians” (Acts xi. 26), a *Jewish* name formed according to the analogies of a *Gentile* tongue) to signalize the reconciliation which the Saviour had achieved between man and man, nation and nation (Eph. ii. 11-22), by a collection for the saints in Judea. (Acts xi. 29, 30.) *Third*, The motive by which they were impelled was love and gratitude to Christ: “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” (2 Cor. viii. 9.) *Fourth*, The grand result, the giving of glory to God in the thanksgiving of the saints, which is his “will in Christ Jesus concerning them.” “For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by *many thanksgivings unto God*; while by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for *your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ*, and for your liberal distribution unto them and unto all men; and by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you.” (2 Cor. ix. 12-14.) “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!”

It is obviously impossible, within the limits of an address like this, to illustrate at length the foregoing points, or even to present a full statement of all the relations of this interesting subject as brought out in the eighth and ninth chapters of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians; and we therefore leave them to your prayerful study, reminding you only that the same principles hold in regard to contributions for

the support of the gospel and its diffusion as in regard to aid given to saints in poverty. (Phil iv. 15, &c.) We proceed now to call your attention more particularly to the doctrine of the first resolution of the General Assembly, above cited. You will observe that they assert, not merely that the communion or fellowship is *a duty*, but that it is the special kind of duty called "*worship*." It is not only an "ordinance," but an ordinance of the same general nature and design with "*the sermon, prayer and praise*." That this doctrine is true may be shown from an examination of the nature of worship, and from express testimonies of Scripture:

*First*, From the nature of worship. The fundamental element of worship is a sense of dependence upon God; a physical dependence, as living, moving and having our being in him; and a moral dependence, involved in the other, as subject to his law, as consecrated to his service, and as finding in him alone a satisfying portion for the soul. It is a dependence upon him as "the Father of lights, from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift, with whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning." This sentiment of dependence and inferiority was, probably, the occasion of the old English application of the word "worship" to a feeling, or expression of feeling, of one man toward another; an instance of which we have in our Authorized Version of the New Testament at Luke xiv. 10. This sentiment of dependence has many other emotions accompanying or flowing from it, such as reverence, love, faith, humility, and thankfulness. Now God has established certain ordinances by which these and such like emotions are to be formally expressed; and the observance of these ordinances is what is called worship, external worship, in which the body, as the instrument and servitor of the soul within, is called in to aid. There is formal prayer, for instance, in which we express our adoration and reverence for the majesty and glory

of our Maker, our sense of guilt and pollution in ourselves, our need of all things, our petitions that this need may be supplied, our thanksgiving for what he has already done for us and for what he has promised to do, and our intercession for others, involving like confessions, petitions and thanksgivings. So with praise by singing, the main elements of which are adoration and thanksgiving. The sermon, also, though often regarded as an interlude in the worship, is really a part of it, as much as meditation upon the word by ourselves: "it is a musing, that the fire may burn" (Psalm xxxix. 3), making our hearts "hot within us," and kindling the sacrifice. Baptism and the Lord's supper are parts of worship more symbolical in their nature, but still expressing the same sentiments.

Now it must be observed in regard to all these parts of worship, that so far as there is any *advantage* to be derived from performing them, it accrues altogether to the worshipper. It is eminently proper that we should acknowledge God, and he commands us to do it; but he is no gainer if we do it, and no loser if we fail. Our refusal only recoils upon our own heads by exposing our insensibility to all that is noble and august in moral perfections, and our shameless destitution of thankful emotions. It is for our good we are required to worship. This good is twofold: first, of instruction, and, then, of moral improvement, the exercise of the graces of the Christian character, and the consequent development and invigoration of them. No man, for example, can pray sincerely without knowing more of his own heart and more of God than he knew before, and having his faith and love increased. He rises from his knees with a clearer knowledge and a deeper sense of the great comprehensive truth that he is nothing and God is all in all.

There is no space for more extended illustration, but these hints are perhaps enough to show that "contributions to the poor and to the general purposes of the church" possess the



essential elements of worship. They express our dependence upon God, our thankfulness for his temporal mercies (compare Luke xi. 41 with 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5), and his universal and perfect propriety in us and in all that belongs to us; that we are not our own, that none of us liveth to himself, that we are stewards of his goodness, and as such are bound to be faithful. Further, as has been shown of other parts of worship, so it may be affirmed of this, that there is an eminent propriety in our thus recognizing God as our sovereign Lord and Benefactor; but that there is no profit to the Almighty in our so doing. He has no need of our money; the silver and the gold are his, and the cattle on a thousand hills. If he were hungry he would not tell *us*, for the world is his and the fulness thereof. It is for our good that he commands us "to offer unto him thanksgiving," "to do good and to communicate," assuring us that "with such sacrifices he is well pleased." (Compare Ps. l. 7-15 with Heb. xiii. 15, 16, and the provisions of the law of Moses touching "free-will offerings," noticed subsequently in this paper.) A cheerful giving to the Lord is the instrument of instruction and of growth in grace, like the visible symbols, the elements and actions, of the Lord's supper. It appears, then, that there is a very complete analogy between contributions to pious uses and the ordinary parts of worship.

But we are not compelled to rely upon general considerations like these and the precarious support of analogy. Nor ought we to rely upon them. No form of worship is acceptable to God which he has not prescribed. He hates will-worship, and classes it with idolatry. He rebukes his people for doing what he has *not* commanded, as well as for not doing what he *has* commanded. (Jer. vii. 31; xix. 5; xxiii. 32.) Let us look, then, at the argument from Scripture.

*First*, Under the Old Testament we find it was a part of the instituted worship of God that his people should give of their worldly substance to his cause. 1. Beside the stated

offerings of animals and the meat offerings in the daily and annual solemn services of the tabernacle, and afterwards of the temple, there were also "free-will offerings" of the same kind which the Lord intimated to his people would be acceptable to him, and of which we have a full account in the Book of Leviticus. Among these great prominence is given to the thank offerings; and in the history of the Israelites we meet with frequent examples of extraordinary sacrifices, both for number and costliness, offered in token of gratitude for signal benefits received. Indeed, the great idea of thanksgiving seems to have been associated with all the offerings of the law, not excepting even those offered in expiation of sin: "But unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come: and thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and heave offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your free-will offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks: and there shall ye eat before the Lord your God, and ye shall *rejoice* in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the Lord thy God hath blessed thee." (Deut. xii. 5-7.) In other parts of the same chapter it is expressly stated that the Levites, the officers of religion, are to share in this joy and blessing of the Lord, because "they have no inheritance" among the tribes; and in the fifteenth chapter a like provision for the poor generally is enjoined in connection with the "blessing" of the Lord. Now, it is important for you to observe that, although these sacrifices of thanksgiving, *in form*, have passed away, the essence of the duty still remains, as you will find by comparing with the foregoing statements Heb. xiii. 15, 16. In this passage the apostle, after showing that, from the nature of the case, no distinctions of clean and unclean meats could exist under the gospel (Compare 1 Tim. iv. 3-5; Rom. xiv. 17), adds the exhorta-

tion couched in the terms of the ceremonial law: "By him, therefore, let us offer the *sacrifice* of praise to God continually, that is, the *fruit* of our lips ('*calves* of our lips,' in Hos. xiv. 2), giving *thanks* unto his name. But to *do good*, and to *communicate*, forget not: for with such *sacrifices* God is well pleased." Almsgiving is, therefore, the offering of sacrifice, and if that is not worship, nothing is. It is a thank offering, not *expiatory* in any case, as the enemies of the gospel assert.

2. Beside the offerings above mentioned were the "tithes," or "tenths," still offerings "in kind"; but as it does not appear that they were free-will offerings at all, but rather a regular tax for the support of the Jewish theocracy levied *pro rata* (see 1 Sam. viii. 15-18), they furnish no rule, whatever may be asserted to the contrary, for those who enjoy the liberty of Christ. As expressions of the dependence of the people upon God, and of their obligation to love and serve him, they were, unquestionably, parts of the worship of the old law; but they are no longer binding upon the church, because they possessed a civil as well as an ecclesiastical character; and since the Jewish commonwealth has passed away, and God has now ordained civil government in general (Rom. xiii.), we may regard the payment of our civil dues and customs as a full discharge of corresponding obligations.

3. Again, over and above these offerings in *kind* were offerings in *money*. "And Jehoshaphat said to the priests, all the money of the dedicated things that is brought into the house of the Lord, even the money of every one that *passeth the account*; the money that *every man is set at*, and all the money that *cometh into any man's heart to bring into the house of the Lord*," etc. (2 Kings xii. 4.) The first kind of contribution in money here mentioned is doubtless the capitation tax provided for in Exod. xxx. 11-16, the "atonement money." It was levied for the support of the temple ser-

vice, as our Saviour's argument in regard to it (Matt. xvii. 24-27) implies, and was symbolical in its design. We may, therefore, pass it over, as also the second sort mentioned, "the money that every man is set at," which is, doubtless, the "estimation money" of Lev. xxvii. 1, etc. What has been said in regard to the "tenths in kind" applies to these as well. The third sort of money contributions, to-wit, those "which come into any man's heart to bring to the Lord," are permanent, and will continue so long as there are any "breaches in the Lord's house" to be "repaired." The ninth verse informs us how the collection was made: "Jehoiada the priest took a chest, and bored a hole in the lid of it, and set it *beside the altar*, on the right side as one cometh into the house of the Lord: and the priests that kept the door put therein all the money that was brought into the house of the Lord." The *temple*, the *altar* and the *priest* are the Jewish elements in this description, and have ceased to exist in the church on earth, since Jesus, the Son of God, has become all three; but the rest is worthy of our imitation.

*Second*, Under the New Testament the true significance of such voluntary sacrifices comes out more clearly. In the sixth chapter of Matthew, which is a part of the Sermon on the Mount, our Saviour, after having vindicated the *second* table of the law, mainly, from the perverse constructions of the scribes and Pharisees (see chap. v.), proceeds to rebuke some practices which were in violation of the *first* table, and to point out the manner in which God should be worshipped in the three particulars of "almsgiving," "prayer," and "fasting." It seems evident that almsgiving is associated with the exercises of prayer and fasting in this place, not by a fortuitous juxtaposition, but upon the ground of its possessing the same general nature and design. And it is worthy of notice, that in many manuscripts the reading "*righteousness*"<sup>1</sup> occurs in the first verse instead of "alms," and is

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Revision of 1881.

placed in the margin by our translators. According to this reading, the first verse might be considered as a general direction in regard to the manner of worshipping God, and then the general direction is illustrated by the specification of three particulars, "almsgiving," "prayer," and "fasting"; "almsgiving" being put first, perhaps, in consequence of its natural connection with the close of the last chapter. In this passage the *private* worship of God seems to be particularly in the Lord's view. But if contributions to pious uses really belong to the worship of God at all, we might expect to find them in the public and social exercises of the saints also. Accordingly, in Acts ii. 42 we read: "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and *fellowship*, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." That this is a description of the church as it appeared before the eyes of men, or in its social and public capacity, is evident from the mention of the "breaking of bread" (exclusively a social ordinance), and from the use of the term "*fellowship*," which, on its face, conveys the idea of *joint*-worship, and is oftener used to denote the *Lord's supper* and *contributions* than any other parts of worship. In this case there is special reference had, in the use of the term, to contributions for the poor, as is evident from the forty-fourth and forty-fifth verses lower down: "And all that believed were together, and had all things *common* (or as "fellows," or in "fellowship"), and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need." (Compare chapter iv. 31-37 and chapter v. 1-11.) The sin of Ananias and Sapphira may be called "a lying to the Holy Ghost," because it was a false pretension to that worship which is a worship "in the Spirit." (Phil. iii. 3; 1 Cor. xii. 3; John iv. 23, 24.) Again, at First Corinthians xvi. 2 you meet with the following exhortation: "Upon the *first day of the week* let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." Why is this "laying

by in store" ordered to be done specially on the "first day of the week," if it be not an act of worship? The Sabbath is consecrated to the worship of God, and it must be because contributions to his cause are formal exercises of worship that there is a peculiar propriety in their being made on that day. In addition to the foregoing passages, permit us to call your attention once more to the whole of the eighth and ninth chapters of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians.

To this view of the subject and to these interpretations of Scripture it may be said, *First*, That the worship of God is not left optional with man; that it is not a matter of "free-will," but of imperative obligation. But these contributions are "free-will offerings"; therefore, they are not of the nature of worship. To this we answer, that the "free-will offerings" of the law were of the nature of worship, being in other respects of the same kind with those which were, in number and character, expressly prescribed. All that was necessary was an intimation from God that they would be acceptable to him, it being left to the ability and love of the worshippers to determine the amount or costliness of the offering. So, under the gospel, the point upon which our "free will" is to be exercised is, not as to the *giving*, but as to the *amount*. God has not said, "Give me a tenth, or a twentieth, or a hundredth, or a millionth"; and it is presumption for any man to say to another, or for a church court to say to the members under its care, "You must give such and such a proportion." It is a matter between God and the man's own conscience. He must "give as God hath prospered him," and of the measure of his prosperity another man has no right to judge, as he cannot know the condition of his affairs, nor how much has been already given, or is habitually given, under the solemn injunction that "the left hand shall not know what the right hand doeth." But there is a very clear expression of the will of God in the matter, and the

very form in which he signifies his pleasure is, to those who love him, the strongest command. (See Second Corinthians viii., and especially the eighth and ninth verses: "I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to *prove the sincerity of your love,*" etc.) *Second,* It may be said that the collections recorded in the Scriptures were *occasional*, and, therefore, are no rule for us. We answer, Many of them were, but not all. But, granting that all of them were occasional, it must be granted, also, that as often as the occasions, or their like, recur, the same principles will operate. When we have the poor no longer with us; when there shall be no longer any need of preaching the gospel at home and in foreign parts; when the dawn of the millennial glory shall chase away the shadows of the night and fill the earth with the knowledge of the Lord, there will be no more *occasion* for collections. But even then, we are told (Rev. xxi. 24, 25, and compare Isa. lx. 6-11), the nations shall bring their glory and honor, their gold and silver, into the New Jerusalem, in acknowledgment of the sovereign propriety of her King.

We have not been able to do more than throw out hints and suggestions; but we earnestly beseech you, beloved brethren in the Lord, to pursue them. Search the Scriptures whether these things be so. Allow us, however, to remind you that whatever may be your judgment of these statements, arguments, and interpretations, the main question is not an open one in the Presbyterian Church. This doctrine is not *new*, it is not *ours*. Not to repeat again the passage from the *Directory for Worship*, cited in the opening of this address, which takes for granted the truth of the doctrine that contributions for pious uses are of the nature of worship, and may properly accompany preaching, prayer, and singing, we ask your attention to the following additional passages: *Confession of Faith*, Chapter XXVI., Section 2: "Saints, by profession, are bound to maintain an holy fellow-

*ship* and *communion* in the worship of God, and in performing such other spiritual services as tend to their mutual edification; as also in relieving each other in outward things, according to their several abilities and necessities. Which communion, as God offereth opportunity, is to be extended unto all those who, in every place, call upon the name of the Lord Jesus." *Form of Government*, Chapter II.: "The ordinances established by Christ, the Head, in a particular church, which is regularly constituted with its proper officers, are prayer, singing praises, reading, expounding, and preaching the word of God; administering baptism and the Lord's supper; public solemn fasting and thanksgiving, catechising, *making collections for the poor and other pious purposes*, exercising discipline, and blessing the people."

It will be seen, by examining our standards, that the whole work of the church is provided for, not only as to the *what*, but the *how*. "The ordinances in a particular church, regularly constituted with its *proper officers*, are," etc. If we take the work of Missions, for example, we find the contribution of funds made an ordinance of the church, the distribution of these funds entrusted to officers called deacons (the very nature and uses of whose office have been almost forgotten); and the General Assembly seems to have been created, in a great degree, with a view to the conduct and support of Missions. No extra constitutional agencies, therefore, are needed, and we are happy to inform you that the Board of Foreign Missions have thrown themselves upon the faith and love of the people of God, and risked their noble cause upon the truth and energy of these great principles, by dispensing with all agents other than the officers of the churches in the regular and ordinary discharge of their duties.

We will detain you now with a short statement (without enlarging) of some consequences of this doctrine which we have endeavored to explain and defend:



*First*, There is nothing unnatural or inconsistent with the exercises of the day or the place in taking up collections for pious uses in our Sabbath assemblies. It is one form in which our love and gratitude to God, and our communion with one another as members of the same body, are expressed. It is an ordinance of God as much as prayer, or preaching, or singing. This caution seems to be necessary, on account of the growing tendency in some portions of the church to separate their giving from their worship, and thus to lose sight of the nature of that act. (1 Cor. xvi. 2.)

*Second*, It is the duty of every man to contribute. (Acts xi. 29.) An unconverted man may not say that he cannot do it aright, and, therefore, ought not to do it at all. Upon the same ground, he might excuse himself from the worship of God altogether, and turn atheist. Let him do it as well as he can, and seek to be found in Christ, to have his Spirit, that he may do it aright. A Christian may not say that he has very little to give, and, therefore, "it is not worth while." It is always worth while to obey the commandments of God; and until the Lord shall say that he will accept nothing under a certain amount, you cannot refuse. What human arithmetic can calculate the amount which has been brought into the treasury of the Lord by the "widow's mite"? Only let your prayers accompany your alms (Acts x. 2, 4), and be assured they will both be "a memorial before God."

*Third*, These things being so, the General Assembly have not transcended their powers in adopting the second and third resolutions, which *require* the lower courts to attend to this business, and to see to it that in every "particular" church this ordinance of God's house be observed.

This Presbytery has accordingly resolved that at their next spring meeting they will institute an inquiry to ascertain whether and how far the ministers and sessions have complied with the injunction of the highest court; and it may be proper to say of the Presbytery also, that in adopting this

resolution they have been guilty of no usurpation of power. If, according to our standards, this contribution is directed to be made whenever and wherever they require the sermon, prayer, and singing, it is just as competent for the Presbytery to call ministers and sessions to account for neglecting this ordinance of the house of God as it is for neglecting the reading of Scripture, prayer, singing, and the blessing of the people. The Presbytery may judge an annual or monthly collection to be equivalent to the collection every Sabbath, but they have no authority to dispense with both.

“Now, the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and we pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.” *Amen.*

## MORAL OBLIGATION OF THE TITHE.<sup>1</sup>

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MORAL obligation can be created only by some intimation of the will of God. God alone can bind the conscience. The will of God can be made known to us only in one of two ways: either by the "light of nature" or by revelation. The light of nature becomes manifest either through the constitution and consciousness of the individual man, or through those of the human race expressed in the "*consensus populorum*." That which has been believed always and everywhere and by all is very apt to be true; and that which has been felt to be binding upon the conscience, with the same universality of times, places and persons, may be concluded to be of moral obligation. The voice of the people in this sense may be regarded as the voice of God. The moral sense may be undeveloped, or it may be perverted in its judgments by ignorance, prejudice, passion, and habits of wickedness; but where it has a fair opportunity to be heard, and especially upon questions upon which its judgments are opposed to the desires and appetites of man, sinful and selfish, it would seem to speak with the authority of man's Maker and Ruler. It is conscience, the "categorical imperative," against what is voluntary in man. It is an authority which man feels cannot be resisted with impunity.

Both these kinds of proof, reason and revelation, have been appealed to by the defenders of the moral obligation of the tithe. But before we proceed to the examination of the proof, let us understand what the question precisely is. It

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<sup>1</sup>This article appeared in the *Union Seminary Magazine*, March-April 1890.—Ed.

is *not* whether men are not morally bound to acknowledge God's propriety in them and in their substance, to confess their dependence upon his providence, and to give thanks to him for his bounties; nor is it whether they are not bound to do these things by offering to him a portion of their substance as well as by a form of words; nor whether all their worldly goods are not held by them as his stewards, and are to be used for his glory. There can be no debate upon such questions among those who acknowledge a divine providence. But the question is, whether the precise proportion of the *tenth* is the divinely-ordained proportion—that proportion alone (or, at least, the smallest) which God will accept as a rental, or as an expression of our dependence, our gratitude, our devotion to him. To discuss any other question than this precise one is, in our judgment, a waste of time.

I. The proof from the light of nature for the tithe is easily disposed of. 1. It has not been shown to be universal. 2. Where the custom did obtain, it seems to have been observed, when *statelley* observed, as a mode or the mode of sustaining the priesthood; when *occasionally* observed, to have been offered as an acknowledgment of special divine favors. The only pre-Mosaic instances in the Bible are those of Abraham (Gen. xiv.) and Jacob (Gen. xxviii.). The tithe paid by Abraham was a solitary instance, was a tithe of the spoils of war, not of his own property or income, and was a tithe paid to a *priest*. If the instance proves anything for the theory of moral obligation, it proves that there ought always to be a visible priesthood to receive the tithes. In point of fact, as we shall see, the divine obligation of the tithe was not asserted in the Christian church until the ministry of the word had become a priesthood. The two things, tithe and priesthood, stand or fall together in every free church. The case of Jacob is a clear case of a voluntary vow, of a vow made to do a thing which there is no previous moral obligation to do. The cases of these two patriarchs

have been mentioned here only in connection with the proof from the "light of nature." We shall have something more to say about Abraham's tithe when we come to examine the argument from Scripture. As to both cases, they were sporadic and occasional, and can furnish no proof of the moral obligation of the tithe in the only sense in which we are using the term in this paper, that of a tenth of one's income stately paid for religious uses. 3. If the light of nature reveals the moral obligation of the tithe, how comes it to pass that the church did not see it for the first three centuries of its existence? Surely, Christians were not blinder than the heathen to the light of nature. Yet we have the statement of a scholar in the tithe-supported Church of England "that the fathers of the first three centuries nowhere speak of tithes as even a minimum due *de jure divino*, though they had occasion for saying so, had such been the opinion of the church, or had tithes generally been paid as legally due; they frequently and earnestly exhort to almsgiving, they never exhort their hearers to give tithes."<sup>1</sup> These facts are all the more weighty from the tendency in the church to revert to the Mosaic institutions of a mortal priesthood, temples, altars, and ritual sacrifices. A similar argument might be made from the fact that the tithes were not easily collected, even from the Jews themselves, although the "light of nature" was reinforced by a positive divine command. (Mal. iii. 8.) It appears to us, therefore, that the argument from reason, or the light of nature, ought to be given up. The utmost that it can prove is, that God ought to be acknowledged and honored by giving him of our substance.

II. The proof from Scripture. 1. It is argued that Abraham must have offered the tithe to Melchisedek in obedience to a recognized custom of the religion of the day. We answer, that Abraham did not offer a tithe of his property or

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Sharpe, in *Smith's Dict. of Eccl. Antiq.*, under "Tithes."

of his income, which is the only kind of tithe that we are concerned with, but of the spoils of war. Was it a *custom* with that patriarch to offer tithes of that sort? Was he ever engaged in war but this once? Did he ever go to war for the purpose of getting spoils, out of which he might offer a tenth? Further, after the tithe was instituted in Israel, was there a rule that a tenth of the spoils of war was to be offered to God? There was no such rule. If places were put under an anathema, no portion was to be reserved under pretense of sacrifice or any other sacred use, as Achan and Saul found to their cost. If they were not anathematized, all the spoils were left entirely to the people that went to war, without any sacred decimation. When God would have a sacred portion out of the spoils (as those taken from the Midianites, Num. xxxi.) to show that they did not fall under the law of tithes, he took, not the tenth, but one portion of five hundred from the soldiers, and of fifty from the people. "Hence," says Dr. Owen, "the giving of the tithe of spoils was not from the obligation of any law, but was an act of free will and choice in the offerer."<sup>1</sup>

But it is said that the apostle's argument (in Heb. vii.) requires the assumption that tithes are always to be paid, because there is always a priest to receive them, and that Abraham *was* acting under a law of tithing. We answer: (*a*), That we cannot see it. (*b*), What is much more to the purpose, Dr. Owen did not see it. He takes occasion, from this very passage, to argue against this perpetual obligation of the tithe. "Keen optics must he have, I ween, who sees what is not to be seen," or who sees in the Epistle to the Hebrews what escaped the vision of the great theologian and venerable saint who wrote four bulky volumes of commentary upon it. (*c*), It has already been shown that Abraham was *not* acting under a law of tithing. (*d*), The apostle's argument

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<sup>1</sup> See Owen on Heb. vii. 1-3, in Vol. V., p. 349, of Edinburgh edition, 1814.

is not based upon the facts in the case of Melchisedek, but upon the *record* concerning him. He does not mean to say that that strange person had neither father nor mother, but that there is no record of either. In other words, God so ordered the history of Melchisedek, and the record of it, as to furnish a "sign" of the coming of that seed of the woman who was to be both king and priest, and a priest without a priestly genealogy, without predecessor and without successor; a priest "after the power of an endless life." Melchisedek is of no *historical* import whatever. His appearance is not the effect of anything in the history that precedes, or the cause of anything that follows. He was no doubt a real person, as real as Abraham himself was. But his appearance was a mere sign or type. "His name emerges but a moment from deep obscurity, and night falls upon it again. It is as a shadow passing for a moment along an illuminated portion of a wall on a dark night: the outline of some figure silently steals out of the gloom into the line of illumination and vanishes into the darkness again." He is mentioned no more for a thousand years (Psalm cx.), and then only once; and then, after the lapse of another thousand years, he reappears in the exposition of his typical significance in the Epistle to the Hebrews. And yet upon the fact that Abraham once made to this personage a voluntary offering of a tenth of the spoils which he had taken in battle is made to hang the moral obligation of paying stately a tenth of one's income to the ministers of religion! Some of our brethren have the boldness to say, "Everything here affirmed of Melchisedek must be affirmed of Christ; and everything here affirmed of Abraham must be affirmed of the church; otherwise the representation is faulty, and the whole incident loses its significance." Upon this statement we remark: (*a*), The moderation of Dr. Owen is greatly to be preferred, who says, "What is represented in the type, but is really subjectively and properly found only in the antitype, may be affirmed of the type

as such." (b), To say that the antitype, Christ, receives tithes in the sense that he receives them in response to his demand for them, is a bald begging of the question. Whether he demands them or not is the very question in debate. "He that liveth" is Melchisedek, and not Christ. (Heb. vii. 8.) (c), There is a fallacy and a begging of the question in the use of the word "church." The apostle affirms nothing of the church in its Christian form; he refers only to the Levitical church, a church that had a mortal priesthood, of the tribe of Levi and of the family of Aaron, and that supported that priesthood by tithes. He proceeds upon the notorious fact that the Levitical church paid tithes. To make what he says applicable to the Christian church it must be assumed or proved that the Christian church has a priesthood of mortal men which it supports by that method. Truly, if the argument of the apostle had been what the brethren on the other side take it to have been, he might well have said that it was "hard to be uttered" ("hard of interpretation").

Before taking leave of this argument from the meeting of Abraham and Melchisedek, which the advocates of the moral obligation of the tithe seem to regard as their Gibraltar, we would call the attention of our readers to its *sacerdotal* tendencies. The tithe and the priesthood: these are the twin ideas, the correlated facts. If the priesthood is by law, the support of the priesthood must be by law also. Nothing under such a system can be left to the *voluntary* contributions of the people. They have nothing to do with the making of priests, and they will have nothing to do, unless compelled, with supporting them. The two methods, support by tithes which are obligatory, and support by voluntary offerings, are in their nature, genius, and operation the opposites of each other. The one is of the nature of a tax; the other, of a free gift. The one is the expression of obedience to law; the other is the expression of the liberty which belongs to a voluntary compact. The one implies simply submission,



more or less sullen; the other is the expression of confidence and affection towards him who dispenses the ordinances of the gospel.

It is plain that, if the views of the advocates of the tithe should come to prevail, our whole conception of the pastoral office would be revolutionized by changing the method of support. A pastor would not be dependent upon his congregation, but upon a common fund administered by a committee or a commission appointed by the General Assembly. If the tithe should be honestly paid, said committee would have a great fund at its disposal, which would corrupt both the dispensers and the ministers to whom it should be dispensed. We should soon have a lording it over God's heritage with a vengeance. The people would lose, virtually, their right of electing their pastors; at least, it would be maintained with difficulty in the face of so mighty a "patron" as such a committee would be. The right of election and the right of patron are not easily kept separate, as the history of the Church of Scotland and the existence of the Free Church of Scotland demonstrate. If the right of patronage be delegated to a central committee, how long would the right of election be retained? And, the right of election having been surrendered, how long would it be before the ministry of the word would become a virtual priesthood, independent of the people, and lording it over them, claiming to be the "clergy," the inheritance of God, and despising the "laity" as sheep worthy only of being fleeced?

We do not desire to see the revenue of the church collected "by law." Our tithe brethren insist that such a method of collection is necessary; and they ask, with an air of triumph, if any other kingdom could subsist upon the free offerings of the people. The answer is easy: There is no other kingdom like the kingdom of Christ; no other kingdom of truth, righteousness, joy, and peace; no other in which *love* is the reigning principle, love to the King and to his people; no

other which is moral and spiritual in its origin, aims, methods, and ends; no other which, from its very nature, must abhor an appeal to force. One of the weightiest objections to the tithe method is, that it would unspiritualize the church. "Our present system of ministerial support is," as Dr. Thornwell maintained against Dr. Hodge, more than forty years ago, "as perfect in theory as the wit of man can make it. While it institutes a near and tender relationship between every pastor and his charge, it binds the charges together in ties of mutual charity and dependence, which bless alike the givers and the receivers. It is a plan in beautiful accordance with the spirit of the gospel; it preserves the unity of the church without disturbing the free and healthy action of its parts."<sup>1</sup> Let it be repeated for the thousandth time, that what the church needs is, not other methods, but more *life*. Let us leave legal and compulsory methods to the papacy, which is a kingdom of this world, and, therefore, cannot rely upon the love of its people to Christ, and upon the power of the Holy Ghost.

What has been said concerning the tendencies of the tithe method is fully confirmed by history. The passages from the fathers which have been quoted by the brethren on the other side, those of them which clearly teach the divine obligation of the tithe upon Christians, belong to a period in which the ministry was considered a priesthood. If they prove anything, therefore, they prove too much for Presbyterians. Search and see if there has ever been a church which enforced the tithe which did not hold sacerdotal views of the ministry, or was not in unscriptural alliance with the civil power. The tithe has not kept good company in Christendom.

But to return to the scriptural argument. The advocates of the tithe are sorely pressed for any New Testament support to their cause. It is not merely the silence of the New Testament that troubles them. This of itself is not conclu-

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<sup>1</sup> *Southern Presbyterian Review*, Vol. I., p. 82.

sive, as we all hold, in regard to some subjects. The trouble is, that it is not silent in regard to the support of the ministry. It says a good deal on that subject, and what it does say makes it impossible to account for the omission of any allusion to the tithe, if the moral obligation of such a mode of supporting the ministry of the word was acknowledged or acted on. For example, let us take the classic place in 1 Corinthians ix. The apostle there argues at some length the right of those who preach the gospel to live of the gospel. Instead of arguing the point from the tithe as a permanent law which had been in force for centuries, he argues it from principles of natural right. His illustrations are drawn from the ordinances of Moses, from military usages, from husbandry, from the shepherd's calling, from the usages of the temple service, all of which are exemplifications of the principle that the laborer is worthy of his hire. It has been asserted that the apostle, in the fourteenth verse, uses the expression "even so" to indicate that the ministry is to be supported exactly in the same manner as the Levitical priests, that is, by tithes. On which we remark, (*a*), that in the preceding verse, where he is enforcing his point by the usages of the temple service, he probably has in mind only the offerings upon the altar, of which the priests, and the priests only, were allowed to eat; <sup>1</sup> not the tithes, of which the tithe payers could also eat. (Deut. xii. 6, 7.) But, (*b*), if the tithes are referred to, then the "even so," as rigorously interpreted by our brethren, must imply that the preachers of the gospel are priests, for the priest and the tithe go together in the illustration. (*c*), The "even so" refers to *all* the preceding illustrations, not merely to that in the verse preceding; and if so, what a batch of absurdities would the interpretation of our brethren result in! Ministers should live on grass, on grapes, on milk, etc. (*d*), The meaning is plain enough: that as in all the preceding ex-

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<sup>1</sup> See *Hodge's Com.*, *in loc.*

amples God has ordained that every worker, man or brute, should live by his work, so he has ordained concerning the worker in the gospel, that he should live by the gospel. There is no more proof from this passage that the minister should live upon a tithe than there is that the ox should, or the soldier, or the shepherd, or the planter of a vineyard.

But the New Testament is not merely silent about the tithe. It proposes a method of raising a revenue inconsistent with the method of the tithe. It is the method of *voluntary* contributions, in opposition to a *tax*, whether a tenth or any other. The proportion is a proportion to prosperity, of which the believer is to be the judge; and the judgment is to be made under the guidance and impulse of love. He that was taught in the word was to communicate to him that taught in all good things. (Gal. vi. 6.) Paul himself received a "gift" from his Philippians which he delights in as "a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing unto God." (Phil. iv. 17, 18.) If it should be said that Paul was no longer ministering to the church at Philippi, and was not entitled to the tithe, that this contribution to him was, therefore, of the nature of a free gift, and had nothing to do with the tithe which was paid to the settled minister in that church, we ask, What, then, becomes of the plea which is so persistently urged in favor of the tithe, that it will furnish abundant means for sustaining and enlarging our missionary work, as well as for sustaining our pastors? Was there ever a missionary who deserved an ampler support than the great Apostle to the Gentiles? And considered as an apostle, and, therefore, as having plenary authority over all churches, a sort of universal pastor, he would have had a right to the tithe, to say nothing of the special obligations by which the Philippian church was bound to him as its founder, and as a sufferer in its behalf. The Philippian tithe, therefore, is a pure fancy.

The attempt to evade what is said in the New Testament

about voluntary offerings, by making these offerings additions to the tithe, is a pure begging of the question, and need not be noticed until an attempt is made to prove that they were so. As to the fears that voluntarism will not yield sufficient revenue, it may be said, (*a*), that if voluntarism is God's way, it *will* yield enough, and all fears are begotten of unbelief. (*b*), That neither method will yield enough without the Holy Spirit of God in the hearts of his people. It is vain to attempt to make a law to do the work of the Spirit. A dollar is not a dollar in the kingdom of God. A dollar given from love to God is more than a dollar given from conscience or fear merely to comply with an external statute. (*c*), That the history of the two methods is, to say the least, not against the voluntary. (Compare Ex. xxxvi. 5, 6; 1 Chron. xxix. 3-9, with 2 Chron. xxxi. 5-10, and see also Mal. iii. 8, 9.) In these passages we have recorded an abounding liberality, both of tithes and of voluntary offerings; but it is only in the case of the latter that it is said the people had to be restrained from giving more, while in the place of Malachi God charges his people with robbing him in the matter of tithes. So, also, in Scotland when the exodus of the Free Church took place, not only its enemies, but its timid friends, predicted that voluntarism would prove a disastrous failure; but the event falsified the prediction.

An additional argument in favor of the proposition that the voluntary method is incompatible with the method of the tithe, and that, therefore, the use of the one for the support of the ministry implies the disuse of the other, may be drawn from the nature of the ministry as depending for its effectiveness upon the mutual confidence of minister and people. In other words, voluntarism is in harmony with the nature of the ministry, and the law of the tithe is not. But as we have already touched upon this before, it need not be enlarged upon here.

The other arguments from the New Testament urged by the brethren in favor of the tithe do not seem to be worthy of serious refutation. We, therefore, conclude this essay by begging our readers to remember that the *sole* question we have been debating is, whether there is now a law of God requiring his people to give him a tenth of their income for the support of the offices of religion.

## THE LORD'S SUPPER.<sup>1</sup>

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IN the remarks which we propose to make upon this subject, we have in our view the needs of the great body of private members of the church rather than the needs of the ministers of the gospel, although we are not without hope of being able to say something which may serve to impart additional clearness to the views of some ministers who have not made the subject a matter of special study. Observation and experience have convinced us that there is not a little confusion, if not some error, in the notions entertained by many intelligent Presbyterians in regard to the nature and design of this ordinance, and to the mode in which it conduces to the sanctification of believers. Fatal errors in regard to it were taught in the church for ages, and so inveterate had these errors become, so thoroughly had they poisoned the life of Christians, that even the great men who were raised up by Divine Providence and employed as his instruments in the work of reform in the sixteenth century failed to reach any harmony of views among themselves concerning it; and an ordinance which had been established by the Saviour as the most impressive symbol of the union and communion of his people became the occasion of bitter contentions and divisions. Its mission, like the mission of the Redeemer himself, seemed to be that of bringing a sword, not peace, on the earth. The history of the church scarcely records anything better suited to humble us and make us distrustful of our unaided understandings than the debates at the colloquy of Marburg, and especially the obstinate weakness of Luther in defending a position as utterly untenable as that of the papists themselves. The cask preserves

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<sup>1</sup> Appeared in *Southern Presbyterian Review*, October, 1879.—ED.

the odor of the first liquor that is put into it, and the error of Luther still lingers in the noble church which has been called by his name. But are Presbyterians free from error in regard to this ordinance? Their doctrinal standards are, as we believe, but we also believe that the ghosts of the departed errors of popery still linger about the communion table even in our own church. This is our apology, if apology be needed, for the present writing.

We have in the New Testament four several accounts of the institution of the supper. The last of these is found in the eleventh chapter of Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians; and being the last in the order of time as well as the most complete, it was doubtless designed by the Saviour to be the chief directory for the church in celebrating this ordinance. So the instinct of the church seems to have decided, and we shall be guided in what follows by this directory.

I. In the first place, it must be borne in mind that this ordinance was instituted by the Lord himself. "For I have received of the Lord," says the apostle, "that which also I delivered unto you." (Verse 23.) It is no ordinance of man, but an ordinance of God in Christ. It is a *positive* institution, not *moral*; that is, the obligation to observe it rests not upon "the nature of things"—the nature of God, the nature of man, or the relations of God and man as modified by the gospel—but upon the sovereign appointment of God. Given a knowledge of the gospel and of those new relations which the death of our Lord Jesus Christ has constituted betwixt him and us redeemed sinners, then the obligation to remember his death with the liveliest emotions of gratitude, faith, and repentance, immediately arises and suggests itself. The relations cannot be recognized without feeling the obligation. This is the *moral* side of the matter. But to remember him and commemorate his death in this particular method, to wit, by assembling before a table, and eating bread and drinking wine together, would never have suggested itself to



us in the way of duty. No obligation would have been felt, and none would have existed. But the moment the command is given, "Do this in remembrance of me," the obligation arises. It is created by the command. This is the *positive* side of the matter.

There are some inferences of immense importance to be drawn from this fact, that the Lord by his own sovereign will ordained this feast:

1. If it be an expression of his sovereign will, and no reason exists for celebrating the supper but the bare command, then a refusal to go to the Lord's table involves the guilt of *rebellion*. Rebellion differs from other crimes in that, while other crimes are transgressions of particular laws or commandments, this crime is aimed at the very source of all law, the authority itself upon which all law rests and by which alone it can be enforced. Murder can be committed by one who is thinking of nothing but the gratification of a private purpose or impulse of cupidity, lust, ambition, or revenge; but rebellion is always an attempt to subvert the government itself, or, at the very least, a denial of allegiance to it. Such was the crime of our first father in Eden. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was of the nature of a positive institution. The prohibition, "Thou shalt not eat of it," and that alone, created the difference between it and the other trees of the garden as to man's right of enjoyment. It was the expression and the symbol of God's sovereign right to control his creature. To eat of the fruit of that tree, therefore, was to deny that sovereign right, and to say as plainly as an act could say, "I will not have this God to rule over me." It was not the transgression of a single commandment, but a comprehensive repudiation of man's whole allegiance, an exhaustive denial of God's right to issue any command at all. So, here, the refusal to obey this command, "Do this in remembrance of me," on the part of any one who understands the case, is equivalent to a rejection of the whole authority

of Jesus Christ. It is a very solemn and emphatic way of saying, "I will not have this man to reign over me." Let this be pondered by those who say that they can be as good Christians out of the visible church as in it.

2. If this ordinance be a symbol of Christ's supreme authority in the church, and there is no valid reason for observing it but his command, it will follow that he who goes to the Lord's table with the consciousness of being impelled, only or mainly, by the desire to obey him, to remember him and his death, in the way that he himself has appointed, has good reason to look for a blessing. His obedience as such will be rewarded. We do not mean that a mere mechanical compliance with the law of this ordinance, or of any other, will entitle a man to receive a blessing; much less are we believers in what has been called in the papacy the *opus operatum*, that the sacraments produce their appropriate effects whenever administered, unless some bar is opposed to prevent their operation. Our meaning is, that beside the effects which an ordinance is adapted in its own nature to produce, a special manifestation of God's favor may be expected to follow the essential spirit of obedience itself; and that where this spirit of obedience exists, the other effects which have been alluded to may be more confidently expected to take place. To illustrate: the memorials of a Saviour's broken body and of his blood shed are adapted by a law of our nature to awaken certain emotions and to call into exercise certain spiritual faculties or habits, such as love, gratitude, faith, repentance, etc.; and this awakening and exercise might take place in the heart of a sincere believer (a Quaker, for instance), when the divine institution of the ordinance was not clear to his own mind, or even when it was clear to him that it was not of divine institution, but was only a pleasant ceremony of purely human origin. What we contend for is, that such a believer would not be entitled to expect as large a blessing as another who should come with a

full assurance that it was Christ's own ordinance he was coming to, and that he was coming because he believed it to be Christ's.

3. This view is important, further, as helping to settle the question, in a given case, whether a person ought to go to the communion. If it were a mere question of privilege, one ought, perhaps, to wait for absolute assurance of his right. But if it be a question of duty, then a lower degree of evidence ought to convince him that he is bound to perform it.

II. It is a *teaching* ordinance; it is designed to set forth some fundamental doctrines of the gospel. All teaching is by signs. The two kinds of signs which God chiefly employs in teaching us are words and symbols. Words, indeed, are symbols in a certain sense, but they are here distinguished as a class of signs differing from symbols. Words are in their origin signs addressed to the sense of hearing. A word is a *vox*; and if it be not a sign also, it is a *vox et præterea nihil*. The written word is simply the record of these signs, as written, appealing, no doubt, to the sense of sight, but appealing remotely to the ear. Symbols appeal to the eye mainly. In the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel we have the record of a discourse of our Saviour, in which he announced to the people the same great truths which are set forth in the Lord's supper. (See especially verses 35, 48-58.) The comparison of that discourse with 1 Corinthians xi. 24-26 will give us a clear idea of the difference between teaching by words and by symbols. In the one, the Lord appears as describing the sacrifice which he was to offer for the sins of the world, and the method by which that sacrifice should become effectual for the life of the sinner. In the other, the Lord appears as actually presenting his flesh to his people under the symbol of bread, and they appear as actually receiving and eating it. (Compare John vi. 51-58 with 1 Corinthians xi. 24.) It is the same truth in both, but in the one case conveyed in the language of words, words

in the highest degree figurative, but still words; in the other, conveyed in the form of symbolical elements and actions. Considering the supper as a system of signs, its whole value lies in the truths which it presents and exhibits.<sup>1</sup>

Now note one or two important inferences from this view:

*First*, There is no special mystery about this ordinance. It began to be called a "mystery," a "tremendous mystery," in the church so early as the middle of the second century, and as words react mightily on thought, men began to think that there must be a mystery in it, and as they could not find any, it became necessary to put some into it. Hence the very word "sacrament," which meant mystery;<sup>2</sup> hence the doctrine of the "real presence" in all its forms. If this simple memorial of Christ's death could not be made a miracle for the senses, it must at least become a mystery for faith. Something must be put into it to justify the extravagant language which was commonly employed in regard to it.

The mystery is not in the ordinance. How men can be taught by the use of visible signs and symbols it is not harder to understand than how they can be taught by words; not as hard perhaps. The mystery is in the truth, not in the vehicle; the mystery of the incarnation, of "God manifest in the flesh"; the mystery of grace, condescension, and love in the Saviour's death; the mystery of the believer's vital union with his Saviour; the mystery of glory, when that life which is now "hid with Christ in God" shall be revealed

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<sup>1</sup> We have taken for granted, it will be observed, the common Protestant interpretation of the words, "This is my body"; this is the sign of, or this represents, my body. This is not the place for exposing the absurdities of the papal doctrine of transubstantiation—a doctrine fatal to all rational belief in the Bible as the word of God, and the mother of the most desolating skepticism.

<sup>2</sup> The Latin version of the Bible, which goes under the name of "The Vulgate," commonly uses the word *sacramentum* to represent the Greek *mystery*; and the English reader by substituting "sacrament" for "mystery" in Ephesians v. 32, will understand how ignorant people might be made to believe that the Bible makes marriage a sacrament.

in the revelation of Christ "our life"; all these mysteries are real and ineffable. But they may be and are set forth in the preaching of the word, as well as in the supper. Is there any mystery in preaching?

*Second*, This view furnishes an answer to the question, how the Lord's supper conduces to the sanctification of believers. The answer is, by the truth it sets forth. Its operation is not physical. Men ate the manna in the wilderness, and died the death of the body. Men have eaten the bread of the supper, and have died the death both of the body and of the soul. Its operation is not magical; its effects are not like those ascribed to the wizard; the words of institution are not an incantation. All such notions are the dreams of drivelling superstition, or the devices of an ambitious and avaricious priesthood, unsupported by any evidence and in the highest degree insulting to God. There is too much reason to fear that there are remains of this superstition lingering in the minds of some Christians who are far from deserving to be described as superstitious.

The *truth* is the *only instrument* that God uses for the sanctification of his people (John xvii. 17; 2 Thess. ii. 13; Jas. i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 22-25; ii. 1, 2), while his *Holy Spirit* is the *only sanctifier*. Peter, in the passage just cited, compares the word of God to the seed which determines the nature of the life and all its manifestations. Paul uses (Rom. vi. 17) the figure of a mould or type to express the relation of the life of a believer to the truth—"that form of doctrine whereto ye were delivered" (see the rendering in the margin). The metal must be fused in order to take the impression of the mould; the wax must be softened in order to take the impression of the seal. This softening and fusing of the heart is the work of the Holy Spirit alone. He alone *gives* the life, and he alone *invigorates* and *develops* it; but he imparts it and develops it according to the truth as recorded in the Scriptures and symbolized in the sacraments. It is as easily

understood, therefore, how the sacraments conduce to our sanctification as how the reading or preaching of the word does. There is a great mystery in the Spirit's operations (John iii. 8), both by word and sacraments; but the mystery is not greater when he works by the latter than when he works by the former.

There are two circumstantial differences, however, which it may be well to note in passing:

1. The truths presented in the sacraments, especially in the Lord's supper, are presented in a more condensed form than in the word. The light in the old creation, to borrow an illustration from Owen, was sufficient to illuminate the world while it was diffused everywhere before the work of the fourth day; but it was more glorious and penetrating when reduced and contracted into the body of the sun. So the truth concerning Christ scattered up and down the Bible is sufficient for the illumination of the church; but it is far more glorious when reduced and contracted into the Lord's supper. All the rays of Christ's glory are here converged, as it were, into one burning focus, and consequently better suited to set the soul of the believer on fire.

2. The other difference is, that in the supper the power of the truth is increased by the active part which the communicant takes in the celebration of the ordinance. There are symbolical actions as well as symbolical elements used in the Lord's supper. The action of the administration in offering the elements to the communicants is symbolical of the free offer of Jesus and all the benefits of his redemption to those who will truly receive them, "Take, eat," etc. The action of the communicants in taking the elements and in eating and drinking them is symbolical of their reception of Jesus and the benefits of his redemption. In reading or hearing the word, there is no profession made as to the state of mind and heart of the reader or hearer. In the act of communicating, there is a profession made of receiving and

resting upon him whose body and blood are symbolically offered to them; and, by a law of human nature, when such a profession is sincerely made the truth is brought nearer to the soul of him who makes it, and is in more favorable conditions for making an impression.

We come now to consider more particularly what the truth is which is symbolized in the supper: "My body broken for you" (verse 24); "this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." (Matt. xxvi. 28; compare Mark xiv. 25; Luke xxii. 20.) The fundamental truth here set forth is the substitution of Jesus for the sinner, of his life for the sinner's. This was the theory of the bleeding sacrifice under the Mosaic law. "For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement (Hebrew, *covering*) for your lives; for it is the blood that maketh a covering by the life that is in it." (Fairbairn's rendering; see his *Typology*.) Life is substituted for life; the life of the victim for the life of the sinner which has been forfeited to the law; the life of the victim becoming thereby a covering for the forfeited life of the sinner; and hence an at-one-ment,<sup>1</sup> a bringing-into-one, a reconciliation of God and the sinner—these are the great ideas set forth in this precious ordinance of the church, ideas without which the gospel is but "the play of Hamlet without the part of Hamlet."

The great purpose of the ordinance is to set forth the death of Christ: "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew (announce, proclaim) the Lord's death till he come." (Verse 26.)

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<sup>1</sup> Atonement is here used in its proper etymological sense of *reconciliation*, expressing the result of an expiatory offering rather than the process of expiation itself. This last is the ordinary acceptance of the word, and that in which our Authorized Version of the Bible uses both noun and verb, with rare exceptions. One of these exceptions is in Romans v. 11, where the Greek word rendered "atonement" means *reconciliation*, and is so rendered by our translators in the margin.

We are so familiar with this simple rite that we are not as much impressed as we should otherwise be with the strangeness of it. Men are accustomed to celebrate the birth-days of great benefactors of their country or their race. Their death-days have been lamented and deplored as putting a permanent arrest upon their beneficent career. "In that very day their thoughts perish." The death-days of the Christian martyrs were celebrated by their brethren with appropriate ceremonies; but they were celebrated as their *natalitia*, their birth-days, upon which they entered into glory, honor, and immortality. It must be borne in mind, also, that these days of martyrdom could never have been celebrated if Jesus had not died; that his death alone made them birth-days into glory. The death of Manes was celebrated by the Manichæans; but it was no doubt in impious imitation of the church's festival.

But the death of Jesus is not only celebrated by the church, that vast communion of his worshippers, but celebrated as a festival, as a feast of thanksgiving, as a eucharist. How strange! There must be something very unique about this death; some quality or feature in which it refuses to communicate with any other death which has ever occurred amongst men. What is it? The answer is, that the death of Jesus was to him what the death of no other man could ever be to that man—the very end and purpose of his birth. Jesus was born for the express purpose of dying. His body was prepared (Psalm xl. 6; Heb. x. 5) in order that it might be broken; his blood was made to flow in its channels in order that it might be shed. It is, indeed, "appointed unto all men once to die"; but this is not the end for which they were created. But the body of Jesus was created for this end. (See John x. 18.) This was the commandment or commission of the Father, that the Son should come into the world and take a human life, in order that he might lay it down and then take it again. Upon the supposition that



Jesus was a mere man and a mere martyr, this passage of John is utterly unintelligible. If he came into the world, as some monk of St. Bernard might go out among the snows of the Alps, not for the purpose of offering up his life, but only at the risk of losing it in the prosecution of his benevolent mission, then the gospel-history is an insoluble riddle. No! No! He was, indeed, the wisest of all teachers, the most illustrious of all the martyrs of philanthropy; but he was infinitely more, the great High Priest, performing a sublime and noble act of worship in the offering up of himself a sacrifice to divine justice for the glory of the Father and the salvation of the lost. The Unitarian would place him in the same class with Paul. Paul is indignant at the outrage done to his Master. "Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" In the esteem of that great apostle, Jesus stood alone, in solitary glory, the Saviour of sinners. The only glory Paul claimed was that of preaching the unsearchable riches of this Saviour "without charge" to his fellow-sinners. (1 Cor. ix. 15-23.)

The death of Jesus, then, was not a mere incident in his history which might or might not have taken place, and yet the religion he taught have remained the same. It constitutes, together with his resurrection from the dead, the very *essence* of his religion. So Paul, in 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4, sums up the religion which he preached; and it is a true instinct which has led the church to regard the supper as her most significant symbol and ensign. Around it her fiercest battles have been fought both with avowed enemies and with pretended friends.

This view explains the impotence, the confessed impotence, of the papacy to give peace to its deluded votaries. It has taken away from the laity the cup, the symbol of the blood, and it virtually denies the efficacy of the Saviour's death by the *repetition* of his sacrifice (Heb. x. 1-4, 11-14) in the abomination of the mass. Compare now the views of one of

its "saints" who died more than a century before transubstantiation became the established dogma within its domain, and more than three centuries before the "communion in one kind" became the established dogma. In a direction for the visitation of the sick which is ascribed to St. Anselm of Canterbury, we have the following:<sup>1</sup>

"Dost thou believe that thou canst not be saved but by the death of Christ? The sick man answereth, Yes: then let it be said to him, Go to, then, and whilst thy soul abideth in thee put all thy confidence in this death alone, place thy trust in no other thing, commit thyself wholly to this death, cover thyself wholly with this alone, cast thyself wholly on this death, wrap thyself wholly in this death. And if God would judge thee, say, Lord, I place the death of our Lord Jesus Christ between me and thy judgment: and otherwise I will not contend nor enter into judgment with thee. And if he shall say unto thee that thou art a sinner, say, I place the death of our Lord Jesus Christ between me and my sins. If he shall say unto thee that thou hast deserved damnation, say, Lord, I put the death of our Lord Jesus Christ between thee and all my sins: and I offer his merits for my own, which I should have, and have not. If he say that he is angry with thee, say, Lord, I place the death of our Lord Jesus Christ between me and thy anger."

He who, by an unction from the Holy One (1 John ii. 20), knows this death, can afford to despise the "extreme unction" administered by a juggling priest, *in articulo mortis*.

The peculiar efficacy of the blood of Jesus is indicated by calling it "the blood of the new covenant." The new covenant suggests an old. Blood was the life of all the covenants before Christ, from Abel down. With which of these old covenants does the Saviour tacitly compare the covenant sealed with his own blood when he calls it the "new" covenant? Evidently the covenant of redemption which was sealed with the blood of the paschal lamb, as recorded in the twelfth chapter of Exodus. This is the most natural supposition under the circumstances. The Saviour was at this very time celebrating the feast of the Passover with his dis-

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<sup>1</sup> Cited by John Owen, Treatise on Justification, Sec. 2. *Works* (Russell's Ed., London, 1826), Vol. XI., p. 22.

ciples. The Passover covenant was that which then occupied their thoughts. The Sinaitic covenant was more a covenant with the church as redeemed than a covenant for its redemption; a covenant for the nurture and sanctification of pardoned sinners rather than a covenant for the pardon of sins; although the fact that it also was sealed and ratified with blood shows that the great idea of expiation was not suffered to drop out of the memory. A bloody sacrifice for expiation must continue forever to be the ground of all communion of even redeemed sinners with God. That the Passover covenant is referred to by the Saviour is further manifest from 1 Cor. v. 7: "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us."

Such being the reference, the blood being the blood of redemption, the people of God are reminded of the great truths, (1), That they needed to be redeemed. All Israel by nature were in the same condemnation with the Egyptians. The sovereign election of God and the blood made the only difference. (2), That this redemption was to be accomplished—(a), by a work of righteous judgment upon the serpent's seed (compare Ezek. xxix. 3 ff.; Rev. xii. 3; xiii. 1, 2; 1 John iii. 8); and (b), by the suffering of the woman's seed typified in the lamb. (3), That the efficacy of the expiation for the salvation of the seed of God depended upon its being "sprinkled," which could only be done by *faith*.

All this may be readily applied to the redemption achieved by Jesus. There is one important difference, however, between the blood of the paschal lamb and the blood of "the lamb of God" with regard to their efficacy. There was no intrinsic power in the blood of the paschal lamb to protect the house of an Israelite. The life of no mere animal is an equivalent for the life of man. The efficacy, therefore, was due only to the sovereign appointment of God. Far different is the efficacy of the blood of him "who through the eternal Spirit (or, by an eternal Spirit, *i. e.*, by means of a divine nature—compare Romans i. 4) offered himself

without spot to God." It is real and intrinsic, so that if we could separate (which is not possible) the offering of Jesus from the appointment of God, it would still be efficacious to "purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God," in the case of every sinner who should trust in it. (See the argument of the apostle in Hebrews ix. 13, 14, where the whole force of the "how much more" lies in the fact of the intrinsic efficacy of the blood of Christ.) It is impossible that the soul which has been sprinkled with his blood should ever be lost, not only because God says it shall not be, but because "the nature of things" forbids it, the nature of God, the nature of Jesus, the nature of his priesthood, the nature of his sacrifice. Truly we have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us. (Heb. vi. 18.) All this is confirmed by the fact that the believer is made a partaker of the life of Christ. The Israelites ate the flesh of the paschal lamb; but there was no community of life between them and the lamb. But there is a real community of life between the believer and his Lord. He lives in the believer by his Spirit, and the believer lives in him by faith, is a member "of his body, of his flesh, and of his bone." (Eph. v. 30, and compare John vi. 53-58.) This is a great mystery, as real and glorious as it is incomprehensible—the union of Christ and his church.

Another comforting inference to be drawn from this reference to the covenant for redemption out of Egypt is, that the safety of the believer depends wholly upon the sprinkled blood, and not upon his personal character; though it is true that the believer has been sanctified also. We are strongly tempted here to quote in illustration of this point more than one eloquent paragraph from Dr. Stuart Robinson's *Discourses on Redemption*, Discourse 5. But as we take pleasure in believing that this precious volume is very widely circulated, we shall content ourselves with a single paragraph:

“Here is a genuine child of faithful Abraham, who has sometimes obtained a glimpse of the great truth involved in the shed blood, and experienced, in view of it, inexpressible comfort and peace. But the weakness of the flesh, and the temptations of sin, and the harassing cares of life have overshadowed his spiritual vision, and hidden the light from his view. The remembrance of many a sin returns and sits heavily upon his conscience, and thereby darkens his views of the great doctrine of the atonement for sin. But still, at the command of Jehovah, through Moses and the elders, he prepares the lamb, and sprinkles the blood. Yet as the shades of night thicken and all are waiting in anxious suspense for the blow of vengeance and of deliverance, imagination is busy, and fears and terrors, as dark spirits, rise from the depths of his soul. And now unbelief suggests in view of the array of past sins which memory parades before him: ‘Can a little blood, sprinkled on the door-post, blot out *such* sins? Can the mere acceptance of such a call and command from Jehovah purge the conscience of such guilt? However this blood might avail for the sins of the poor wretch who, under the burden of transgression, cries out, for the first time, to Jehovah in his distress—yet can it avail for one who hath proved faithless to vows, and buried out of sight his very covenant under a multitude of transgressions?’ O thou of little faith! hast thou not listened to the promise? He said not, ‘when I find a tenement wherein there is no sin, I will pass over.’ Nor, ‘when I find one who has, on the whole, not gone far astray, I will pass over.’ Nor, ‘when I find a strong and active faith like Abraham’s, I will pass over,’ but, ‘when I SEE THE BLOOD, I WILL PASS OVER.’”

Here a difficulty may be raised. We can understand, it may be said, how all the Israelites could be “passed over” if they had the blood upon the door-posts, no matter what their personal character might be; how Korah, Dathan, and Abiram could be as safe as Moses himself; for this was a redemption from mere temporal death. But surely, we cannot assert that the blood of Jesus confers safety from the stroke of eternal death in the same way. We answer, that the bondage from which the blood of Jesus delivers is the bondage of sin, the bondage of its curse and of its dominion in the soul; and wherever there is true faith in his blood there is deliverance from the dominion as well as from the guilt of sin. The deliverance from its guilt is absolute and perfect, and is the same in all believers, and the same at the mo-

ment they first believe, in degree and in kind, as at the bar of God when they shall be "openly acknowledged and acquitted." There are, and from the nature of the case can be, no degrees in justification, for the meritorious ground thereof is the righteousness of Christ imputed. To that glorious righteousness nothing can be added, and he who is clothed with it is as fully justified as the Saviour himself is. But in sanctification there are degrees—all degrees from the first blush of dawn to the splendors of the noon-day. Our *title* to the heavenly inheritance, if we be true believers, is absolutely perfect from the moment we believe; our *fitness* for the inheritance is a thing of growth. The two, however, cannot be separated. Wherever there is any true faith in a sinner, there we find a man who is both justified and sanctified. Still, the safety of the man is found in his justification, and that depends upon the blood (Rom. iii. 24, 25; v. 9); and as all believers are equally justified, they are all equally safe. The sensible evidence of the justification may and does vary according to a variety of circumstances, and, among these circumstances, the degree of sanctification; but the justification is the same in all, and, consequently, the safety from the stroke of death. Hence, when the question is, Are we safe from the stroke of the destroyer? let our eye be fixed upon the blood. Let us "take ten looks at Christ for one at ourselves!"

III. The supper is a *sealing* ordinance. By this is not meant that it makes an impression upon the soul as the seal upon the wax. This belongs to it as a sign, or system of signs, as presenting the truth to our minds. This has been already explained and guarded, and the sovereign agency of the Holy Ghost as the only sanctifier and comforter has been emphatically asserted. The meaning is, that this sacrament, like that of baptism, is a seal appended to the gospel, the charter of our salvation, for the purpose of confirming to our weak faith the promises of God. (See Rom. iv. 11; Acts. ii.

38, 39 ; Heb. vi. 16-18.) We are all familiar with the use of seals for a similar purpose among men.<sup>1</sup> (Gen. xxxviii. 18, 25 ; Jer. xxxii. 10, 11, 12, 14, 44.) God has given us his word, his oath, his visible seals, so that it would seem to be impossible to doubt. When we handle the elements of the Lord's supper, we hold, as it were, Christ and his salvation in our hands ; we see them, we feel them, we incorporate them with our very selves. If we believe the evidence of our senses, why should we doubt that Jesus and his salvation are ours ?

On the other hand, by partaking of the Lord's supper the communicants seal their engagement to be the Lord's. (*Shorter Catechism*, Question 94.) This engagement is first made in baptism, and then solemnly renewed from time to time in the other sacrament. (*Confession of Faith*, Chap. XXIX., § 1.) In every celebration of this ordinance there is an exchange of seals between God and the believer (John iii. 33), a fresh ratification of the covenant of grace, in which God promises to be the Father and God of the believer, and the believer promises to be his son and to render to him the obedience of a son. It is a fresh pledge of God's faithfulness to us and a fresh pledge of our faithfulness to him.

It follows, from this view of the supper as a seal, that it is valuable and valid only so long as it is appended to the gospel charter. Cut off the seal from a human covenant or deed of conveyance, and it becomes utterly worthless. It conveys nothing, it confirms nothing. Hence the worthlessness of the sacraments, so called, in the papacy, which has virtually denied the fundamental doctrines of the gospel, and has so

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<sup>1</sup> A peculiar and almost mysterious importance has always been ascribed by jurists to the great seal of England. "It is held that if the keeper of the seal should affix it without taking the royal pleasure to a patent of peerage or a pardon, though he may be guilty of a high offence, the instrument cannot be questioned by any court of law, and can be annulled only by an act of Parliament."—Macaulay's *History of England*, Vol. II., p. 487, Harper's edition, 1849.

far laid aside the gospel as to make the sacraments the whole of religion.<sup>1</sup> According to its teaching, a sinner may be saved without knowing anything of the gospel if he will only submit to the manipulations of the priest. It teaches that the sacraments not only signify grace, but convey it in every case in which a bar is not opposed to its operation. The sacraments, therefore, in the papacy do all that the gospel can do, and a great deal more: they save the soul, which the gospel never does without them. The Bible teaches that the sacraments (with the exception of baptism in its application to infants) are intended for the confirmation of faith in believers; Rome teaches that "by them all grace begins." Hence, no preaching is done, worth speaking of, in the papacy, where it is the exclusive religion. The pulpit is almost as silent as the grave in Mexico and Colombia. They have cut off the seals and thrown away the charter, and with the seals, as magical charms, they pretend to work wonders which no eye can see. Let us guard against their fatal delusions, and bear in mind that the sacraments are only appendages to the gospel, and are utterly worthless without it. The sacraments are monuments without inscriptions, and their meaning and intent can only be made known by the record.

IV. The supper is a *commemorative* ordinance: "Do this in remembrance of me." The idea of a commemoration is implied in a great deal of what has already been said in explaining the significance of the rite. We here consider it only as the commemoration of a great event, the death of Jesus Christ. In this relation, it belongs to the mass of proofs by which the facts of the gospel history are authenticated to us. The celebration of this festival can be traced back through all the centuries to the time when Jesus is af-

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<sup>1</sup>"By these (the sacraments) all true righteousness begins, or, being begun, is increased, or, being lost, is restored."—*Concil. Trident. Decretum de Sacramentis*, Sess. 7. *Premium*.



firmed to have died, and no further. The church has always professed to celebrate it in commemoration of his death. The reality of that death is therefore indisputably established. A similar argument might be used to establish the reality of his resurrection from the observance of the first day of the week (Sunday) as a commemorative ordinance; though, for obvious reasons, this argument is not of equal strength with the other. But we may take this occasion to remark that the death and resurrection of the Founder of Christianity are the only events in his history which God has commanded to be commemorated by the celebration of certain ordinances. All other commemorations are without authority, and tend only to impair the sense of obligation as to the observance of these two. In point of fact, the day of Christ's birth was not commemorated by a Christmas for nearly four centuries after his birth. Further, the *anniversary* celebration even of the death and resurrection of Jesus is without authority, and seems inconsistent with the proprieties of the case as acknowledged by those branches of the church which observe these anniversaries. Why celebrate once a year, on Good Friday, an event which they celebrate once a month, and even daily? Why celebrate once a year, on Easter, an event which they celebrate every week?

Again, the commemorative character of this ordinance furnishes an answer to the objection which is often felt without being uttered, that it is a bald and simple ceremony. Even in our ordinary human life, no other than a simple memento is needed of a dead or absent friend; a ring or lock of hair is sufficient. We cannot help observing the difference in this respect between the Jewish economy and the Christian. If we have never seen and conversed with one whose character and office we have been taught to respect and love, we need a minute and circumstantial description of his person, his voice, his features, his gait, in order to recognize him when we see him. But having seen him and conversed with him,

a very simple memorial is sufficient to recall his image and to evoke from the depths of the heart the emotions which he was accustomed to inspire when actually present. So to the church before his advent a very minute description of the Christ was needful, and accordingly we find a complex system of symbols and types foreshadowing him, his priestly, kingly, and prophetic offices, and the leading events of his history. But to the church since his advent in the flesh these things are not needed; and the multiplication of ceremonies in the Christian church is a melancholy proof of the decline of love to him and of an eclipse of faith. We have, indeed, not seen the Saviour with our bodily eyes, but we have what is better (see John xvi. 7), the presence of the Holy Ghost, the "Paraclete," whose office it is to reveal him to us, to take of his things and show them to us, and so glorify him. (John xvi. 14.) Where the church has a large measure of the Spirit, it will feel that the simple memorial which Jesus instituted is enough; when the Spirit withdraws, and in proportion as he withdraws, the attempt will be made to compensate for his absence by ceremonial symbols which appeal to the senses and the imagination. We must walk either by faith or by sight. A life in the Spirit is a life of faith; a life without the Spirit is a life of sense. Hence the horrible perversion of the supper in the papacy. Jesus is not known by faith through the Spirit, and his very flesh and blood must be brought down under the "species" of bread and wine. Nominal Christians worship a wafer as their God! an idolatry as brutal and senseless as that of the Israelites who worshipped a golden calf which their own hands had made as the God who had brought them out of Egypt.

The simplicity of the supper is its recommendation. If it had a great intrinsic value, if it had any quality so charming or imposing as to fix the attention upon itself, there would be danger of its significance, Christ and his salvation, drop-

ping out of sight; the symbol would be in danger of usurping the place of the thing symbolized. The victors in the Grecian games were content with a wreath of laurel; the glory was not in the crown, but in the victory. The instinct of patriotism has chosen as the flag of a country a worthless piece of bunting, or, at the most, a piece of silk; and when the flag is given to the breeze, it is not the beauty of the cloth or of its folds which makes the heart of the patriot swell and throb, but the thought of the country it represents, the institutions, the laws, the wisdom of the cabinet, the prowess of the field of battle, the blessings of home and fire-side, in a word, the glory of the country and of its history. So the Christian of lively faith looks upon this simple ordinance of the supper, the banner of the church, and remembers with exultation the death by which death itself was slain and the principalities and powers of darkness spoiled; he remembers the storms of fire and blood through which that banner has passed, and in which it has been held steadily and heroically aloft. He remembers the many instances in which he has himself conquered by this sign, or, rather, the many instances in which the Saviour whose death is there represented has, by the power of that death, given him the victory. He looks upon it as the sure and certain pledge of final victory for the church and for himself.

V. This leads us to note the relation of the supper to the second coming of our Lord, as suggested in the 26th verse: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death *till he come.*" This is not designed merely to fix the limit, in point of time, beyond which the ordinance is no longer to be observed. It does this; but why is the celebration to cease? Because then the whole work of redemption will have been accomplished; that which was virtually done when Jesus upon the cross cried, "It is finished" will have been actually done; the whole body of the redeemed will then be complete—complete as to its num-

ber, and complete as to all the parts and effects of redemption, the glorified spirit united with the glorified body, and the ransomed church received with songs and everlasting joy upon its head into the marriage supper of the Lamb. Meantime, until the church shall be blessed with that vision of her Lord, she is to celebrate and shew forth his death in the observance of the supper as the pledge and earnest of his coming. As this ordinance is a proof that he did come once "to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," so it is a pledge that, having put away sin, "he shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation unto them that look for him." There is a parallel here again between the Paschal supper and this. The Passover was a commemorative ordinance, commemorative of a redemption; but it was also prospective in its character. It looked back to the redemption of the church out of Egypt; it looked forward to the redemption achieved upon the cross, and further still to that which Paul denominates "the redemption of the body." It is but one redemption throughout, in different instalments, as there is but one church in different stages and different forms of manifestation. Hence every earlier instance of redemption is a pledge and earnest of the later and of the last. Hence the exodus out of Egypt, the death of the Lamb of God upon the cross, the advent of that Lamb again in glory, are all connected by an internal, moral, spiritual, and indissoluble bond. They constitute a golden chain like that in Rom. viii. 30. We need not be surprised, therefore, to find, in the vision of the rapt seer of Patmos (Rev. xv.), "the song of Moses the servant of God," as well as "the song of the Lamb," sung by the harpers on the glassy sea. The victories are the victories of the same Redeemer and for the same church; and it is meet that the whole body of the redeemed should sing both songs.

The principles upon which this connection of the different parts and stages of redemption rests are obvious enough.

They are the immutability of God's nature, the immutability of his purposes and plan, and the necessary harmony and consistency of the parts of his plan. What he begins, he will complete (Phil. i. 6), and he must always act like himself. The Apostles Peter and Jude use the same kind of argument to prove, against the Universalists and scoffers, that there must be a final judicial discrimination between the righteous and the wicked. (2 Pet. ii. 4-9; Jude 7.) There has been; therefore there shall be. The arguments (many of them at least) used against the possibility of eternal punishment, if valid, would prove that God has never punished the wicked. But God has punished the wicked; therefore, the arguments are not valid. They are dashed in pieces against the mountains of *facts*. So redemption is an accomplished fact, and the believer in Jesus may argue, with perfect assurance, from the beginnings of redemption to its ultimate and glorious completion. The worthy communicant who sits down, with fear and trembling perhaps, at the Lord's table, shall as certainly sit down at the marriage supper of the Lamb as it is certain that he lives.

VI. The mention of a "worthy" communicant suggests the last topic upon which the reader will be detained, the qualifications for communion. (Read 1 Cor. xi. 27-32.) (*a*), It is plain that there is a worthy and an unworthy eating and drinking in this ordinance, and hence that it is not for all persons. It is not a mere exhibition of the truth, as in the preaching of the word. It is a setting forth of the covenant with its seal; and those alone are entitled to communicate who are in covenant with God and cordially accept its promises and its conditions. (*b*), The worthiness does not consist in being perfectly free from sin. The table is spread for those who are still encompassed with bodies of sin and death, and who sigh for deliverance. (*c*), Nor does it consist in a strong faith. Faith which is as a grain of mustard seed, if it be indeed faith, may say to the mountain of sin, "Be thou

removed, and be thou cast into the sea," and it shall be done. The feeblest faith has its hold upon Christ, and, therefore, upon salvation; and the seals of salvation belong to it. The Lord has babes in his family as well as adults; and Christ is the food for both—milk for the one, strong meat for the other. This is an ordinance for the nourishing of the weak as well as of the strong. The father is pleased with the stammering, inarticulate speech of the child in the arms, which is not yet able distinctly to recognize its filial relation to him, as well as with the clear manly address of the full-grown son who rejoices in that relation. Given the adoption, whether clearly recognized or not, and the right to this ordinance exists. (*d*), Nor does it consist in entire freedom from doubt as to "being in Christ, or as to due preparation" for the ordinance. The *Larger Catechism* of our church says (Question 172): "One who doubteth of his being in Christ, or of his due preparation to the sacrament of the Lord's supper, may have true interest in Christ, though he is not yet assured thereof; and in God's account hath it, if he be duly affected with the apprehension of the want of it, and unfeignedly desires to be found in Christ, and to depart from iniquity; in which case (because promises are made, and this sacrament is appointed for the relief even of weak and doubting Christians) he is to bewail his unbelief, and labor to have his doubt resolved; and so doing, he may, and ought to, come to the Lord's supper, that he may be further strengthened." (See the whole of the elaborate and admirable exposition in this Catechism, Questions 168-175.) (*e*), It consists in a knowledge of the Lord's body, an ability to discern and an actual discerning of that body. (See verse 29.) The word "discern" and its related words are several times used by the apostle in this context. Thus exactly the same word occurs again in verse 31, and is rendered in our version "judge." So also the simple verb in verse 32, and the corresponding noun in verse 29 (unhappily rendered "damna-

tion" in our version, as the reading is "judgment," which is given in the margin. Compare the corresponding verb in the first clause of verse 32). The dominant idea in verses 27-32 is that of judging and discerning or discriminating. This process is twofold, so far as the determination of our right to the Lord's table is concerned: (1), A judgment as to the Lord's body (verse 29); that this feast is no common meal, at which men are to satisfy their natural hunger, much less to drink themselves drunk (see verse 21); that it is a solemn act of worship; that this body of Jesus is to be "discriminated" from every other human body that was ever made in this, that it was made for the express purpose of being offered in sacrifice to God, for expiation and propitiation. (See the exposition given in the preceding part of this article.) (2), A judgment of ourselves (verse 31, and compare verse 28 and 2 Cor. xiii. 5): "of our being in Christ; of our sins and wants; of the truth and measure of our knowledge, faith, repentance, love to God and the brethren, charity to all men; of our desires after Christ, and of our new obedience." (*Larger Catechism*, Question 171.) As the observance of the Lord's supper is a reasonable service, nothing less can be demanded of a communicant than a state of mind and heart corresponding with the truth exhibited in its elements and actions; a state of mind and heart which may be comprehensively described as one of faith. A worthy eating and drinking is an eating and drinking by faith. Faith is the mouth by which the flesh and blood of the Saviour are received. (John vi. 35, 40, 53-57; *Confession of Faith*, Chap. XXIX., Art. VII.) He must be received as he is exhibited and offered, and in no other way. If he is exhibited and offered as a perfect satisfaction to divine justice for human guilt; as an expiatory sacrifice which has met all the demands of law; as an exemplary sacrifice, also, illustrating the spirit of true obedience to the Father, a spirit of absolute self-renunciation for the glory of God and the good

of man; then, in order to be worthy communicants, it is indispensable that we should have some apprehension of the justice of God, of the malignity of our guilt as sinners, of the necessity of satisfaction; that we should have some sympathy with the spirit of Jesus, some readiness to deny ourselves for the glory of God and the good of men. He who does not feel himself to be guilty of death, and who does not long to be holy, cannot be a worthy communicant.

Saving faith in Jesus Christ receives and rests upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel. He is offered to us as our King as well as our Priest, and we cannot truly receive him without receiving him in both offices. It is a fatal error of the papacy, and of its imitators among so-called Protestants, to disregard the interests of personal holiness, and to attempt to put God off with a ceremonial service which would be despised if offered to themselves by their fellow-men. Holiness in his church is the very end and purpose for which Jesus gave his body to be broken, and no man can be said "to discern" that body who does not feel this to be true. He may not be able to formulate, after the fashion of the theologians, this and other truths set forth in the supper; but there will be a spontaneous and unreflective recognition of them. If Jesus, the holy, harmless, and undefiled one, did not die for the purpose of bringing his redeemed into the likeness of himself, then the Bible, the church, the sacraments, have all alike been given in vain. To be left to the corruption of our nature is to be left to the worm that never dies.



## WHOSE CHILDREN HAVE A RIGHT TO BAPTISM?<sup>1</sup>

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THIS is a question which our pastors are often called upon to decide in the regular course of their ministrations, and the decision must generally be made under circumstances involving a sacrifice of personal feeling on their part, and the risk of offending those to whom they are anxious to do good. The impulses of kindness or considerations of expediency are sometimes too strong, even in wise and good men, to be resisted by a simple conviction of right; and this is particularly liable to occur when, as is the case with nearly all pastors, such impulses and considerations are fortified by the recollection that they have been generously treated by the very persons to whom they ought to deny the privileges of the church. We need, therefore, to have our convictions of truth and duty confirmed, that, while we hold ourselves ready to become all things to all men, if by any means we may save some, we may yet firmly refuse, even for an hour, to resign one principle of the gospel, or prostitute any, the very least, of the ordinances of Christ. We ought to feel continually that the pastoral office is a *trust*, and, consequently, that our only concern is to be found faithful. We have no right to preach our own gospel, or administer our own ordinances, or administer God's ordinances in our own way. We are not ministers plenipotentiary, but ambassadors, with definite instructions which we dare not transcend. If we are abused by foolish men for doing our duty, and refusing to yield to their humors, let them look to it. We serve the Lord Christ, and to him alone must we finally render our account. The

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<sup>1</sup>This article appeared in the March number of the *Critic*, 1855.—Ed.

smiles of such a Master will be an ample compensation for the frowns and curses of a world.

Although the doctrine of our church in reference to the baptism of children is perfectly explicit, as explicit as words can make it, our practice has not been entirely uniform, and, we have every reason to fear, there is not an entire unanimity of opinion amongst us. The General Assembly of 1811 appointed a committee to prepare a report on the duty of the church in the instruction and discipline of her baptized children. This report was presented to the Assembly of the following year, but was not adopted by that Assembly or by any other. It is reprinted in the *Presbyterian Educational Repository*. Why it was not adopted, we suppose will be plain enough to any man who will read it. We refer to it now merely for the following enumeration of errors against which it was, among other things, designed to bear testimony. They are errors against which, we rejoice to believe, the great body of our church would bear testimony now.

“The errors to which we refer,” say the committee, “are that the right and power of handing down baptism to our children are derived from the baptism of the parent; ‘that the original guilt of baptized infants is so covered by the blood of atonement, symbolized in baptism, that its condemning power, at least with respect to baptized infants dying in infancy, is destroyed by the grace of the new covenant’; ‘that a profession of saving faith in adults is not requisite to entitle them to baptism’; ‘that a mere owning of the covenant, without a credible profession of a person’s being in the covenant, entitles him to the baptism of his children’; ‘that a child ought not to be punished by refusing baptism for the fault of its parent’; ‘that a parent’s profession is to be considered credible if his life be moral, without inquiring into his religious practice, or exacting from him a promise of obedience to all the commandments of Christ’; ‘that a per-

son may lawfully be admitted to the Lord's supper who neglects religious duties, though he may be moral in his deportment'; and 'that the sacraments are converting ordinances, intended to regenerate sinners or to procure the pardon of sins.' "

Such errors betray deplorable ignorance of the very nature of a sacrament. They spring from the tendency in our fallen nature to lose sight of the spirituality of religion and the sovereignty of the Holy Ghost in the great business of salvation, that tendency which has worked itself out in the apostate communion of Rome and made it the cage of unclean birds, the hold of every foul spirit. The consequence of this tendency, aggravated by the long and dismal reign of papal darkness, is that, with unconverted men, the sacraments are a sort of charm, and the verbal forms used in celebrating them a species of magical incantation. A horseshoe nailed over the door has much the same meaning for some grossly superstitious people that the precious seals of the covenant of God have for some educated and enlightened men. And perhaps it is not going too far to say that many intelligent Christians in our own church regard the sacraments with a sort of awe nearly allied to superstition. Why that slavish fear in approaching the feast of heavenly charity spread by a Father's hand? Why that anxiety to have a dying child baptized when no such anxiety is felt for the child in health?

It cannot, therefore, be out of place in a journal like this, devoted to the exposition and defence of scriptural Christianity, to attempt an answer to the question, "Whose children have the right to baptism?"

The doctrine of our own church upon this point is very clearly expressed in the answer to the 166th Question of the *Westminster Larger Catechism*, which is in these words: "Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible church, and so strangers from the covenant of promise, till they profess their faith in Christ and obedience

to him ; but infants descending from parents, either both or but one of them, professing faith in Christ and obedience to him, are, in that respect, within the covenant, and are to be baptized." (See, also, *Confession of Faith*, Chap. XXVIII., Sec. 4.) The only difficulty that can arise in the interpretation of this statement is as to the meaning of "faith in Christ and obedience to him." In some branches of the great Presbyterian family a credible profession of *saving* faith is not required in order to full communion in the church. It is well known how earnestly Dr. Mason, of New York, protested against the right of church sessions *to demand evidence of a change of heart*<sup>1</sup> from candidates applying for admission to the Lord's table, and the same views are held, we believe, in the churches of Scotland and Ireland. But that branch of the church to which we belong, so far as we know, has always acted upon a different view of the case, and held that the faith which qualifies for communion is that faith in Christ which is defined in the 86th Answer of the *Shorter Catechism* to be "a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel." It ought to be noted that the question is not, "What is *saving* faith?" but simply, "What is faith in Christ?" The title of the fourteenth chapter of the *Confession* is "Of Saving Faith," and the description of it is only an expansion of the answer in the *Shorter Catechism*. It is plain from the *Larger Catechism*, above cited, that the qualifications which are required for full communion of adults by their own baptism are required also to give them the right to have their children baptized; and these qualifications are "faith in Christ (as elsewhere defined) and obedience to him." Jonathan Edwards has, we think, clearly demonstrated, in his treatise on the "Qualifications for Full Com-

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<sup>1</sup> This is too strong. Dr. Mason's position was, that admission into the church depended *not* upon the *reality* of a change, but upon *credible evidence* thereof. See "Essays on the Church," No. 3.—T. E. P.

munion," that the views we are defending are the scriptural views of the matter, and we doubt not that the sympathies of our whole communion, with rare exceptions, are with him. We cannot regret the controversy which compelled him to write that able treatise; and although, for reasons which he states, he abstains from the discussion of the question before us, it is not difficult to determine what his conclusions in regard to it would have been.

It may be said that the General Assembly refused,<sup>1</sup> in 1816, to decide that "those parents who live in the constant neglect of the Lord's supper are not entitled to the right of having their children baptized." But in answer to this, it may be observed: 1, That they did not decide the contrary. 2, That the proposition, Digest, p. 330, submitted to them has very little to do with the main point, and they may have rejected it on account of its irrelevancy. 3, The proposition seems to have referred to the case only of a regular member of the church absenting himself, of his own accord, from the Lord's table, and not to baptized or unbaptized men of the world. We can conceive of cases even of actual suspension from the communion of the church in which serious doubts might arise whether the children of such suspended persons ought to be debarred the privilege of baptism; but such cases rarely, if ever, actually occur, and when they do, they are to be judged upon principles differing very materially from those which control the question as it relates to parents who have never professed "faith in Christ and obedience to him."

In 1794 the following reference from the Synod of Philadelphia was laid before the Assembly:<sup>2</sup> "As baptism is to be administered to the infants of those who are members of the visible church, but our *Directory* leaves the description

<sup>1</sup> Digest of 1820.

<sup>2</sup> See Minutes for that year, 1794, p. 91 of the volume containing Minutes 1789-1820.

of the visible and credible profession of Christianity vague and indefinite, it is humbly proposed to the Assembly to give some precise direction and definition of such a profession for the information of its ministers." In answer to this reference, the Assembly judged it unnecessary, and perhaps impracticable, to deliver rules more explicit than those contained in the standards of our church; but should cases of difficulty arise, they must be decided, respectively, according to their own merits, before the proper judicatories. Here, again, the meagreness of our ecclesiastical records leaves us in doubt as to the views really held by the Assembly. But this much is clear, that, in their judgment, whatever might be the ambiguity of the *Directory* (which is not, in the full sense, a part of the standards of the Presbyterian Church), the standards are explicit enough. And so we think.

Seeing, then, that these standards teach that the children *only* of parents, one or both, professing "faith in Christ and obedience to him" have a right to be baptized, let us inquire whether this is the teaching of Scripture. In doing so we take the liberty of saying that, in addressing the officers of our church, the argument from Scripture is *ex abundantia*, as they have solemnly acknowledged the standards to be scriptural. If any man thinks that they are not in accordance with God's word, he ought to be something else than an officer in the church which holds them.

In the New Testament baptism is nowhere recorded as having been administered without profession of "faith in Christ," or repentance from sin. These two things go together, and are, in some sort, the same act of the soul—contemplated, in the one, in its relation to the *terminus ad quem*; in the other, in its relation to the *t. a. quo*. It is a turning away *from* sin and turning *to* Christ. Hence Philip says to the eunuch, asking if he might be baptized: "If thou believest with *all thine heart*, thou mayest"; and Peter says to the multitude on the day of Pentecost, "*Repent* and be bap-

tized." (Acts viii. 36, 37; ii. 38.) "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of." (Rom. x. 9; 2 Cor. vii. 10.) This is the faith and the repentance required in order to give the right, as before God, to baptism; and a credible profession of such faith and repentance is necessary, as before the church, to warrant the administration of it. "He that *believeth* and is baptized," said the Saviour, "shall be saved." "*Repent,*" said John the Baptist to the multitude, "for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"; and "they were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." In a word, as baptism sets forth the union of the believer with Christ by the indwelling spirit of holiness, that union from which faith, repentance, and all the other manifestations of spiritual life proceed, it should seem to be the emptiest ceremony in the world without the reality or the credible profession of such an union. If this be so, then in the baptism of children who shall make the profession? The children themselves cannot do it. Nobody has a right to make it, in such a case, and children ought not to be baptized at all, say some. Anybody may do it, god-fathers and god-mothers, say others. Parents may do it, say the Scriptures and our *Confession*, if they can do it honestly. And, accordingly, we have examples of household baptisms on the profession of faith of the head of the household (see Acts xvi. 15, 33; xviii. 8), the profession of *saving* faith. Paul and Silas said to the jailer, "*Believe* on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be *saved*, and *thy house*;" and it was on the profession of such faith that "he and all his were baptized straightway." The jailer "rejoiced, *believing* in God with *all his house*." "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, *believed* on the Lord with *all his house*." We are not disputing now with Antipedo-baptists, and, therefore, shall not stop to vindicate our

view of these household baptisms as implying the baptism of children. What we insist upon is, that a profession of faith on the part of parents, either one or both, must go before the baptism of children, if such baptism is to be administered at all.

This may be argued, further, from the very nature and design of the sacraments. There can be but two theories, essentially, as to the nature of a sacrament, the one confounding in some form or other the sign and the thing signified; the other asserting their distinction and separation. In the Lord's supper, for example, there is no middle ground between popery, in some form, or Zwinglianism, in some form. There can be, in like manner, but two theories, essentially, as to the efficacy of the sacraments, the one making it to depend upon the fact of administration, *ex opere operato*; the other making it to depend on the sovereign power of the Spirit, accompanying the *truth* of which the sacrament is the sign and seal. Take away the truth signified and sealed in the sacraments, and they become unreasonable ceremonies, and our worship becomes the sacrifice of fools. Hence our Assembly decided ten years ago that Romish baptism was no baptism; not upon the ground only that the element of water was materially corrupted by the admixture of loathsome foreign ingredients, but that the *truth* constituting the form of the sacrament was utterly denied, and trampled under foot by that mother and mistress of abominations. Hence her eucharist has ceased to be "that feast of free grace and adoption to which Christ invited his disciples to sit as brethren, and co-heirs of the happy covenant, that feast of love and heavenly-admitted fellowship, the seal of filial grace"; and has become "the subject of horror and gloating admiration, pageanted about like a dreadful idol." These ordinances are monuments without an inscription, and it depends upon what we write on them whether they be true and precious memorials of God's love



to us, or, like the tower of Babel, the memorials of our rebellion against God. The truth is the grand instrument of our sanctification, the *mould* into which the soul of the believer is to run and take its shape. (John xvii. 17, 19; Rom. vi. 17, in the Greek.) And whether that truth reaches the mind through the avenue of the ear, in the preaching of the word; or through the avenue of the eye, in the symbolical elements and actions of the sacraments, it conduces not to our sanctification, unless the Spirit melts our hearts by an immediate influence of his own. The shapeless piece of metal will lie by the side of the mould and in contact with it, shapeless for ever, if nothing more be done. How, then, can the sacraments profit us, or our children, if we believe not? They cannot, any more than the eternal springs and fountains of the hills can assuage the burning thirst of the dying travellers in the desert. Why, then, should an unconverted man ask for baptism, either for himself or for his child? Are the signs of that ordinance any signs to him? Of what is the word trumpet the sign to a man born deaf? Is the seal of the covenant any seal to him when he has not yet set to his own seal that God is true? In a word, is baptism, in the case of such a man, anything more than weak superstition or wanton mockery of God? If the man knows not what he is doing, it is the first; if he does know, it is the last. In either case it is the duty of the minister not to allow, if he can help it, the ordinance of God to be profaned. Men should be taught that they are bound to believe in Christ and to confess him in order that they and their children may enjoy the privileges of the church; that they alone are to blame if their children are deprived of any; and that the same law holds in the visible church as in nature and providence; the children suffer for their parents' delinquencies. *Believe* and be baptized; *believe* and have thy house baptized.

We might argue still further from the nature of the church as an association of men established for the purpose of ac-

completing a certain end, and enjoying certain privileges. Is it not a universal rule that members only are to enjoy these privileges? What would a lodge of Free Masons say to a man who should demand any of the rights thereto pertaining, when he was not only not a member, but was habitually using his influence, silently or openly, against the whole order? What would a railway corporation say to a man who should demand the payment of a dividend or a free passage always over the road, when the man was not a stockholder? And shall the church of Christ not protect her privileges from invasion on the side of the world, in league with the prince of darkness against her? She is not purely a voluntary association; she has no power to make or alter her charter; her charter is given her of God, and in it there is no provision made for *honorary* members, entitled to enjoy the privilege of baptism and no other. If the officers of the church were firmer in maintaining her dignity and independence in this respect, her privileges would be felt to be worth having, and she would not be the poor pitiful slave and laughing-stock of men that she often is.

But a parent may say the constitution makes baptized children members of the church: I have been baptized in infancy, I have never been excommunicated, and, therefore, am a member now, and entitled to the right of having my child baptized. A great deal might be said in reply, but this is enough for our present purpose, that children who have been baptized are members of the church in a sense somewhat analogous to the sense in which they are members of the state; they are subject to law, and enjoy the fostering care of both, but they are not entitled to all the privileges of either until they become adults. Adulthood in the state is defined by law, and consists in the attainment of a certain age; adulthood in the church is also defined by law, and consists in the possession of faith, or credible evidence thereof. This view of the matter, therefore, will not help the non-

professing parent who has been baptized in infancy; it is enough, however, to alarm him about his own salvation if he will look at it. If he *is* a member of the church he has an awful account to meet for broken vows.

We had intended to say something in regard to the recklessness, to use no harsher term, of unconverted men in taking the sort of vows upon them which they are compelled to take in offering their children for baptism in our church; and in regard to the cruelty of ministers in allowing them to do it. But we conclude by exhorting our brethren to remember that corruption has generally come into the church through changes in the worship of God, and that of all the parts of worship none ought to be more strictly guarded than the seals of the covenant, designed, as they are, to be the discriminating badges of the friends and followers of Christ.

## PASTORAL LETTER ON THE OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH.

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TO THE CONGREGATIONS UNDER THE CARE OF THE PRESBYTERY  
OF BALTIMORE.<sup>1</sup>

**D**EAR BRETHREN: We, ministers and elders, in Presbytery assembled, respectfully and earnestly ask your attention to the following resolutions, adopted by the General Assembly of our church, at their sessions in Philadelphia, in May, 1853, and to some considerations which we venture to add by way of explaining, illustrating, and enforcing them. The resolutions are:

1. *Resolved*, That the proper observance of the Christian Sabbath is essential alike to the purity and progress of the church, and to the prosperity of the state. A church without the Sabbath is apostate; a people who habitually desecrate this divine institution have abandoned one of the grand foundations of social order and political freedom.

2. *Resolved*, That the General Assembly most earnestly enjoin it upon their churches, ministers, and members, both in their public and private capacity, both by their discipline and example, to sustain the strict observance of the holy Sabbath. The Assembly look upon the increasing desecration of this day, by the various modes of public conveyance, as of a most alarming character, as of a manifest abuse of the great temporal prosperity of the country, and as tending to provoke the judgments of God upon the church and the nation. So far as Christians are connected with the system of Sabbath desecration, by their ownership of stocks, or other interests in our railroad and other corporations, there can be no doubt of their duty to protest earnestly and constantly against the violation of the Sabbath, and to use all the influence of their position to arrest this growing evil.

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<sup>1</sup>The following letter was reported by a Committee of the Presbytery of Baltimore, and read before that body on the 12th of April, 1854, and, though not formally adopted, was approved by them, and the author, Mr. Peck, requested to publish it. It appeared in the April number of the *Critic*, 1855.—Ed.

That this is a seasonable testimony cannot be denied by any serious observer of the signs of the times. In the universal agitation and conflict of opinions, which is one of the most striking characteristics of the age, the great questions touching the perpetual obligation of the Sabbath institution, and the change in the day of the week, from the seventh to the first, have again been subjected to a discussion, which, though earnest and solemn, has not been more solemn than the glory of God and the prosperity of the church demanded, or more earnest than the discussions of men generally are when their interests are concerned in upholding or in destroying anything venerable for its age or influence. No ordinance of God can dread discussion; no plant of our heavenly Father's planting can ever be rooted up by the storms of controversy, and we are under no apprehension that the Sabbath, which (beside the institution of marriage) is the only flower that has been transplanted from Paradise in our fallen world, and which has survived the scorching heats and blasting winds of wickedness for so many centuries, will be done away till he comes who is the substance of all the shadows, the complement of all pledges and earnestings which have been given to the people of God, and the final rest of all who are troubled for the cause of truth and righteousness. Still, unstable souls may be led astray, and even well-instructed Christians may be reduced to perplexity and doubt, "by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive." We exhort you, therefore, to study the word of God, and especially the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in which the apostle brings out clearly the perpetual obligation of the Sabbath as a day of rest, and also the change (and nature of the change) of the day, from the seventh to the first, by showing that when the warning was given in Psalm xcvi. 11, the rest founded upon the finishing of creation (which included the observance of a particular day), and the rest founded on the deliverance of Israel out of

Egypt, which also included the observance of a particular day (Dent. v. 14, 15; and compare the same as it occurs in Exod. xx. 10, 11), had both passed away, and, consequently, there "remained still a rest" (Greek, in the margin, a "sabbatism," or "keeping of Sabbath") "for the people of God"; a rest which also included the observance of a particular day, to-wit, the day on which Jesus entered into his rest, having ceased from his own works, as God did from his. In thus studying the word of God you will find that the obligation to observe the first day of the week as a day of rest, and the consequent promises and privileges belonging to a conscientious and faithful observance of it, stand upon a foundation which cannot be shaken by the plausibilities of Christian argument, much less by the rhetoric of men to whom "gain is godliness." So shall you have boldness in the day of judgment and trial, and be able to stand before any tribunal on earth, and "give a reason for the hope that is in you."

The tide of immigration, unexampled in fulness and constancy, which is flowing into this country, invests this subject with peculiar importance to you as American Christians and American citizens. The strangers from the old world who come here are, for the most part, from Ireland and the provinces of Germany. The vast majority of the Irish emigrants are papists; and all the world knows with how little even of decent respect the apostate community of Rome has been accustomed to regard the Lord's day. It has multiplied days of its own till whole nations, subject, by the curse of God, to its dominion, have been reduced to desolation, misery, and crime, and all possible evils which can flow from ignorance and idleness; but the desecration of the Lord's own day has been tolerated with a long-suffering very remarkable in her who has drunk the blood of the saints for refusing to obey her commands. In this, as in all things else, obedience to God is eternal enmity to Rome. You, who reside in the city of Baltimore, need not be told what Rome

thinks of the Sabbath of the living God. Your eyes are shocked with their childish processions; your ears are offended, and your worship is disturbed, by their bells and bands of music, grating harshly upon that solemn quiet which ought never to be broken but by strains of heavenly melody, the sweet invitations of the gospel, or the voice of prayer. In all this they are consistent; they are not content with equal rights; they are not satisfied with the privilege of worshipping God or Mary undisturbed, but they must disturb others in their worship. They are driving us nearer, every day, to the decision of the great question which must be decided, sooner or later, whether Protestantism and liberty, or popery and despotism, shall rule this country, a decision which will not be doubtful.

In connection with the despotism of Rome, and its contempt for the Sabbath, and by way of illustrating the political tendencies of the Sabbath institution, we quote the following passage from the world-renowned "working-man," Hugh Miller. We quote the whole passage, though the whole does not bear upon this particular point: "Among the existing varieties of the *genus* philanthropist," he says, "benevolent men, bent on bettering the condition of the masses, there is a variety who would fain send out our working people to the country on Sabbaths, to become happy and innocent in smelling primroses and stringing daisies on grass-stalks. An excellent scheme, theirs, if they but knew it, for sinking a people into ignorance and brutality, for filling a country with gloomy workhouses, and the workhouses with unhappy paupers. 'Tis pity, rather, that the institution of the Sabbath, in its economic bearings, should not be better understood by the utilitarian. The problem which it furnishes is not particularly difficult, if one could be made to understand, as a first step in the process, that it is really worth solving. The mere animal, that has to pass six days of the week in hard labor, benefits greatly by a seventh day

of mere animal rest and enjoyment; the repose, according to its nature, proves of signal use to it, just because *it is* repose according to its nature. But man is not a mere animal; what is best for the ox and the ass is not best for him; and, in order to degrade him into a poor, unintellectual slave, over whom tyranny, in its caprice, may trample, rough-shod, it is but necessary to tie him down, animal-like, during his six working days, to hard, engrossing labor, and to convert the seventh into a day of frivolous, unthinking relaxation. History speaks with much emphasis on this point. The old despotic Stuarts were tolerable adepts in the art of kingcraft, and knew well what they were doing when they backed with their authority *The Book of Sports*. The merry, unthinking serfs who, early in the reign of Charles I., danced on Sabbaths round the Maypole, were afterwards the ready tools of despotism, and fought that England might be enslaved. The Ironsides who, in the cause of civil and religious freedom, bore them down, were staunch Sabbatarians.

“In no history, however, is the value of the Sabbath more strikingly represented than in that of the Scotch people during the seventeenth, and a large portion of the eighteenth, century. Religion and the Sabbath were their sole instructors, and this in times so little favorable for the cultivation of mind, so darkened by persecution, and stained with blood, that, in at least the earlier of these centuries, we derive our knowledge of the character and amount of popular intelligence mainly from the death-testimonies of our humbler martyrs, here and there corroborated by the testimony of writers such as Burnet. (*Memoirs*, Vol. I., page 431.) In these noble addresses from prison and scaffold, the composition of men drafted from oppression, almost at random, from out the general mass, we see how vigorously our Presbyterian people had learned to think, and how well to give their thinking expression. In the more quiet times which followed the Revolution, the Scottish peasantry existed



as at once the most provident and intellectual in Europe, and a moral and instructed people, pressed outwards beyond the narrow bounds of their country, and rose into offices of trust and importance in all the nations of the world. There were no societies for the diffusion of useful knowledge in those days. But the Sabbath was kept holy; it was a day from which every dissipating frivolity was excluded by a stern sense of duty. The popular mind, with weight imparted to it by its religious earnestness, and direction by the pulpit addresses of the day, expatiated on matters of grave import, of which the tendency was to concentrate and strengthen, not to scatter and weaken, the faculties; and the secular agitations of the week came to bear, in consequence, a Sabbath-day stamp of depth and solidity. The one day in seven struck the tone of the other six. Our modern apostles of popular instruction rear up no such men among the masses as were developed under the Sabbatarian system in Scotland. Their aptest pupils prove but the loquacious *gabbers* of their respective workshops—shallow superficialists, that bear on the surface of their minds a thin diffusion of ill-remembered facts and crude theories; and rarely, indeed, do we see them rising in the scale of society; they become Socialists by hundreds and Chartists by thousands, and get no higher. The disseminator of mere useful knowledge takes aim at the popular ignorance, but his inept and unscientific gunnery does not include in its calculations the parabolic curve of man's spiritual nature, and so, aiming direct at the mark, he aims too low, and the charge falls short.”<sup>1</sup>

In reference to that portion of our German population which is connected with the Church of Rome, we need add nothing, as what has already been said of the sort of reverence for the Lord's day entertained by that church admits of the same application to them. Rome has reverence for nothing but her own inventions. In this respect she is

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<sup>1</sup> *First Impressions of England, etc.*, Chap. iii.

truly, always and everywhere, and in all her votaries, the same, and always will be, till the Son of God shall destroy her "by the brightness of his coming." In reference to the Protestant portion of the German population (we allude, of course, to those who have not been long in the country), a similar want of reverence for the Lord's day must, to a great extent, be acknowledged. Whatever may have been the cause, whether the misapprehension of some of the leading Reformers in regard to the true relation of the fourth commandment to the law of Moses, and their consequent doubt as to its perpetual binding force to the end of the world—a misapprehension arising, perhaps, from some passages of the New Testament, and strengthened by the authority of some of the early writers in the church, as well as by the preposterous abuse on the part of Rome of holy days—whatever account we may give of the fact, the fact itself is unquestionable, that the Sabbath has not been held in reverence as it should have been among the churches on the continent of Europe, Lutheran and Reformed. And the case is far worse, since the formulæ and practical results of the modern pantheistic philosophy have come down to the masses of the people. Thousands who understand, and can understand, nothing of the processes of reasoning by which the startling conclusion has been reached, that every man is God, are able to perceive and feel the bearing of that conclusion upon the great questions of law, of personal immortality, of personal responsibility. Nothing can be idler than to talk to such men of moral obligation, and especially of moral obligation to observe a positive institution of God. The assembly of Germans who, a few years ago, issued their manifesto from Cleveland, and those who responded to them on this side the mountains, evidently regarded themselves as Olympian divinities, sovereign and supreme, and, therefore, subject to no law but that of their own will, and to be restrained by no bounds except those

imposed by the clashing of interests which must of necessity occur among a plurality of independent and lawless gods. It is greatly to be feared that these sentiments extensively prevail; that many of the secret associations amongst us have been organized upon the atheistic, radical, anarchical principles which, at the close of the last century, were cherished in the Jacobin clubs of Paris and the societies of the Illuminati, and finally deluged, like burning lava, the institutions and governments of Europe. The Germans of St. Louis, or a portion of them, have already protested formally against the Sabbath laws, as unconstitutional encroachments upon their civil rights; and others, in other parts of the country, if published documents can be relied on, seem to regard laws of any sort as unjust restraints upon their liberties. When such doctrines as these are unblushingly avowed, it is time that the church should utter a voice of remonstrance and protest, and say, with our General Assembly, to the world, that the "Sabbath is essential to the prosperity of the state, as well as to the purity and progress of the church," and that not only "is a church without the Sabbath apostate," but that "a people who habitually desecrate this divine institution have abandoned one of the grand foundations of social order and political freedom." No wonder is it, brethren, that the lovers of their country on these happy shores are organizing themselves to resist and roll back the foreign influence which threatens to swallow up the precious inheritance of regulated liberty left us by our fathers, and sealed and consecrated with their blood! We will have nothing to do, by the grace of God, with continental religion, or continental politics, except by our instruction and example to rebuke, and, if possible, to mend them.

As the government of this country is eminently one of law and of opinion, as contra-distinguished from military force, it is evident that public morality is of the very last importance to our safety. But in what nation has pub-

lic morality survived the degradation of the Sabbath? We have already alluded to the connection between the Sabbath and the institution of marriage, as the common and only survivors of the fall; and the experience of the world demonstrates that when the first falls into contempt, the last, which is the great bulwark of morality and social order, will share in its disgrace. The only people in Christendom who have attempted to abolish the Sabbath formally, and by law, were so far abandoned as to place a shameless strumpet upon the throne of God; and their short and melancholy reign is written in blood. If we give up the fourth commandment, which is the citadel of the first table of the law, we must soon surrender the seventh commandment, which is the citadel of the second table; all personal and public morality will be prostrate; our countrymen will become "brute-beasts, fit only to be taken and destroyed," "living in divers hurtful lusts and pleasures, hateful, and hating one another." God forbid that it should ever be said of us, as Napoleon said of the people just referred to, "Their great want is *mothers*," chaste and noble matrons, who, like Cæsar's wife, must not even be suspected, faithfully and laboriously polishing their jewels, and then, with confidence in God, giving them to their country, to adorn and bless it.

In illustration of this point, let us recur for a moment to the present condition of some parts of Germany. In a recent number of one of the leading British quarterlies, it is stated that "in Breslau, the stronghold of Silesian Lutheranism, only a third of the Protestant population are church-going, the public houses are forty times the number of places of worship, and the proportion of illegitimate births is one in four. Stettin, the chief city of Pomerania, seems now sunk to the most deplorable depth of pagan, and worse than pagan, immorality. In a population of 50,000, the church attendance is only seven per cent. The number of persons in jail has doubled since 1851, their crimes being mostly committed

under the influence of strong drink. One person in seventy lives by prostitution. The number of divorcees yearly (which the Prussian law allows) is one hundred," etc. The statistics of Paris, the royal residence of his Christian majesty, would doubtless make a more appalling commentary upon the connection of the fourth and seventh commandments. Without the public worship of God, there can be no religion. "Without the Sabbath," says Daniel Webster (Arg. in Girard case), "there can be no public worship," and where these are not, there cannot be morality. "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despightful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful." (Rom. i. 28-31.) Can we read this catalogue of the fruits of despising God, and not tremble? Be assured, brethren, no people ever robbed God of his time, or of the glory of his name, without paying for it. Remember the eagle in the fable, which stole a coal from the altar, and thereby kindled a fire in her nest, which involved herself and her young in common conflagration and ruin. "The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked; but he blesseth the habitation of the just." (Prov. iii. 33.)

We had intended to say something to you in regard to another point in the resolutions of the Assembly, the responsibility of those who own "stock or other interests in our railroad or other corporations" which violate the Sabbath, but must content ourselves with only a word or two.

There seems to be an aggravation of human guilt in the use of our iron roads and copper wires. God, in opening these fields of discovery and improvement, has added greatly

to the length of human life, if life is to be measured by the successions of the mind, instead of astronomical revolutions, has made a very large addition practically to the six days which he gave to man, while his proportion, his *one* day, remains the same, and yet men rob him of this little. Will he not avenge such a *sacrilege* as this? Remember, brethren, that an omnipresent responsibility invests you. In all relations, in every place, at all times, you are accountable to God. If you have but one share in a joint-stock company, God will look into the manner in which you have managed that trust; and a few dollars here will be but a poor compensation for the frown of your Maker on that day.

Finally, brethren, we say to you that the Sabbath is the sign of God's covenant with us. (Exod. xxxi. 13-17; Ezek. xx. 12.) It is a brilliant bow of promise upon the very darkest cloud that hangs upon the horizon of our country. So long as we observe it, so long shall the floods of popery and despotism, infidelity and anarchy, threaten us in vain. If we abandon it, or treat it with contempt, then comes merited vengeance: the opening of the windows of heaven, the breaking up of the foundations of the deep, and a shoreless ocean, engulfing all that has exalted us, and made us prosperous as a people, and the brightest hopes and anticipations of the nations of the earth.

## REVIVALS OF RELIGION.<sup>1</sup>

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THE word "revival" implies the previous existence of life; more properly, it means resuscitation or resurrection from the dead. But according to usage, and with reference to the secondary meanings of the word *life*, it means calling into active exercise a life which has become torpid or has been slumbering. Hence, it has special application to the church, not to the world outside. In Acts ii. 41 ff. we have an account of a revival in the proper sense of the word, for all the statements there concern the members of the visible church of God. What is commonly called a revival—a general religious movement among the unregenerate—was called by our fathers "an awakening." There is a sense in which such an awakening may be called a revival, to-wit, a revival of God's work (Hab. iii. 2), that work of salvation, of calling in his elect, which he has been doing from the beginning. This work seems at times, and in some places, almost to cease; the Lord seems to abandon his church and give it up to the power of Satan, as in the days of Elijah, at the crucifixion of Jesus, and in the "Dark Ages." Then comes a time of reviving, a great movement among the dry bones, and a great multitude stand up for the Lord. (Josh. xxiv. ; 1 Sam. xii. ; Judg. ii. ; 1 Chron. xxix. ; Hezekiah, Josiah, the Maccabees, Pentecost, the Wilderness, the Brethren of the Common Lot, the Reformation, the Kirk of Shotts, Northampton, the Wesleys, etc.) Great revivals have generally followed seasons of great declension, notably, in our own country, the great revival of 1740-'45.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Appeared in the January number of the *Presbyterian Quarterly*, 1888.

<sup>2</sup> See Hodge's *History of the Presbyterian Church*, Vol. II., pp. 13 ff.

They demonstrate that God does *not* forsake his church, and that the religious nature of man is indestructible.

II. The only efficient agent in producing a revival is the Holy Ghost; a revival cannot be "gotten up"; it must "come down," hence begins with prayer. (Acts ii. 1 ff.)

III. The only instrumentality to be used is the word of God, bringing the soul into contact with it by reading, preaching, singing, the sacraments, and the exercise of discipline. Error may be mingled with the truth in the course of a revival, but it is the truth alone which is the means of awakening the unconvicted and of quickening the spiritual life of believers. The truth of God is seed, and error is seed (Matt. xiii. 24-27), and each produces according to its kind. (See John xvii. 17, 19.)

IV. Questions connected with revivals :

1. *What is to be thought of "religious excitements" ?*

Answer. They are not to be indiscriminately condemned. There are excitements which destroy the balance of the soul's powers, and there are excitements which elevate and invigorate those powers while the balance is maintained. A pair of scales may be in a state of equilibrium, because both scales are empty. This may illustrate a state of indifference. Or, a weight may be put into one of them only and the other kicks the beam. This is a state of morbid excitement, and, when existing in a very high degree, a sort of frenzy or madness. Or, equal weights may be put into both scales; the pressure is increased, but the equilibrium is preserved. This may illustrate the effect of a proper religious excitement. Such an excitement does not derange the powers of the soul. Rather, they are more thoroughly *arranged*, brought nearer to their normal state, the ideal state, which has been disturbed by sin. The reason is, that the emotions in this case are the offspring of the truth, produced by the realities which are suited to move the soul. I may illustrate my meaning by what Paul says (1 Cor. xiv.) in reference to the excite-



ments attending the exercise of spiritual gifts at Corinth. As to those operations of the Spirit, he affirms that they tend to and are designed for edification; that their legitimate exercise is perfectly consistent with decency and order, and this because they do not destroy the self-control of those who have them. "The spirits of the prophets," says he, "are subject to the prophets." This mysterious energy of the Spirit by which the prophets spoke did not so excite them as to derange them. It would not do for those Christians in their public assemblies to say that they were so carried away by the Spirit, that the *afflatus* was so strong, that they could not help speaking even when others were speaking. You *must* help it, says the apostle, for God is not the author of confusion, but of decency and order; "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." The error of the Greeks, recently emerged from heathenism, was an error implied in the very word they used for prophesying, a word near akin to that by which they expressed madness. The heathen notion of inspiration was that the *afflatus* of the divinity was too much for the feeble powers of the human organ, and consequently that his powers became deranged. The New Testament never uses the Greek word alluded to of any of God's prophets. On the contrary, it teaches that no matter how strong the *afflatus* "in the very torrent, tempest, and whirlwind" of it, the subject thereof "must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness." The prophets were, indeed, sometimes overcome and prostrated by visions of God and of angels, but these were effects upon the body. Their minds were not deranged. So far is it from being true that the energy of the spirit of regeneration and of sanctification, of faith and love, of hope and joy, destroys the balance of the soul; it is, on the contrary, an energy whose principal effect is to restore that balance, and especially to restore its rights and prerogatives to the conscience, that regulative and imperial faculty of the soul.

It follows from this account of the nature of religious excitements that—

(a), No excitement is to be considered as genuine because it is uncontrollable, and this, not only for the reasons already given, but also for the reason that other sorts of excitements, notoriously not religious, that is, not the effects of the gracious operations of the Spirit, are uncontrollable also. Saul was greatly excited when he lifted up his voice and wept, and said in the presence of his own men, and of David and his men, "I have sinned," but he sinned on. Judas was greatly excited when he threw down the money and declared that he had betrayed the innocent blood, but he went and hanged himself.<sup>1</sup>

(b), No excitement is holy and genuine because the subject of it professes to have great spiritual enjoyment. (See Matt. xiii. 20; Mark vi. 20.) "Satan," says Dr. Plumer again,<sup>2</sup> "has his devices for *pleasing* the people as well as for *disgusting* them in matters of religion. What is more calculated to gratify a carnal mind than a strong delusion leading one to think himself a Christian, and yet not disturbing his lusts? Besides, man is naturally fond of frolic, and many excitements in religion are so conducted as to suit this propensity. Unconverted men have as little enmity to a religious frolic as they have to one of another sort, provided, always, that the thing is not to last too long, and that then matters are to resume their usual course, and all the parties are to be at liberty to return to their covetous practices, their selfish gratifications, their avoidance of rigid self-denial and their indulgence of sin."

(c), Religious excitements which exist only in social and public meetings, private and closet duties being neglected, are to be suspected. After due allowance has been made for the legitimate operation of the social and sympathetic part of man's nature in the matter of public worship, it may be

<sup>1</sup> Plumer's *Past. Theology*, p. 236.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 237.

said with Dr. Plumer, that "when any man or number of men can pray fervently and very earnestly in a social meeting, yet when alone have but few words or little earnestness or less power, they may know that their hearts have deceived them." (See Zech. xii. 10-14.)

(*d*), All religious excitements are to be dreaded which make men careless as to the state of their own hearts. "At no time more than in a general awakening should the extent, spirituality and holiness of the law, the unspeakable deceitfulness and wickedness of the heart, the sovereignty of God, the trying fires of the last day, the perfectly lost and helpless state of the unregenerate, and the fulness and freeness of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, be kept constantly in view by ministers, Christians, and sinners."

(*e*), A religious excitement attended by "bodily exercises" is to be dreaded. Not that these exercises are proof of the spuriousness of the excitement, but that while they are as little proof of its genuineness, they are so considered by ignorant people, and the Spirit of God is dishonored. Moreover, there is more danger of self-deception; that is, more people are in danger of deceiving themselves when these exercises attend the excitement, because, by the operation of sympathy, they spread more rapidly than the ordinary signs of emotion.<sup>1</sup> Such narrations as those of Davidson's will make every sober Christian pray against these exercises. It will not do, however, because these phenomena can all be accounted for upon natural principles, to say that there is no real presence of the regenerating and sanctifying Spirit in such scenes. They prove nothing either way, save that the nervous system is powerfully affected. The presence of the Spirit can be proved only by effects which are in harmony

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<sup>1</sup> As to the nature and varieties of these bodily exercises, see *ad nauseam*, Chap. VI. of Davidson's *History of the Presbyterian Church of Kentucky*, pp. 142 ff. As to the propagation of them by sympathy, see same, pp. 148 ff. See, also, Alexander's *Religious Experience*, pp. 77 ff.

with his own blessed nature and with his word. (John iii. 8; Gal. v. 18-24; Eph. iv. 20 and ff.) This leads us to the next question about revivals:

2. *What are the evidences that a genuine revival has taken place?*

This question may be answered in a general way by reference to such passages as those just cited. But let us take an instance of a revival known to us by God's testimony to have been genuine, and see what the effects were. (Acts ii. 37-47.)

(a), This revival began with a deep conviction of sin on the part of the professed people of God, the members of the Jewish church. A so-called revival, in which are not awakened the unconverted members of the church, including both the communicating and the non-communicating members, in which there are no "searchings of heart" and bitter bewailings of unfaithfulness on the part of the true people of God, is hardly worthy of the name. (See 2 Chronicles, chapters xxix. to xxxi., the revival under Hezekiah, especially chapter xxx., verses 7-9, 13-19. So, also, chapter xxxiv., the revival under Josiah, especially verses 23-33.)

(b), An increased attention to those duties of which *God* is the direct object, mainly his worship (Acts ii. 42), his word more valued, and the fellowship of believers in the ordinances of worship, sacraments and prayers deeper and more pronounced.

(c), A marked increase of attention to those duties of which *believers* are the direct object. (Verses 44, 45.) Liberality in giving is a good sign of a genuine revival.<sup>1</sup>

(d), An increased attention to those duties of which *the impenitent* are the direct object. (Verse 47.)

In short, a revival shows itself to be genuine by its effects

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<sup>1</sup> The statistics of the General Assembly of 1887 show that while there has been an extraordinary addition to the numbers of our church, there has been little increase in the contributions. This fact, if it be a fact, is a very painful one.

upon the *religious*, the *fraternal* and the *missionary* life of the church.<sup>1</sup> It is deplorable that even in our own branch of the church the number rather than the quality of those added to its communion should be so much regarded.

3. Another question is, Whether *the frequent occurrence of revivals is a test of the faithfulness of a minister of the gospel?*<sup>2</sup>

Some are called to sow, others to reap (John iv. 35-38); some are eminently qualified to awaken sinners, others to edify saints. The difference between sowing and reaping is strikingly illustrated in the foreign missionary work, which has been hitherto mainly a sowing work. The reaping done by Paul and Barnabas came after centuries of the preaching of Moses in the synagogues. (Acts xv. 21. See the Acts of the Apostles, *passim*.) The ingathering under the apostles in Palestine was the reaping of that which had been sown by their Lord. (Compare Acts ii. with John's Gospel, and Acts viii. 5-8 with John iv. 5-42.) Every minister is to be faithful in his place, and leave results to God, who is sovereign. (See Isaiah xlix. 5; liii. 1; Rom. ix. 15, 16; 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16.)

4. *What means are to be used for obtaining a revival and for promoting it?*<sup>3</sup>

(a), The means have been already mentioned in a general way: they are God's word and the ordinances, mainly of worship, by which the word may be more readily and impressively brought into contact with the heart and conscience. And here it is of the very last importance that we should adhere to God's commands and abstain from our own inventions. We should carefully distinguish between means that God, in his sovereignty, may use, and means that he authorizes us to use. The sudden death of some one in the

<sup>1</sup> See A. Monod's Sermon, entitled "*La Vocation de l'Eglise*."

<sup>2</sup> See Plumer's *Past. Theology*, Chap. XXI., pp. 239, 241 ff.

<sup>3</sup> See Plumer *ut supra*, Chap. XXII., pp. 244 ff.

congregation would give great emphasis to the warnings of the minister; but no one would say that it would be right in men to cause a death in such circumstances in order to make the truth impressive.<sup>1</sup>

(b), The means ordained of God are adapted to the nature of man as a rational and responsible being. The emotions which we ought to seek to awaken are the emotions which the truth has a tendency to produce; and we ought to aim at no other. The means are moral, not physical, in their nature; they operate morally, not mechanically. Hence, some kinds of preaching, praying, singing, administration of the sacraments, are better suited to obtain a revival than other kinds. The gifts of ministers vary. Some are better fitted to awaken, others to edify and comfort. Paul and Barnabas were sent out together, no doubt, because their gifts were not the same, and they were intended to complement each other. For the very same reason that God selected men and not angels to be preachers, the men themselves must not be all of the same mould, and the same man must not always be exactly like himself. One of the most significant statements concerning the great preachers above mentioned is that in Acts

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<sup>1</sup> The plea so often urged that good is done, that souls are converted by the use of such measures, is a very sorry one. The answer is easy: 1. No soul is converted except by the power of God, and in pursuance of his decree of election. No man can convert a soul whom God does not choose to convert. 2. It is the very plea by which many corruptions were introduced into the church in the third and fourth centuries. Some of the heathen were brought in and converted, but what multitudes were ultimately destroyed! The venerable Dr. John H. Rice, of Virginia, in a letter to Dr. Archibald Alexander, dated March 4, 1828, says: "He (Mr. Nettleton) affirms that wherever these measures have been tried they have run down any revival that may have occurred, have divided the church, and put the judgment and feelings of all that have not been brought in utterly against religion. From the little that I saw, I would say that if good is done by these irregular means, it is done at a frightful expense. *It is like slaying hundreds to save one.*" (See Dr. Maxwell's *Memoir of Rice*, p. 338.)

xiv. 1: "It came to pass in Iconium, that they *so* spake that a great multitude, both of the Jews and also of the Greeks, believed." The result was due, in part, to their manner of speech, the matter being the same gospel which they preached everywhere. The man of doctrine and the man of "consolation" (*παράκλησις*) both surpassed themselves on that occasion.

The odious distinction, however, between ministers, indicated by the use of the phrases "revival men," or "revivalists," in application to some of them and not to others, ought never to be made. "If a revival man," says the great preacher whom we have several times quoted, "is one who loves to see hearts broken in view of the cross of Christ and labors to that end, then all converted ministers, not in a back-slidden state, are revival men. If by this distinction it is intended to designate those only who have frequent and precious seasons of refreshing, it is a wrong use of the words, for many whose ministry is exceedingly blessed are never so called. Neither can a desire to witness a day of God's power, nor soundness of evangelical views, nor earnestness in publishing the gospel, nor solid and lasting success in the ministry, be pleaded as exclusively belonging to those who regard themselves as the peculiar friends of revivals." So much as to the *manner* of dispensing the word and ordinances.

As to the *matter*, the presentation of certain doctrines of the word is better suited to obtain a revival than that of others. (See the Acts of the Apostles.) The reading of the genealogies in the first chapters of 1 Chronicles, Hermann Melville relates, was the means of awakening a careless sinner on one occasion; but nobody would say that such a passage is as well suited to alarm and awaken as that in John iii. 1 ff, or that in Mark ix. 43-50, and a multitude of others that might be named. The preaching which presents "the three R's," as they were quaintly called by Rowland Hill—

Ruin by sin, Redemption by Christ, Regeneration by the Spirit—is the best suited for revival, because it is the preaching of the very core and marrow of the word. (1 Cor. i. 17-31; ii. 1-5; Matt. iii. 1-12.) Let us guard against imagining that preaching to believers, dwelling upon their privileges and hopes, their temptations and perils, is not suited for revival work. Dr. Nathan L. Rice, of Kentucky, who was eminently blessed in this kind of work, is reported to have always begun a “protracted meeting” by preaching a series of sermons to believers.

It is impracticable and unnecessary to go into details upon these matters. Within the limits just stated, there is great room for variety in the forms of presenting the truth; and this variety will be determined by the circumstances of cases and the judgment of the workman who has been taught by the Spirit rightly to divide the word of truth. The *Memoirs* of Dr. Nettleton contain many specimens of this variety in the mode of presenting truth both in public and in private.<sup>1</sup>

#### UNAUTHORIZED MEANS.

These are used in various degrees of offensiveness, often with circumstances of irreverence and indecency. In the time of Finney, the Pelagian revivalist, they were called “new measures,” and later they have gone by the appropriate

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<sup>1</sup> The mention of Dr. Nettleton prompts the writer to add that the name of that great “revivalist” has been egregiously abused to sanction the use of “new measures,” or “revival machinery.” The truth is, he abhorred these things and wrote against them. Finney, the Pelagian, was the great worker and defender of that machinery in his day, and Nettleton was his antagonist. (See Finney's *Autobiography*, c. 1 c.) The writer was informed by a venerable minister who was an attendant upon the ministry of Dr. Nettleton in Prince Edward county, Virginia, in 1828, that Dr. Nettleton would not even hold “inquiry meetings” until the increase of the work made it impracticable any longer to see inquirers privately. (See Dr. John H. Rice's remarks as to Nettleton's opinion, quoted in the note on a preceding page.)



name of "revival machinery." They embrace all those measures, over and above the means which God himself has appointed, which have been invented by "evangelists" or "revival preachers" for the purpose of awakening careless sinners, such as "the anxious seat," the "altar," to which "mourners" are invited in order to be specially prayed for; the reading of letters (which, perhaps, have been procured by solicitation) from young converts or from inquirers; "silent prayer" of the congregation; the calling on certain classes in the congregation to arise and separate themselves from the rest; the roaming over the assembly of certain persons for the purpose of making appeals to individuals and of producing excitement by mere motion; the calling upon certain descriptions of people in the audience to sing certain hymns, and the requiring of the rest not to sing; the demand for unusual postures in parts of the worship, as, for example, kneeling in singing, etc., etc.

There is one feature which is common to all "revival machinery," and this is, to lead awakened sinners to *commit themselves* in order to get them over that indecision and fear of man which have kept them back, and to render it impossible for them to return with consistency. The measures used for bringing about this commitment are various. Some of them were described in the last paragraph. To these may be added the exacting of a promise "to give themselves to religion at once." These measures, as has been suggested, while they are intended to commit the actors, are intended also to awaken the attention of others, and to serve as means of general impressions.

Now some of the objections to this machinery are the following:

(a), They lead to a reliance on other means than truth and prayer, and on other power than that of God. Sinners are very apt to place dependence on this act of commitment. "I have taken one step, and now I hope God will do some-

thing for me," "is language which," Dr. Griffin says, "I have heard more than once."<sup>1</sup>

(b), These measures divert the attention of the sinner from the truth of God as impressed upon his own conscience. Dr. Ichabod Spencer remarks in his *Pastor's Sketches* (we quote from memory) that he never knew anybody to be converted by a funeral sermon, and he accounts for it by the fact that those who are really afflicted by the death are too much absorbed in the contemplation of their loss to attend to the truth which is set forth by the preacher. So in this case, the sinner is not allowed to meditate upon the truth he has just heard, but his attention is called away by a proposition to change his seat. So, also, the congregation is invited to cease meditating upon the truth and to watch the motions of some who are walking up and down the aisles, or to be on the tip-toe of expectation to see who are going to rise and go forward. What has truth to do with these tactics? They are evidently designed to work on the senses, the imagination and the passions; they are merely for effect.<sup>2</sup>

(c), Hence, when often repeated they become mere forms, like those of Rome. Rome ascribes a magical or a mechanical effect to her sacramental forms; a like effect is virtually ascribed to this revival machinery. In both cases the sinner is invited to submit himself to the manipulations of the min-

<sup>1</sup> See his letter in the appendix to Dr. Sprague's *Lectures on Revivals*. In the same appendix may be found twenty-three letters from the most eminent and venerable ministers of the time, of different denominations, such as Archibald Alexander, Francis Wayland, Samuel Miller, Edward Payson, Bishop McIlvaine, Ashbel Green, Moses Waddel, Thomas De Witt, *et al.*, and showing a significant agreement of views as against "the new measures." He would be a bold man who should venture to set up his opinion against such an array. Dr. Sprague's book was published in 1833.

<sup>2</sup> On the "anxious seat" and the principle of public "commitment," see remarks (Dr. Chas. Hodge's?) in *Princeton Theological Essays*, second series, pp. 122 ff., and Dr. Samuel Miller's letter in the appendix to *Sprague on Revivals*, pp. 261 ff.

ister of religion with the hope of "getting through," and it is no breach of charity to add that in both cases the Christians who are made are man-made and machine-made.

There is another point of resemblance. In the case neither of the priest nor of the "revivalist" is there any necessity for spiritual gifts, for a spiritual frame of mind, or for piety, or anything, indeed, but the power of physical endurance—and *brass*. We do not deny that some of these measures have been used by good men, and with an earnest desire to do good; but there is nothing in their own nature which forbids their being used with effect by men who have not one spark of genuine piety. Accordingly, we find that they have been successfully used by wicked men and hypocrites. The Roman priest performs the ceremonies of the ritual, and the business is done. The character of the priest has nothing to do with the efficiency of the ritual. Whether he be a Hophni or a Zadok makes no difference in the result. The recipient or patient "gets through" alike in either case.

(*d*), This suggests another thought, that these measures most naturally affiliate with a Pelagian or semi-Pelagian system of doctrine. The mummeries of Rome have an intimate connection with the semi-Pelagian position of that body. It is not a question of vital importance which of the two was first in the order of time, the abuse in practice or the error in doctrine. If both belong to the same organism it matters not whether the head or the foot came in first. It is enough for us to know that the head and the foot are members of the same body, and that if the one be admitted the other will be apt to follow in due time. No such ordinance as that which the papists call baptism could have a prominent place in a body which was not at least semi-Pelagian in doctrine. And so it may be truly said that the machinery in question is thoroughly semi-Pelagian in its affinities. It was introduced in modern times by churches of that doctrinal tendency; it was worked *con amore* by the Pelagianizing party

in the Presbyterian Church in the years preceding the schism of 1837, and if not condemned again and put down it will bring on another semi-Pelagian schism or something worse. It is altogether out of harmony with the doctrine of our church concerning the agency of the Holy Ghost in regeneration. One or the other must, in the long run, be given up.

The connection here asserted between Pelagianism and the use of revival machinery is fully vindicated by the history of the famous revivalist, Charles G. Finney. In a review of his sermons in the *Princeton Review* for 1835 (republished in the *Princeton Theological Essays*, second series, pp. 77 ff.), it was shown that he denied the doctrines of total depravity, of regeneration (in the Calvinistic sense), of the direct agency of the Holy Ghost upon the soul, etc.; that he held to the notion of the "self-determining power of the will," and to the related doctrine of sin and holiness as consisting in volitions only, etc., etc. He asserted the perfect, unqualified ability of the sinner to regenerate himself. (Pp. 103 ff.) The great aim and effort of the preacher is to persuade the sinner to convict himself. Hence the use of extra measures. He says (page 83), "God has found it *necessary to take advantage* of the excitability there is in mankind to produce powerful excitements among them before he *can* lead them to obey." "There is a state of things in which it is *impossible for God* or man to promote religion but by painful excitement."

(e), The use of this machinery brings a multitude of unconverted people into the church who would not otherwise come into it. The appeal is made to mere natural sensibilities and sympathies; people, especially the young, honestly mistake this natural feeling and mere impressions on the imagination for religious conviction, or for the sentiments which result from religious convictions, and without time for testing their sentiments and for manifesting their real nature and origin, they are hurried into the church, and assume the

irrevocable vow. A few months are sufficient to reveal the fact of self-deception to a multitude of these "converts"; but they are in the church; they commit, the greater part of them, no "offence" to warrant their excommunication; and they remain in the church, while they are of the world. Hence another fruitful source of apostasy from the faith. By the terms of the supposition, such church members have no spiritual relish for the distinctive truths of the gospel; in particular, there is nothing in them which says "amen" to the teachings of God's word concerning the desperate power and malignity of sin, and concerning the almighty and sovereign power of the Holy Ghost. The real problem of sin has never been anxiously revolved by them, and they are, consequently, unable to appreciate the Bible soteriology, whether of the Son or of the Spirit. Now, as a spiritual experience of the power and reality of the truth is the only security for its preservation; as it is the presence of the invisible church within the body of the church visible which determines and perpetuates the faith,<sup>1</sup> it is plain that the church in which the greater part is unconverted is in danger of losing its faith. The world in the church! this is the great peril. This is doing more to help the cause of Rome and of infidelity than all the crafty books that are circulated in their interest. This is the peril against which the church has been warned from the very beginning; and it is a peril into which the use of revival machinery is aiding to plunge us.

(*f*), There is an argument *ad hominem* which may be addressed to Presbyterians in our own churches, and which ought to be conclusive with them against these "measures," even if they are not convinced that the measures are in themselves wrong, and that is, that they are a clear addition to the covenant which has been made with one another by

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<sup>1</sup> See this point ably illustrated in the discourse delivered by Dr. Lattimer on the occasion of his inauguration as Professor of Church History and Polity in Union Seminary in Virginia.

the congregations constituting "the Presbyterian Church in the United States." This covenant is contained in our standards. We have agreed as to what "the ordinances in a particular church" shall be (*Form of Government*, Chapter II., Section IV., Article V.), and in the *Directory for Worship* the features of the worship to be observed in all our congregations are described. No congregation has the right to introduce any other form of worship, and at the same time to remain a constituent part of that church to which these standards belong. It is not improbable that many machinery-using churches in our communion would be scandalized by the introduction into our non-machinery-using churches of a liturgy. But why should they? The covenant is violated, it is true; but the machinery has also broken it. We do not hesitate to say that, if the covenant has to be broken in one way or the other, we should consider the breach by liturgy much the less offensive and dangerous of the two.

(g), This part of the discussion may be appropriately closed by a testimony or two of the General Assembly. There are many testimonies of this sort, as may be seen by consulting *Baird's Digest*, Book III., Part 4, which bears the title, "Revivals." We shall content ourselves with a quotation or summary from the pastoral letter of the Assembly of 1832, of which the venerable James Hoge was Moderator:

"1. In a time of the revival of religion let it be remembered, that while all proper means are to be used to deepen and cherish serious impressions and to awaken and alarm the sinfully secure, *an undue excitement should be carefully avoided*. If instead of distinguishing between deep and genuine and salutary convictions of sin, and the mere effusions of animal passions and nervous sensibility, the latter are encouraged and stimulated, as leading to a desirable issue, the most baneful effects are likely to ensue, effects multiform in appearance and character, but in all, deplorable and pernicious. Therefore, 2. We advise, that with tender-

ness, but yet with unshaken firmness, all bodily agitations and noisy outcries, especially in worshipping assemblies, be discouraged, and as far as possible prevented. 3. Guard against every species of *indecorum in social worship*, such, particularly, as is manifestly apparent when several individuals pray or exhort or converse at the same time. 6. *Let not the settled order of churches be disturbed.* In the absence of pastors or other authorized ministers of the gospel, let the elders or deacons or other Christians of standing and experience, rather than young converts, take the lead in the social exercises of religion. 7. *Listen to no self-sent or irregular preachers*, whatever may be their pretensions to knowledge, piety and zeal. 8. Let no doctrine inconsistent with the Scriptures as explained and summarily taught in *the doctrinal standards of our church* be promulgated and favored in any of our churches. 9. *Let not apparent converts be hurried into the churches*, and brought to the Lord's table, without a careful examination; nor, ordinarily, without a suitable period of probation, by which the reality of their religion may be better judged of than it can be by any sudden indications, however plausible. Nothing is more directly calculated to injure the cause of God and the credit of our holy religion than *urging or permitting individuals to make a public profession of religion* as soon as they have experienced some serious impressions, and flatter themselves that they have been renewed in the temper of their mind. All experience shows that such persons often and speedily dishonor the profession, and not unfrequently become open apostates, and sometimes avowed infidels. 10. Finally, *let no measures for the promotion of religious revivals* be adopted which are not sanctioned by some example or precept, or fair and sober inference, drawn from the word of God. . . . If such a warrant can be fairly made out, let the measure be adopted; but otherwise, let it be promptly abandoned; for it must be remembered that the Bible contains not

only a *safe* but a *complete* rule of duty." The italics in this extract are in the original as printed in the *Digest*. (Ed. Phila. 1885, pp. 199 ff.)

The opinions of the most eminent ministers of the past generation, as given in the appendix to Sprague's *Lectures on Revivals*, are in the same line with these testimonies of the Assembly of 1832; but we must content ourselves with a simple reference to that work. Under these testimonies and opinions we shelter ourselves from those, if there be any, of our readers who are disposed to charge us, on the ground of the views we have expressed, with being hostile to revivals and to vital piety. The same charge was brought against our fathers, men with whom we would not venture to compare ourselves for a single moment as to knowledge or piety.

A few words may be added upon the danger to the peace and character of the church from so-called "evangelists." Our history is instructive upon this subject. The schism of 1741 was occasioned, in great part, by the excesses and extravagances of itinerating ministers who, instead of preaching in destitute neighborhoods, invaded the pastoral charges of settled ministers, often without their consent, or with a consent extorted by the clamors of the people. The greatest contempt was shown for these settled ministers, no matter how long or how faithfully they had labored, if they had not been what the evangelists were pleased to consider "successful." They were treated as "blind leaders of the blind," cold-hearted, unconverted; and their people were not only encouraged, but exhorted, to forsake their ministrations for those of warm-hearted, zealous, inspired evangelists. These evangelists were generally good men; among them such as Whitefield and the Tennents; but this fact made the results all the more deplorable. (See Hodge's *History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States*, Part II., Chapters IV. and V.)



Another great evil which resulted from the same causes was the lowering or attempt to lower the standard of the education of the ministry, and the encouragement of the laity to usurp the functions of the ministry. These two things go hand in hand, as we see, now in our own modern times. If preaching is nothing but exhorting sinners to flee from the wrath to come, why may not an uneducated, zealous layman do it as well as a trained and ordained minister?<sup>1</sup> Thus the order of Christ's house was broken down, and but for the faithful testimony and labors of the noble men who were stigmatized as "graceless and unconverted" (see the extraordinary sermon of Gilbert Tennent, in Hodge's *History of the Presbyterian Church*, Part II., pp. 152 ff), the Presbyterian Church would have been ruined. Let it be added, with thanksgiving to God, that some of these good but erring men afterwards confessed their error and deplored their uncharitable judgments and speeches.

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<sup>1</sup>History repeats itself. Carolostadt, the contemporary and friend of Luther, denounced human learning as useless, if not injurious, to the student of Scripture; went into the shops of the lowest mechanics and consulted them about the meaning of difficult places in the Bible; insisted that ministers ought not to study, but to support themselves by the labor of their own hands; persuaded the students of the Wittemberg University to abandon their studies, and even the boys in the lower schools to throw aside their books, and enter immediately upon the business of religious teaching. Carolostadt persevered in his unhappy course for years, and though he afterwards came, in great measure, to his senses, acknowledged his fault, and professed to mourn over it, still, the cause of truth had been dishonored, and incalculable mischief done, which it was impossible to recall. See the admirable letter of Dr. Samuel Miller in the appendix to Sprague's book before cited, pp. 248 ff. Well might Baxter say, "The word of God is divine, but our mode of dispensing it is human, and there is scarcely anything we have the handling of but we leave on it the prints of our fingers."

## ASCETICISM.<sup>1</sup>

THE word is derived from the Greek *ασκεῖν*, to exercise, to strengthen, and was applied by the Greeks to denote the kind of exercise by which the athletes in the national games were fitted for the various contests of agility or strength. Hence Hesychius gives *γυμνάζεσθαι* as the equivalent of *ἀσχεῖν*. So, also, Suidas has *ἐγχερατεία* as the synonym of *ἀσχεσις*.<sup>2</sup> Hence Christians were called by the Greek fathers *ἀθληταί*. The idea was derived from the Scriptures: "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery (*ὁ ἀγωνιζόμενος*) is temperate (*ἐγχερατεύεται*) in all things." (1 Cor. ix. 24, 25.) So Paul: "I exercise myself (*ἀσχω*) to have a conscience void of offence toward God and man." (Acts xxiv. 16.) It is the idea which lies at the foundation of a Christian profession, the idea of a self-denying discipline, without which the world, the flesh, and the devil cannot be overcome. In this sense of the word, all Christians from the first considered themselves *ascetics*. The warning of their Master was ever ringing in their ears: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it." The promise is ever "to him that *overcometh*," whether it be addressed to a member of the church of Smyrna, in which grace seemed to triumph over all evil, or to a member of the church of Laodicea, in which evil seemed to triumph over grace. Conflict

<sup>1</sup> Appeared in the July number of *The Southern Presbyterian Review*, 1880.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> See Suidas's *Thesaurus*, *sub verb.*

was the law of the Christian's life, and he soared, like the eagle, by the very resistance opposed to the stroke of his pinion.

In the course of time, however, the denomination of ascetics came to be restricted to a certain class of Christians, superior to the mass of their brethren by the rigor with which they renounced the world and its pleasures. Christians of this class did not at first withdraw themselves entirely from society. Like the Nazarites among the Jews, they moved familiarly among their people, though specially consecrated to God. No higher standard of consecration was proposed for them, either by themselves or by others, than for their brethren. The moral law, as interpreted in the gospel, was the perfect standard for all. The difference between the ascetics and the rest consisted in the degrees of labor and of self-denial with which they aimed to realize the common ideal or to reach conformity to the common standard.

But it was one manifestation of the power of the reaction of heathenism in the Christian church, that the aristocratic idea again obtruded itself upon a religion which was designed to be popular in its character and to constitute a universal priesthood of believers. The truths of Christianity were not abstract ideas, which only trained and disciplined intellects could apprehend, but facts and explanations of facts revealed upon the testimony of God. The facts could be apprehended by the plainest understanding, by any understanding capable of receiving a testimony. The explanations of the facts could be received by the most enlightened only by the teaching of the Holy Ghost, and, with that teaching, they could be received by the most unenlightened. The duties of Christianity were binding upon all, according to their several relations. But a distinction began to be made between *πίστις* and *γνώσις* with reference to the truths, and between *præcepta* and *consilia* with reference to the practical

life. The Gnostics, who made the most of these distinctions, divided mankind into three classes: the "spiritual," the "psychical," and the "hylic," or "somatical"—the men of the spirit, the men of the soul, and the men of the body or flesh. The *gnosis* and the *counsels* belonged to the men of the spirit; the *pistis* and the *precepts* to the class next below, the men of the soul. We may note here, in passing, the close connection between the understanding and the active powers. A difference in the mode of knowing or apprehending carried with it a difference in the rule of duty: *pistis* and *precept*, *gnosis* and *counsel*.

This distinction between precepts and counsels may have originated in a misapprehension of certain passages of Scripture, as, for example, the famous passage which Origen, in opposition to his whole theory of interpretation, interpreted literally (Matt. xix. 12), and the other passage in the same chapter (verse 21), which the papacy quotes in support of its doctrine of supererogatory works. (See also 1 Cor. vii. 6, 25, 40; Luke xvii. 10; Luke xiv. 26 *et seq.*) But, as Whately admonishes us in regard to papal errors generally, we must guard against the mistake of supposing that those errors originated even in a false interpretation of Scripture. They were, for the most part, the inventions of men, instigated by the father of lies, and some color of support was sought for them in Scripture. It is a palpable abuse of these passages and of the moral law. Such statements proceed upon the supposition of a difference between duty *in abstracto* and duty *in concreto*, a difference the poles apart from the distinction between *precepts* and *counsels*. Duty is determined by relations and conditions. The moral law requires perfect love both to God and man, but as to the mode in which that love is to be manifested, that must be determined by relations and providential conditions. In its essence, as the law of love, the Decalogue is binding upon all the subjects of God's moral government, whether angels or men; but it de-

termines some duties for men which are no duties for angels, and some duties for some men which are no duties for other men. There can be, however, no *adiaphora* in morals. A man cannot be more than *wholly* consecrated to God, but whether a married or single state is necessary to this whole consecration must be determined by the condition of individuals. It is as much the duty of a few to remain single as it is the duty of the many to be married.

Upon this distinction, as has already been hinted, of precepts and counsels, the scientific construction of the doctrine of "*opera supererogativa*" has in part proceeded, as also the monastic vows of "chastity, poverty and obedience," which are named as the chief of the twelve counsels of Christ (*præcipua et substantialia perfectionis consilia*). If a man can do more than his duty, then the superfluous or supererogatory merit may be set down to the account of somebody else. This doctrine is defended by some modern Romanists of great reputation.<sup>1</sup>

Another error of the ancient asceticism was the confounding of the opposition of the flesh and the spirit, as it is found in Paul's epistles, with the opposition of matter and spirit as propounded in the Oriental and Greek philosophy. The Scriptures give no countenance at all to this dualism of the philosophers, so far as it involves the doctrine of the essential depravity of matter. They pronounce the material as well as the spiritual works of God *good*, and the bodies as well as the souls of believers are called the temples of the Holy Ghost. The resurrection of the body as well as its original creation, to say nothing of the incarnation of the Son of God, are directly in the teeth of this antagonistic dualism. The Gnostics, holding the dualism, consistently denied the incarnation and the resurrection. But while the church manfully fought and conquered Gnosticism, and bruised its head, yet it was itself wounded in the heel, and

<sup>1</sup> See article entitled "*Consilia Evangelica*" in Hertzog's *Encyclopædia*.

seduced into the error of the inherent depravity of matter. There was, indeed, no formal, much less any dogmatic, substitution of the metaphysical dualism of spirit and matter for the ethical conflict of the spirit and the flesh; but there can be no reasonable doubt that the former species of dualism was practically received and acted upon to no inconsiderable extent. The body as such was practically treated as "a body of sin" in a sense very different from that of the apostle. When he speaks of "the body of sin," he means the *whole* "old man," manifesting its nature and power through the body and its organs as its servitors; in like manner as when he speaks of the consecration of the whole person under the dominion of the "new man," he speaks of it as the presenting of the body a living sacrifice to God. Pride, envy, malice, hypocrisy, are qualities of this body of sin, albeit they are undoubtedly sins of the spirit. "Flesh" with him is the whole man infected with sin; "spirit" with him is the whole man endowed with the Holy Ghost, and under the dominion of the Holy Ghost. "To crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts" is not to crucify the material body, but to crucify "the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts." The body is not to be abused and destroyed, but to be kept under and brought into subjection (1 Cor. ix. 27), and thereby made a nimbler servitor of the heroic spirit. This was the asceticism of the Greek athlete, with which Paul compares his own. We are to glorify God in our bodies, which are his, his temples.

The error upon which we have been commenting was a fatal one. If sin is a thing of the body, holiness is also a thing of the body. The ultimate result is a religion such as is seen in Rome, a religion of bodily exercise which professes to war against the flesh, with its "touch not, taste not, handle not," while, as the apostle warns us (Colossians), it is only a dishonorable "satisfying of the flesh." Such a religion is pleasing to the sinner, flattering to his pride and in-

dolence, allowing him to rejoice in the reputation of humility, while he is "vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind." He finds it much easier to abstain from flesh on Friday than from malice, envy, and all uncharitableness on that or any other day of the week. It is an easier religion than Christ's, and will always be popular so long as men desire to be religious without forsaking their sins. They will continue to strain out gnats and swallow camels, until they learn that the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, nor abstinence from both, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Asceticism further had in it, beside the metaphysical theory of dualism, another speculative element, an element which lay, in fact, at the foundation of the theory of dualism. Dualism cannot satisfy the speculative intellect which, from its very nature; seeks after unity; and this unity more rational thinkers have generally supposed, both in ancient and in modern times, they have found in *being*, either metaphysically or logically considered, *i. e.*, either as an existing monad which physically embraces all possible existence (the *Ens Realissimum*), or as the logical absolute and infinite, the "*Ultima Thule*" of the reason (the *Genus Generalissimum*), which may be predicated of everything, but which itself has no predicates, which is, therefore, logically considered, at once everything and nothing—God = 0—pure being, or pure intelligence.<sup>1</sup> The irresistible tendency in pure speculation to this result, to pantheism, either in its idealistic or in its materialistic phase, is painfully evident in the doctrine of causation as expounded by Sir William Hamilton, and in his application of it to the idea of motion. Being, which can neither be increased nor diminished, but only developed, modified, etc.—this is the last and highest result. Truly he has given us a mournful illustration and proof of "the impotence of the reason." Asceticism is a characteristic of the

<sup>1</sup> See Thornwell's *Coll. Writings*, Vol. I., pp. 535, 536; Müller's *Christian Doctrine of Sin*, Introduction.

two most widespread religions of Eastern Asia, Brahmanism and Buddhism; and both these religions are Pantheistic and mystic. According to some authorities, Brahmanism is a materialistic, Buddhism an idealistic, Pantheism. Others think<sup>1</sup> that they are both idealistic, Buddhism being a reformed or purified Brahmanism; both making the supreme unity to be intelligence, and the supreme perfection of man to consist in absorption into this intelligence, or identification with it; both making release from the bonds of matter the chief part of the process of purification, with this difference, that Buddhism is popular and universal, Brahmanism is aristocratic, and by its *caste* makes it impossible for the lower sort of men ever to be made perfect. But in both *contemplation*, the gazing upon the absolute until the soul becomes identified with it, is the organon of improvement. The senses are to be denied and the material world is to be shut out in order to give the soul a chance for perfection. Mosheim ascribes the asceticism of Egypt in a great measure to the prevalence of a similar philosophy. Without doubt this was the prevailing philosophy in the monasteries of the Middle Ages. The reign of realism is one evidence of this, and the influence of the Neo-Platonic writings of the Pseudo-Dionysius is another. The speculations of Philo Judæus and Ammonius Saccas differ very little from those of the mediæval mystics,<sup>2</sup> and both resemble in a very remarkable degree the speculations of the Brahmins and the Buddhists. They all savor strongly of Pantheism, and therefore of self-worship, of self absorbed or transformed into God. One inevitable result of such views is intolerable pride and arrogance, qualities in which it is difficult to determine whether bonzes and fakirs have surpassed Christian monks and hermits.

The only Greek philosophers whose followers have exhibited a tendency to asceticism are Pythagoras and Plato,

<sup>1</sup> Maurice's *Religions of the World*—the Boyle Lecture for 1846.

<sup>2</sup> Mosheim: *De Rebus Christ, ante Const.*, Cent. II., Sec. 35.



whose systems partook largely of oriental elements. But these systems were never, for any great length of time, popular among the Greeks proper. They were so utterly foreign from the temper, the social and political life of that mercurial and versatile people, that Pythagoras was compelled to seek a home in Magna Græcia, and Platonism found full scope only in semi-oriental Egypt. Diogenes and the Cynics were not ascetics in the proper sense; and Diogenes "pitched his tub," not in the wilderness, but in the Agora, amidst "the busy hum of men." Indeed, it may be affirmed of Plato himself that he was too much of a Greek, with all his dreamy oriental imagination, to be controlled by his theoretic dualism. While in his *Timæus* he shows a predilection for the cosmogonical speculations of Asia, and a tendency to recede to the position of Thales and Xenophanes, from which thinking he had been recalled by his master, Socrates, yet in his republic his idealism is, as it were, confined to earth. "Even his religion," says Milman,<sup>1</sup> "though of much sublimer cast than the popular superstition, was yet considered chiefly in its practical operation on the welfare of the state."

"In Rome," says the same author, "the general tendency of the national mind was still more essentially public and practical." "Under the republic philosophy was a recreation in the intervals of business. Under the empire they took refuge in philosophy from the degradation and inactivity of servitude, still hoping to be summoned again from a retirement without dignity to public life. The philosophic Seneca, who talks with the mortified piety of an anchorite, lived and died the votary and victim of court intrigue. The Thræseas stood aloof, not in ecstatic meditation on the primal Author of Being, but on the departed liberties of Rome; their soul aspired no higher than to unite itself with the ancient genius of the republic."

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<sup>1</sup> *Hist. of Christianity*, Bk. 2, Chap. 5, p. 39, Vol. II. of Murray's Lond. Ed., 1867.

Another error of asceticism was the overlooking of the social nature of man, and its final cause in his constitution. The ascetic was right, on the side of individualism, in regarding his own improvement and perfection as one of the ends of his creation, and, next to the glory of God, his highest end; but he overlooked the fact that society is the sphere, and the only sphere, in which his perfection can be attained. It is a striking fact that asceticism should have been so rapidly developed after the "Catholic doctrine" of the external unity of the church was established. It looks like a counterpoise of the doctrine which makes the church everything and the individual nothing, that there should be a doctrine which makes the individual of so great consequence as to justify him in leaving the corporation altogether and insulating himself for his own salvation. It is hard to say which of these extremes is the most pernicious. The Scriptures, in this as in other things, respect and preserve all that is truly natural and original in man. They make salvation a personal concern of every man, and yet make the church the instrument of teaching him salvation, and of training him, by the exercise of his graces, for the good of his brethren. But the voice of outraged nature will be heard sooner or later; and these very people who retired to the deserts for the purpose of avoiding society, not only formed associations among themselves, but associations which ultimately became so potent as completely to swallow up the individuality of their members. The monastic vow of "obedience" (that is, obedience to the head of the association) practically absolved him who took it, not only from all obligation to obey any other man than the head of the society, but even from the obligation to obey the Head of the church itself. The great wheel of the church was often embarrassed, in its motions, by these smaller wheels within it. It must be borne in mind, however, that what has just been said is true of asceticism, not in its earliest stages, but only in its later, the stage of monasteries, congregations, and orders.

The circumstances which have been thus far mentioned would not be sufficient to account for such a gross perversion of Christianity as we have seen asceticism to be. They are circumstances which attended and promoted the thing, rather than circumstances which gave rise to it. The root of evil is to be found in man's dependence upon his own righteousness and strength for salvation, rather than upon the righteousness of Christ and the grace of the Holy Ghost. This is the evil against which the whole gospel scheme is a protest. Now, when men are ignorant of God's righteousness and go about to establish their own righteousness, they almost universally adopt some system of bodily exercise by which to justify and sanctify themselves. If they take the moral law for their rule, in all its comprehensive spirituality, they will speedily discover that it can only reveal and condemn transgression; that they cannot love God and their neighbor as they ought; and failing in this love, that they are condemned. They must invent a law for themselves which they are *able* to keep; and, from the nature of the case, it will be a law of the flesh and not of the spirit. When asceticism passed into monasticism, religion was no longer "a worshipping God in the spirit, trusting in Jesus, and having no confidence in the flesh," but the reverse of all this. We do not, of course, intend to deny that there was any true faith among the monks, but are only describing the genius and tendency of the system. This tendency was discovered and rebuked by some clear-sighted men among the monks themselves, like Jovinian, who spoke from experience, as well as by others, like the Gallic Presbyter Vigilantius, who were not blinded by the prejudices of the *esprit de corps*. But Jovinian and Vigilantius spoke only to be overwhelmed by the invectives of Jerome, and to be stigmatized as semi-heretics by the church. It is honorable to Augustine, who was the greatest and soundest theologian of his time, that, in spite of his own admiration of monkery, he ventured to say a

word in behalf of these witnesses, and to rebuke the scurrilous vehemence of the monk of Bethlehem.

We may pause here, for a moment, to note the papal idea of religion. The monks and nuns are, in that apostasy, known by the name of "the religious"; they are the people who *do* the religion of the body to which they belong; and what kind of religion it is, enough has been said to show.

That monasticism has signally failed to do for its deluded victims what they hoped, history makes painfully evident. The monasteries have been the nurseries of the very worst sins, both of the flesh and of the spirit. Insulted nature has been terribly revenged.<sup>1</sup> Pride, cruelty, envy, bigotry, fornication, sodomy, and all manner of abominations, have reigned within them. The fact of the terrible impurity of monasteries and nunneries may be abundantly established by the testimony of papal writers and even of papal councils. Upon this point we have no need of resorting to "Protestant slanders," in the way of proof. The sarcasm of Gibbon<sup>2</sup> is not without truth when he says: "The ascetics were inspired with a savage enthusiasm which represents man as a criminal and God as a tyrant, and embraces a life of misery as the price of eternal happiness." How could the divine honor be vindicated but by giving up these institutions, in some measure at least, to work out their own principles, "to eat of the fruit of their own way and to be filled with their own devices"?

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<sup>1</sup>No other result could be rationally expected. The monastic vows of "chastity" (*i. e.*, celibacy) and "poverty" were intended for the extirpation of instincts and appetites implanted in the nature of man when God created him. The vows were a war against nature, and were, therefore, not only ineffectual, but, like all other attempts against nature, pernicious—"naturam expelles furca, tamen usque recurret." In reference to celibacy, Bungeger well says: "Can it be admitted that, in the creation, with a Creator infinitely powerful and wise, the abnormal can be essentially purer than the normal? Was the barren fig tree, then, purer than if it had been covered with fruit?" (*Hist. du Conc. de Trente*, 2, 233.)

<sup>2</sup>*Decline and Fall*, chap. 37.

As to the misery endured by conscientious monks, let us hear the testimony of Jerome concerning himself—Jerome, whose zeal in recruiting for nunneries led to his banishment from Rome: “Oh, how often in the desert, in that vast solitude, which, parched by the sultry sun, affords a dwelling to the monks, did I fancy myself in the midst of the luxuries of Rome! I sat alone, for I was full of bitterness. My misshapen limbs were rough with sackcloth; and my skin was so squalid that I might have been taken for a negro. Tears and groans were my occupation every day and all day; if sleep surprised me unawares, my naked bones, which scarcely held together, clashed on the earth. I will say nothing of my food or beverage; even the rich have nothing but cold water; any warm drink is a luxury. Yet even I, who from fear of hell had condemned myself to this dungeon, the companion only of scorpions and wild beasts, was in the midst of girls dancing. My face was pale with fasting, but the mind in my cold body burned with desires; the fires of lust boiled up in the body which was already dead. Destitute of all succor, I cast myself at the feet of Jesus, washed them with my tears, and subdued the rebellious flesh by a whole week’s fasting.”<sup>1</sup> “The hermit,” says Milman, “may fly from his fellow-men, but not from himself, . . . the very effort to suppress certain feelings has a natural tendency to awaken and strengthen them. The horror of carnal indulgence would not permit the sensual desires to die away into apathy. Men are apt to find what they seek in their own hearts, and by anxiously searching for the guilt of lurking lust, or desire of worldly wealth or enjoyment, the conscience, as it were, struck forcibly upon the cord which it wished to deaden, and made it vibrate with a kind of morbid, but more than ordinary, energy. Nothing was so licentious or so terrible as not to find its way to the cell of the recluse. Beautiful women danced around him; wild beasts of every shape, and monsters with no shape at

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted in Milman’s *History of Christianity*, Vol. III., p. 204.

all, howled and yelled and shrieked about him, while he knelt in prayer or snatched his broken slumbers."

The misery of a monastic life is in strong contrast with the gospel, the glad tidings of salvation. Next to the glorifying of God, and in some sort identical with it in the experience of a believer, stands in the gospel the seeking of our own happiness. The gospel "does not interfere with any rational pleasure, and bids nobody quit the enjoyment of any one thing that his reason can prove to him ought to be enjoyed." It is true that it makes the disciplines of self-denial and the cross the indispensable requisites to being disciples of Christ; but this, so far from interfering with man's happiness, promotes it. Paradoxical as it may seem, the highest pleasure is often found in abstaining from pleasure. Happiness is the reflex of energy, the glow of the soul from the exercise of its proper energies in the proper degree. The gospel is called "the glorious gospel of the blessed (or happy) God," to indicate, perhaps, that the happiness of God himself is not to be contemplated by us apart from the infinite energy exhibited in the person and work of the Saviour. The culminating act of God in this salvation is presented to us in the light of an act of self-denial. "He that spared not his own Son," etc. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son," etc. There is a development of energy in self-denial, in a *proper* self-denial, and, therefore, such a self-denial promotes happiness, which is a very different thing from pleasure. Pleasure is the result of "the suitable application of a suitable object to a rightly disposed faculty or organ." It is an excitement produced from without, in which the man is rather passive than active. Happiness is rather a "home-bred delight." This was the theory of Aristotle, a wiser man, though a heathen, than many nominally Christian philosophers.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Sir Wm. Hamilton's *Metaphysics*, Lecture II. *Discussions*, p. 39. Thornwell's *Discourses on Truth.—Writings*, II., pp. 462 *et seq.*

The limitation has been stated of "a proper self-denial," by which is meant a self-denial required by Christ, who gives the law for this Christian contest. No man is crowned except he strive lawfully, that is, according to the rules and regulations of the contest. There is happiness in the cross, but it must be Christ's cross, of his imposing, not of our own. "Pilgrimages, going barefoot, hair-shirts, and whips," says South, "are not gospel artillery," but the artillery of will-worship and superstition.

"With the Romanists," says the same forcible and witty preacher,<sup>1</sup> "a man cannot be penitent unless he also turns vagabond and foots it to Jerusalem, or wanders over this or that part of the world to visit the shrine of this or that pretended saint, though, perhaps, in his life ten times more ridiculous than themselves; thus, that which was Cain's curse is become their religion. He that thinks to expiate a sin by going barefoot, only makes one folly the atonement for another. Paul, indeed, was scourged and beaten by the Jews, but we never read that he beat or scourged himself; and if they think that his 'keeping under his body' imports so much, they must first prove that the body cannot be kept under by a virtuous mind, and that the mind cannot be made virtuous but by a scourge, and, consequently, that thongs and whip-cord are means of grace and necessary to salvation. The truth is, that if men's religion lies no deeper than their skin, it is possible that they may scourge themselves into very great improvements. But they will find that 'bodily exercise' touches not the soul, and that neither pride, nor lust, nor covetousness, nor any other vice, was ever mortified by corporal discipline. It is not the back, but the heart, that must bleed for sin, and, consequently, in this whole course, they are like men out of their way; let them lash one never so fast, they are not at all nearer to their journey's end; and howsoever they deceive themselves and others, they may as

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<sup>1</sup> South's *Sermons*, Sermon I.

well expect to bring a cart as a soul to heaven by such means."

But has monkery been overruled for no good? If it has not, then truly it is an exception to the general rule. It is hardly conceivable that an institution which has existed for so many ages in the bosom of the church has been wholly and exclusively pernicious.

(a), In the first place, the retirement of so many from the world, their renunciation of its wealth, its honors, its pleasures, in the earnest pursuit of salvation, served to keep alive the sense of the reality of religion and of its supreme importance, in a time of general declension, when worldliness overflowed the church like a deluge. This was specially true after the time of Constantine, when the "woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and with a crown of twelve stars upon her head" (Rev. xii. 1), became the "woman sitting upon a scarlet-covered beast." (Rev. xvii. 1-6.) The ascetics showed, at least, a real earnestness in that in which all nominal Christians professed to be in earnest, and so subserved, in some measure, the purpose of the Nazarite under the Levitical law. Even before Constantine this was true. It is difficult for us who have been accustomed from our infancy to a society, even to a world, moulded, more or less, by the *moral*, in contradistinction from the *spiritual*, power of Christianity, to conceive of the condition of society in the Roman empire. The first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans contains a short but graphic summary of the atrocious and shameless pollutions which defiled it. The First Epistle to the Corinthians shows to what extent these pollutions continued to infest those who had become Christians. The apostle says that they who would keep no company at all with fornicators, covetous men, extortioners, idolaters, must needs go out of the world. (1 Cor. v. 10.) The marriage relation, which is the source of all social relations, had become utterly polluted, if not virtually abolished,



and thus the great tree of society had become poisoned at the root, and brought forth bitter and deadly fruits. The religion of the empire was interwoven with the whole texture of social and civic life; and as that religion was itself horrible corruption, the very atmosphere was like the smoke from the bottomless pit. Earnest Christians felt that they must retire from the world or die. This was a grievous error in those who were called to shine as lights in the world, who professed to be the followers of him who lived in the world for the world's good, but an error not unnatural, and, therefore, an error which ought to save those who committed it from any harsh judgment by us. They seemed to themselves to be obeying such injunctions as that of 2 Cor. vi. 14 *et seq.*

(b), Asceticism was overruled for the spread of the gospel. The gospel was at first, and for a great length of time, preached in the cities and towns of the empire as prominent centres from which the truth might radiate, and these centres had become Christian long before the country, the villages, and hamlets had renounced idolatry. This is witnessed by the very word "pagan" (*paganus*, villager), which came to be equivalent with *heathen*. There were many regions which would never, so far as appears, have been penetrated, or, at least, would not have been penetrated for ages, by the gospel, if the anchorites had not taken up their abode in them. "When Eremitism gave place to Cœnobitism, when the hermitage grew up into a convent, the establishment of these fraternities in the wildest solitudes gathered around them a Christian community, or spread, as it were, a gradually increasing belt of Christian worship, which was maintained by the spiritual services of the monks. These communities commenced, in the more remote and less populous districts of the Roman world, that ameliorating change which, in later times, they carried on beyond the frontiers. As afterwards they introduced civilization and Christianity among the barbarous tribes of North Germany or Poland, so

now they continued in all parts a quiet but successful aggression upon the lurking paganism.<sup>1</sup>

(c), These monasteries became refuges, ultimately, from the degrading ignorance as well as from the violence and pollutions of the world. After the overthrow of the Western empire by the Northern nations, society was for ages in a state of chaos, a boiling abyss of darkness and confusion, in which reigned the genius of the bottomless pit, a genius opposed to all polite learning as well as to all religion which could make any pretension to truth or holiness. The feeble remnant of learning fled to the dens and caves of the mountain and the wilderness. It was feeble, indeed. The great masterpieces of Greece and Rome were not studied; the sacred records of salvation were, for the most part, sealed records, even to the monks themselves. Nevertheless, the monasteries were God's repositories of these treasures, where they were preserved with a traditional veneration until the time should arrive when they were to come forth for the illumination, the training, the salvation of the human race. These repositories have not yet been exhausted, and, ever and anon, some new treasure is exhumed, some new manuscript of the Bible, or some lost tractate of a master-spirit of Greece or Rome, who instructed or entranced the men of his own generation by his skill in reasoning or his charms of diction.

It cannot be denied, however, that monasticism is inherently hostile to sound learning. Some abatement must be made in the praise which has just been accorded to the monasteries as the preservers of books. "It is forgotten," says Bungener,<sup>2</sup> "that what the monks have *saved* of the writings of the ancients is not the hundredth part of what they have suffered to be *lost*." And no doubt what they suffered to be lost was, much of it, lost for a reason:

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<sup>1</sup> Milman's *History of Christianity*, *ut supra*, pp. 194, 195.

<sup>2</sup> *Hist. du Conc. de Trente*, pp. 5, 25.

they desired to get rid of troublesome witnesses for the truth. If monasticism was unfriendly to religion, it must have been unfriendly to learning. Sound learning and true religion naturally go together, for God has created no schism in the human soul. A man shut up in his cell all his life cannot be expected to have any enlarged and liberal views of man or of the world. As little can he feel the genial influence upon his intellect of the domestic and social affections, or the sobering effect of domestic and social sorrows. A hard heart can scarcely be joined with a sound head; and that monasticism hardens the heart, who that has read its melancholy history can doubt? How could it be otherwise? A man whose only business and calling is to maintain an unrelenting war against nature in himself is not likely to be touched with a sympathy with nature in others. Again we say, God has created no schism in the human soul.

The great thinkers of Greece and Rome, who "still rule our spirits from their urns," were no recluses. They moved about continually among men, and gathered thoughts and illustrations from the street and the market-place. The soundest ethics of the monastic schools of the Middle Ages were derived from Aristotle. The thinking of that imperial mind was healthy in a marvelous degree, because the social and public life of his time and country were totally opposed to anything like monastic seclusion. The greater teachers of mankind, before whose influence even the influence of Aristotle dwindles into insignificance—Jesus and his apostles—were anything but monks. The freedom of Jesus' intercourse with the world exposed him to the charge of being "a gluttonous man and a wine bibber"; and his apostles mingled as freely with society as did other men. It is their hearty *humanity* which, in part, gave popularity to their writings at the era of the Reformation. It was a glorious transition from the dreary platitudes, the endless hair-splitting, the barren jargon of the schools to the fresh, lively, racy, human sentences of Paul and Peter.

While, therefore, it must be conceded that monkery has been, in a very important sense, the friend of learning, it must also be affirmed that, in a sense still more important, it has been the enemy of sound knowledge. There are many flagrant instances in ecclesiastical history of the pernicious influence of monks on the faith of the church. One may be mentioned. The error which goes under the name of "anthropomorphism" was one which monkery had a direct tendency to foster. This may, at first view, seem paradoxical, as the monks are people who have retired from the world in the interest of spirituality, for the very purpose of contemplating, undisturbed by the importunities of sense, the nature and perfections of the Deity. As the dread of the corrupting influence of nature was one powerful inducement to this retirement, it might be expected that, whatever error they might fall into concerning God, they could certainly keep clear of *materializing* this nature. Yet this is the very thing they did. It was among the monks of the Scetian Desert in Egypt that anthropomorphism assumed its grossest and most obstinate form. "They seemed," says Milman, "disposed to compensate themselves for the loss of human society by degrading the Deity, whom they professed to be their sole companion, to the likeness of man. . . . Imagination could not maintain its flight, and they could not summon reason, which they had surrendered with the rest of their dangerous freedom, to supply its place." The same process took place in regard to other spiritual beings, angels and devils; they had to become incarnate in order to become proper companions or antagonists of the solitary anchorite. Luther's devil in the Wartburg was one that he could throw his inkstand at. A solitary must be a visionary. The mind of a monk must be "*mens pasta chimæris*," a mind on fancies fed. It is sad to see what havoc such a life has made on the fairest human intellects. Open any of the volumes of the scholastic monks, those, for instance, of the Se-

raphic Doctor, Bonaventura, or of the Angelic Doctor, Aquinas, and see what wretched fooleries are mingled with profound thought and sincere devotion; or take a more flagrant instance (more flagrant because belonging to a period long subsequent to the Reformation), that of the Port Royalists in France, numbering among them the names of Pascal and Arnauld, and see how the loftiest intellect can grovel in the dust, and how Pascal himself illustrates his own favorite antithesis of "the glory and the misery of man"! It is a noteworthy feature of the history of the Jesuits, that while it has been a capital point of their policy to inveigle into their order the ablest men of the world, and while they have made the boast (a boast which has been strangely allowed by some eminent men among the Protestants to have been well founded) of being the best educators of youth, yet that order has never produced a thinker of the first rank, a Bacon, or Des Cartes, or Leibnitz, or Kepler.

(*d*), Lastly, the monks have done good service without intending it, in exposing to the derision of the world the pretensions of the papacy to unity and infallibility. The different monastic orders, as every tyro in church history knows, have been as wide apart from one another in matters of faith as if they belonged to different communions—wider apart, by a great deal, than the various branches of the Reformed Church have been from each other. Innocent III., one of the ablest and shrewdest of the popes, he who established the dogma of transubstantiation and auricular confession, he who hated *Magna Charta* as well as John Lackland, he who let slip the blood-hounds upon the unoffending Albigenses, and, in general, was the highest type of papal arrogance and tyranny, was opposed, with a true instinct, to the multiplication of the monastic orders, which he called (here also with a true instinct or true insight) "religions." The Dominican

<sup>1</sup> *Acta Concil.*, Lateran IV., Canon 13: "*De novis religionibus prohibitis.*" Labbe and Cossart's *Conc.*, XIII., p. 950.

and Franciscan orders were as much different "religions" as the Presbyterian and the Methodist, to say the least. The pope's apprehensions were fully justified by the result. Was there ever a more bitter controversy in the Protestant world than that in the bosom of the papacy between the Jesuits and the Jansenists? The truth is, the pretension to unity on the part of that system, if anything more be meant than unity of government, is of all the impudent pretensions ever made one of the most baseless and shameless.

The monks have been equally successful in demonstrating the hollowness of the pretension to infallibility. In the famous war between the Jesuits and the Dominicans, in the sixteenth century, about "grace," a vital point of religion and theology, the pope refused to decide between the combatants, a very crafty stroke of policy in a mere worldly kingdom; but what shall we say of it as coming from one who professed to know the divine will, and to be commissioned to declare it? We owe a debt of thanks to the mighty *esprit de corps* of some of the monastic orders, which proved itself stronger sometimes than the spirit of the general body to which they belonged, and in virtue of which they became a breakwater against the despotism of the central power and a check mutually upon each other.

## THE CHAMBER OF IMAGERY IN THE CHURCH OF ROME.<sup>1</sup>

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ONE of the most striking features in the aspect of affairs in this country at present is the pervading curiosity of our people in reference to the doctrines of the Church of Rome; and the jealousy, almost universal, in regard to her designs and movements. The sagacious instincts of liberty, coupled with God's blessing upon the faithful and frequent warnings of some eminent patriots, endowed with a larger share of forecast than the mass of their generation, have detected dangers ahead, and the whole nation has been aroused and put in a posture of vigilance and defence. The social and political tendencies of Romanism; its ferocious opposition to civil and religious freedom, *in principle*, always and everywhere, *in practice*, whenever and wherever it has not been restrained by policy or power; its audacious interference with the law of marriage, as ordained of God, and as lying at the very foundation of all earthly and temporal relations; its universal and shameless disregard of personal and public morality; its implacable hostility to the best and highest interests of man, for the life that now is—all these aspects of this proud empire have been, of late years, so amply exposed, that thousands of Americans are now awake and watchful, who, not long ago, were sleeping in the profoundest security, and crying, in their dreams, "peace! peace!"

But these are not the only, or even the most important, aspects of this "mystery of iniquity." We ought to know it, not only as a *tyranny* or as an *immorality*, but also, and

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<sup>1</sup> Appeared in the *Critic*, September, 1855.—Ed.

mainly, as a *heresy*—a heresy fundamental and fatal—fundamental, in its denial and corruption of the gospel; fatal to the eternal happiness of mankind. All the dreadful names of infamy which may be justly heaped upon Rome are names of honor compared with that of ANTI-CHRIST—ANTI, in both senses of the preposition, *against* and *in the place of*; *against, because* in the place of CHRIST. It is the mystery of iniquity, because it sets itself against, and in the stead of, the mystery of godliness, “God manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”<sup>1</sup> And unless we take this view of it, and learn to hate it in this view, there is no security against our falling, as a people, under the same dominion which has crushed the life and energy out of nearly all the nations of Christendom, and shut still faster and more hopelessly against them those gates of heaven which its keys were *never* able to open.

It is never to be forgotten that popery is a judicial infliction upon mankind on account of their unbelief. The advent of the man of sin is thus described by the pen of inspiration: “Whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” So long, therefore, as men refuse “to receive the love of the

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<sup>1</sup>The connection of the passage here quoted, with the graphic description in the beginning of the next chapter of the Apostasy, is worthy of note; and, particularly, as Bishop Mede observes, the dislocation of the clause, “received up into glory,” in order to bring it unto closer juxtaposition with the “doctrines of demons,” subsequently mentioned. (1 Tim. iii. 16, etc.) If we consider the relations of our Saviour’s ascension to his work, we may see at once how the leading doctrines of Rome involve an utter denial of that glorious truth.



truth," they are in danger of falling under this blighting curse of a righteous Judge.

For when we in our viciousness grow hard,  
 Oh! misery on't, the wise gods seal our eyes,  
 In our own filth drop our clear judgments, make us  
 Adore our errors, laugh at us, while we strut  
 To our confusion.

No man is safe who is ignorant of the righteousness of God. The necessity of believing something, which is the fundamental and indestructible condition of intellectual activity, may at any time drive a man who has trifled with the majesty of truth and the principles of evidence into a communion which professes infallibly to decide all religious questions, and to relieve from all doubt in regard to a subject upon which all serious doubt must be agony. We are not at all surprised that men of the very first order of mind, and of the highest attainments in all the walks of merely human thought, should throw themselves into the arms of Rome. When Cicero wrote his *Treatise on Pagan Theology*, history informed him of but three speculative atheists. Since the light of Christianity has dawned upon the world they may be counted by hundreds. In heathendom, every man has a religion and observes some form of worship. In Christendom, there are tens of thousands who have none. Infidelity and superstition, all forms of unbelief, of disbelief, and of misbelief, grow from the same root, the carnal mind, which is enmity against God; they are the unclean birds of night which haunt the darkened shrine, the fallen columns and ruined walls of the human soul, which was created to be the temple of holiness and truth. "This is the condemnation," said he who knew what was in man, "that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."

The darkness of popery has special charms for that class of unbelievers who, from the force of education or the natural effects of disappointment and misfortune, have been led to reflect upon their moral condition, and to listen to the voice of conscience. They long for a darkness in which the colors of truth and falsehood, of right and wrong, shall alike be lost; in which they may get rid, at once and forever, of the intolerable misery of thought and the harassing sense of responsibility; in which they may float smoothly along upon the current of impulse, appetite, and passion, with a comfortable persuasion that it can convey them to nothing worse than an ocean of purgatorial fire. "That is an affair of the priest," said the Belgic count, stained with a brother's blood, when urged to prepare for death. He had surrendered his private judgment, and consequently his responsibility. Alas! for the wretchedness of poor human nature, seeking to escape its doom by a voluntary surrender of all that made it the image and glory of God, and degrading itself to the level of the brutes that perish! This is the intellectual death which thousands have found, which thousands more have sought, but have not found, though they have dug for it as for hid treasures.

That which invests popery with this tremendous power to entrap and destroy, to blind and kill men, to buy and sell and make merchandise of their souls, is suggested in the title of this article. It is the chamber of imagery in the very temple of the Lord. It professes to hold the great principles of the gospel, but really denies them and tramples them under foot. Its real doctrines are the images of the true; its worship a counterfeit of the true worship of God. It becomes all things to all men in the largest sense: to the heathen as heathen, to the Christian as Christian, if by any means it may destroy some. The gilded crosses upon their temples reflect the earliest rays of the morning, and the last rays of the setting sun linger upon them; but the meaning of the symbol is, "Christ crucified afresh, and put to open

shame," within the gloomy walls below. It professes to represent, by its external unity, the one only true church and body of Christ, out of whose pale there is no salvation; it is really the unity of a vast and complicated machine, in which immortal men are mercilessly ground to powder. It professes to be the pillar and ground of the truth; it is really the strongest prop and bulwark of Satan's kingdom on earth. It professes to be the church founded upon the rock; it is really the gates of hell.

It has been often observed that the majority of men look only at the outward signs of things. "The outward signs of a dull man and a wise man are the same, and so are the outward signs of a frivolous man and a witty man." And, in like manner, the outward signs of false religion may be the same as the outward signs of the true. The image and superscription of the spurious coin are accurately copied from the true. The misery is, that in the matter of religion men will not go to the trouble of weighing the coin in the scales of eternal truth; they are satisfied with the beauty of the stamp, and, as they find very little use for religion in the trade and business of life, the mistake is seldom discovered until they and their fancied wealth are together condemned and rejected in another world. The case is even stronger than this. As it is by the outward signs they regulate their judgment, the more ostentatiously the signs are paraded by any form of religion, the fairer chance it has of being accepted as the true. Crosses, surplices, gowns, altars and what not, pass for religion, while the modest graces of the Spirit, faith, love, temperance, mercy and the rest, having no pomp and circumstance to recommend them, are overlooked and despised. It ought to make a man blush for his race, that bold, impudent and constant assertion of extraordinary and exclusive pretensions is, to so great an extent, successful in securing a passive acquiescence in such pretensions. We may remember, however, that the Pharisees, with their long robes, long faces and long prayers, boasting that they were the tem-

ple, and the only temple, of the Lord, were pronounced by him who read their hearts to be a generation of vipers that could not escape the damnation of hell. And yet they were adored by the multitude, who are ever ready to sell the truth and never ready to buy it.

It is one of the most universal characteristics of mankind to cling tenaciously to the forms and representatives of whatever has been once valued, loved, honored or revered. How long and with how much jealousy did the ancient Romans cling to the forms and signs of their free republic, after the substance was gone, and they were groaning under a despotism well-nigh absolute! What passionate kisses are imprinted upon the marble features of the lifeless body which once shined a spirit pure and noble, the object of affection and respect! So is it with religion. When the experience of the power of the truth of God has been lost; when men have ceased to *taste* and *see* that the Lord is good; when there is no more pungent and radical conviction of their needs as subject to guilt and misery, and, consequently, no more conviction of the necessity and priceless value of a Saviour's atoning blood and sanctifying Spirit; when the perception of the true glory of Christian worship, simple, manly and spiritual, consisting in fellowship with God and the divinely-ordained expression of that fellowship, has been destroyed, or, in a great degree, impaired; when, in a word, nothing but the corpse of religion remains, the most is made of that corpse. It is bedecked and beautified, it lies in state, it is visited and gazed upon with emotions approaching to idolatry. Such a corpse of Christianity is the Church of Rome. Let us look at it in a few particulars:

I. It is a cardinal truth of Christianity that Jesus Christ, in his person and grace, is to be proposed and represented to men as the principal object of their faith and love.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Owen's sermon on the "Chamber of Imagery," preached at the morning exercise at Cripplegate, 1682, in answer to the question,

The Saviour being, as to his divine nature, invisible to us, and as to his human nature gone beyond the reach of mortal vision, must be represented to our minds in some way, or he can never be the object of our faith and love. This representation is made in the gospel and in the sacraments, by which he is "before our eyes evidently set forth, crucified amongst us." "We all, with unveiled face, beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." We have four different portraits, so to speak, drawn by those who lived in familiar intercourse with him, who listened every day to the gracious words which issued from his mouth, who witnessed his wonderful works of beneficence and power, and saw the tears which demonstrated that the Man was tenderly alive to all the impressions of human woe. He is presented to us in a great variety of lights and attitudes to render our conception of him as round and full as our limited capacities will allow, and all this under the inspiration of God. At the same time we have no minute description of his bodily form or features, in order, as it might seem, to rebuke beforehand the presumptuous folly or misguided affection which should lead the church to attempt to reproduce them upon canvas, or in marble, wood or metal. The perception of Jesus is a spiritual perception by faith. Faith goes to him in distress, leans upon him for support, communes with him in joy, fights for him against the world, the flesh and the devil, and looks for that blessed hope and his glorious appearing, when its office shall cease amid the splendors of the vision beatific. Now we see, as by a glass, darkly; and even these dim reflections of the beauty of our King cannot be perceived by us till he, by his Spirit, opens and purges our eyes. Nothing is more natural, then, when

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"How is the practical love of truth the best preservative against popery?" (*Works*, Vol. XVI., p. 52. Russell's London edition, 1826.) Many of the thoughts which follow were suggested by this sermon.

the conviction exists that Christ ought to be habitually present to the mind, and yet the spiritual illumination, by which alone he can be perceived, is denied, to resort to images and pictures, to fasts and festivals, which commemorate the events and vicissitudes of his mortal life. And this the Church of Rome has done. But the Christ of their temples and domestic shrines is no more the Christ of the Scriptures than Aaron's golden calf was the God who brought the Israelites out of Egypt, and is no more suited to instruct the besotted people who use the image as to the true nature of his person and his office than the more ancient instrument of idolatry was suited to convey adequate conceptions of that majestic Being who was thundering out of the thick darkness of the mount. In both cases there is an attempt to worship God by a violation of one of the very plainest of his commandments. The ancient idolaters, however, made no attempt, so far as we know, to expunge the obnoxious precept.

It is, however, less as an object of worship than as an instrument of instruction that we now refer to the use of the image in the Church of Rome. It is *their* way of setting forth the great truth touching the prominence which is due to the person and grace of Christ in the experience of the believer. The manner in which Paul would begin a missionary work may be seen in Rom. x. 6, 8. The method of popery may be seen in any history of its missions. The results, respectively, of the two methods in exalting national character in knowledge and civilization are so obvious that the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err concerning them. The results of the two methods in the improvement of the individual in scriptural knowledge and genuine piety are still more startling, and scarcely need to be referred to.

II. Again, "it is a prevalent notion of truth that the worship of God ought to be beautiful and glorious."

We cannot reflect upon the majesty of our Maker at all without feeling that the worship which becomes such crea-

tures as we are, and which is acceptable to him, must not be mean or low, except so far as these qualities must belong to the creature in comparison with the Creator. This is the dictate even of the light of nature. When we come to examine the Scriptures we find that this instinct, so far from being disallowed, is sanctioned and confirmed. The worship of the Mosaic institute, the gorgeous furniture of the tabernacle, the splendid temple which succeeded it, the brilliant vestments of the priests, the costly incense which ascended in a fragrant cloud from the golden censer, the inner sanctuary, where was the throne of God, attended by the cherubim, concealed by a veil which the high priest alone was allowed to put aside, and he only once in the whole year, all this was designed to impress the ancient people of God with a sense of his awful majesty, and with a conviction of the glory of his worship. But it was only the alphabet, the primary elements, as Paul calls it, of the truth. The scheme of redemption, in its great features, was so different from anything ever conceived by the human understanding, so difficult to be received by it, that a new language was necessary, symbols addressed to the senses and the imagination, and kept continually before them, to give the new ideas and anomalous relations a permanent lodgment in the current of human thought. Under the gospel all the forms are changed; the worship of God is still glorious, nay, far more glorious than before, but the outward signs of the glory have been removed. (Compare 2 Corinthians iii. with the Epistle to the Hebrews throughout.) Jesus Christ is the spirit of the old letter; the temple, the ark, the mercy-seat, the altar, the priest, the complement of the whole imposing ritual in all its parts and details. There is no more use, no propriety, in such forms and appliances of worship as were tolerated under the law in the infancy and childhood of the church. There is no priest on earth in the literal sense; all are priests, high priests, who have boldness to enter every day and every

hour into the holiest of all, through their union with Jesus, the only real priest, *de jure* or *de facto*, in the universe. There is no sacrifice, in the literal sense, on earth; all the services and worship of believers are spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, who offered himself *once for all*, and by that one offering perfected for ever them that are sanctified. There remaineth no more sacrifice for sin. There is and can be no temple on earth in the literal sense; every believer is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and there are no dead temples now, no consecrated stone, brick, or wood; our houses of worship are "meeting-houses," no more, no less. The true and only temple, in the sense of that which makes God conversable with man and man's worship acceptable to God, is the human nature of our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup>

We need not say that in the Church of Rome there is nothing but the old Jewish image of the true glory of divine worship: a temple, a succession of mortal priests, a daily sacrifice, incense and intercession, a ritual imposing to the senses and the imagination, but no access to the mercy-seat of God. "Through him," that is, the Son, "we have access by one Spirit to the Father;" this is the description of true worship, the fellowship enjoyed by all who have been admitted to the glorious liberty of the sons of God. But where are the vestiges of it in the great apostasy? Is God a Father there, or a vindictive Judge, ever ready to launch his thun-

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<sup>1</sup> It will be obvious from these statements that there are many things done and tolerated in our own church, especially in the large cities, whose tendency is towards popery. The pedigree seems to be: 1. Semi-Presbyterianism; 2. Semi-Episcopacy (Low Churchism); 3. Episcopacy (High Churchism); 4. Popery. The forms of worship must correspond, in the long run, with the doctrinal character of the religions; innovations in worship lead to corruption in doctrine. Innovations have been made in the worship of the Presbyterian Church in this country which would have been resisted by a thoroughly instructed people (say the Scotch), even at the peril of an open rupture. Such may be the result even here, for the Christian liberty, as at present interpreted, is the high road to Jewish bondage.



der-bolts against the wretched victims of remorse and terror? Is not the mediation of the Son entirely annihilated? What means the sacrifice of the mass but a denial of the reality and efficacy of the sacrifice of Jesus? the erection of a daily "remembrancer of sin," which can never make the worshipper perfect as pertaining to the conscience, and, therefore, keeps him in the iron bondage of a sense of guilt? And where is the intercession of the Son? Is it not thrust aside by their "doctrines of demons," their teachings concerning angels and the glorified spirits of the saints, accommodated from pagan mythology and rabbinical tradition? And what room is there in this accursed system for the agency of the Spirit? The priesthood, which is the church, has thrust itself between the worshipper and the Holy Ghost, as well as between the worshipper and the Son. It is a mere mechanical process of salvation by sacramental means; the personality of the Spirit is practically denied; the sovereign will of the blasphemous usurper of divine prerogatives called a priest, implied in the "intention," is the only personal element in the business. The miserable wretch who is taught to believe that he is eating his god will have this advantage over the priest who makes the god for him, that his damnation will not be quite so deep.

We have no space for more specific illustration. We advise our younger brethren to study this system more and more as *anti-Christ*. The most subtle and ingenious perversions of the cardinal doctrines of the gospel, made by the cunning of him who was a liar and a murderer from the beginning, constitute the essence, the organic life, of popery, and give rise to all those appalling manifestations of its nature in the history of individuals, families, and nations. Clearly and strikingly will it be seen, by such an investigation, that no man can hate it as it deserves to be hated, unless he loves the doctrines of grace; that the infamy which covers the system as a grinding despotism in the life that now

is, is honor and glory compared with the infamy which belongs to it as a cruel and devilish device to crush all the hopes of fallen and agonized humanity for the life that is to come. It is amazing to observe with what remorseless activity and vigilance it meets the sinner at every turn, offering the image for the reality, the shadow for the substance, stones for bread, and a scorpion for an egg. It is Hobbism in this world, a vast Leviathan whose will is law, whose frown is death, but it is also semi-Pelagianism, which is worse, sealing men up in everlasting darkness and despair.

We are not to be deterred from doing our duty by the cry which we shall doubtless hear from foolish men, that in exposing and denouncing popery we are dabbling in politics. If the insatiable ambition of priests and prelates, and their equally insatiable avarice, have alarmed the jealousy of those who love their country, who are to blame for it? While as American citizens we claim the right to think and speak freely on all subjects connected with our national prosperity, we swear by no party. Doubtless there are many who declaim upon the stump and elsewhere against Rome who do not and cannot hate it, because they have not been converted to God. There are not a few who justify the sarcasm of Mr. Wise; who raise their hands with holy horror at the audacious wickedness which shuts the Bible against man, and yet never disturb the repose of their own Bibles covered with cobwebs and dust. But if men hold the truth in unrighteousness, they must answer for themselves. The duty of the church is plain. It is to set forth the mystery of godliness, and in contrast with it and explanation of it, the mystery of iniquity. "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See 1 Timothy iii. 16; iv. 1-6, and the Second Encyclical Letter of St. Peter, Chapter II., throughout.

## SEYMOUR ON ROMANISM—THE VIRGIN MARY.<sup>1</sup>

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THE work entitled *Mornings Among the Jesuits at Rome*, by the Rev. M. Hobart Seymour, M. A., has been for some years before the world. It consists of "brief notes of conversations on the subject of religion held with certain Jesuits" while the author was residing in Rome. These champions of popery were selected, as it would seem, from amongst the most subtle and practiced dialecticians connected with the literary institutions of that city; they were men who had made victims of Protestants before, and had all the confidence and quiet self-possession in debate which experience and the memory of past victories are adapted to inspire; and some of them, perhaps, were really anxious for Mr. Seymour's salvation from the doom of a heretic, and talked with that persuasive manner which is the natural offspring of sincerity, but which it is hard for any but a Jesuit to assume. Whatever may be thought of their religious knowledge, and it is extremely small according to any other than a papal standard, they were men of very considerable attainments in science, men of renown among their fellows. Mr. Seymour's statements are pervaded by such an air of truthfulness, and, indeed, have so much antecedent probability to commend them, that we are sure no candid mind can hesitate to accept them as a record substantially authentic; and this being admitted, the perusal of his book will of necessity deepen our impressions of the pitiful weakness of the logical foundations of Romanism. The weakness of the system has a tolerably fair exponent in the Jesuitical arguments, if we may be allowed to abuse that word, recorded here. We ought to

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<sup>1</sup> Appeared in the *Critic*, March, 1856.

give up the theory of insanity, which is the fashionable method of accounting for perversions to popery, as it is for swindling and suicide, and adopt that of idiocy. We honestly confess that we can come to but one of three conclusions in regard to those who go Protestants to Rome, and are converted there by Jesuit reasonings: either they listen with a foregone conclusion, and are papists before they begin; or they are in such a state of natural imbecility as to be incapable of comprehending any principles of logic; or they are judicially abandoned and given up to believe a lie. A French manikin manufacturer could make as good a reasoning animal as one of Mr. Seymour's interlocutors.

His last work, reprinted in this country a few months ago, is entitled *Evenings with the Romanists*; and is mainly a record of the substance of conversations and familiar cottage lectures among the Irish. It is a more valuable work by far than the other. The author was not exposed to the temptation of playing the Jesuit himself on a small scale, in his intercourse with the impulsive Celts, as he had been in his debates with the wary champions at Rome, and, consequently, there is an atmosphere of honesty and candor about this book quite refreshing, after having just emerged from the sulphurous azote of the other. As to the Irish side of the controversy, it would be very faint praise to say that they argue infinitely better than the learned priests at Rome; that is to say, the peasants; for when an Irish priest comes upon the stage he seems smitten with the same fatuity as his Italian brethren. The great strength of the *Evenings with the Romanists* lies in the free and almost exclusive appeal to Scripture as the only umpire on all questions of religion. This is the sword of the Spirit, and is always the most effectual weapon in debates of this sort. It may now and then be necessary, in obedience to Scripture, to answer a fool according to his folly, by turning his own weapons against himself; but where conviction, as well as victory, is our aim,

we shall find no weapon so piercing as the *ipsissima verba* of the most high God. It is the incessant flashing of this trenchant blade in Mr. Seymour's chapters which has produced a fluttering among his Episcopal brethren of a certain party; and which has led, we imagine, to the disreputable expedient of publishing a mutilated edition of the work. If a *two-edged sword* be necessary to cut, at the same time, popery and tractarianism, here we have it. The author is a minister of the Church of England, and we cannot endorse every sentence in his book; but we hope the editions will be multiplied until a copy is in the hands of all our American people. It is the best-adapted book for popular circulation on the subject of Romanism we have ever seen. We say it is adapted for *popular* circulation, not as implying that there are any clap-trap, *ad captandum* arguments in it, such as often disgrace books intended for the many, but as being a simple, pointed, striking exhibition of the truth. It is a book which any plain Christian may read to aid his devotion, as well as to furnish his mind. In the manner of putting his points, in his handling of Scripture, and in the general tone and spirit of discussion, we have been frequently reminded of the simple majesty of Jonathan Edwards. And we say, again, that it is a book which cannot well be dispensed with by those who are called in providence to deal with popery in the pulpit, in the market-place and at the fireside.

We transfer to our pages the greater part of the chapter on the Virgin Mary, as at once a fair specimen of the author's manner and a conclusive argument in itself. The late superfluous blasphemy of the Roman See in "defining" the doctrine of the immaculate conception has given additional interest to the whole subject of Mariolatry in that apostate community.

Papal popular orators in the United States have industriously labored to persuade the people, and such is the ignorance of Mr. Chandler and others of his class in regard to

the dogmas of their own church, charity requires us to suppose that they themselves believe, that popery in this country is essentially a different thing from popery in Europe. Without stopping to ask, if this be so, where is the boasted *unity* of the universal Church of Rome? we remark, that no greater difference exists between that church in Italy and the same church in the United States than exists between that church in Italy and the same church in France or Ireland. *Calum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt* ought to be as true of a community which boasts of being the "same always and everywhere" as it is of individuals. It is very evident that John Hughes had a very strong conviction of the identity of American and foreign popery when he thought proper in his late lecture in Baltimore to attempt the proof of the paradox, that such a religion as his could flourish in such a country as this; that the religion of besotted and down-trodden Rome *could* flourish in enlightened, free, and progressive America. But the reader will see from the extracts we have added from the *Freeman's Journal* (which blazons upon its front the words, "The official organ of the most Rev. Archbishop Hughes"), that Mariolatry, the worship of the Virgin, is as deep an abomination here as across the seas. We insert these extracts, together with some from Brownson, who has been endorsed by all the bishops, for the very purpose of forestalling this cry about the superiority of American popery. It will be seen that not even a Protestant public is any longer able to shame the priests and doctors of "Catholicity" out of an avowal before the face of the sun of their blasphemous absurdities.

#### THE VIRGIN MARY.

"The distinctive characteristic of the Church of Rome at the present day is the worship of the Virgin Mary, not that it is a modern invention, but that it has of late years assumed a prominence, all-pervading and all-absorbing, which it had not known before. I once remarked to an ecclesiastic in the city of Rome, that it appeared to me that *the religion of Christ,*

as received in that city, would be more fitly called *the religion of Mary*. He replied, approving the sentiment, and adding that every year it was becoming more and more developed as THE RELIGION OF MARY!

“It is important, therefore, that we should understand something of the nature and extent of this worship.

“In almost all the devotional books of the Church of Rome the Virgin Mary is styled THE MOTHER OF GOD, and in most of the pictures and images in the churches she is crowned and sceptered and enthroned as THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN. These titles are so frequently given to her that they are regarded as distinctively belonging to her, as is that of ‘God of heaven’ to the Almighty himself.

“The origin of this is far deeper than a mere corruption of Christianity. It has its roots as deep and as universal as human nature. It originated in a symbol—a symbol universal among the nations in the darkness of heathenism. The ideal of the creative or productive power was intimately connected in their minds with the idea of maternity. It was a power that conceived and brought forth, and in ages in which it was thought necessary to represent the Creator or creative power under a symbol, it was not unnatural to adopt the symbol of a WOMAN as developing this idea of maternity. Accordingly, in almost all the mythologies of ancient times, whether in the East or in the West, there was a female divinity, a goddess whose maternity was worshipped. In one mythology it was Astarte, of the Assyrians; in another, it was Ashtoreth, of the Sidonians; in another, it was Bawaney, of the Hindoos. In the classic mythology of Greece and of Rome, eclectic as it was, there was a Venus adopted from one, and a Juno from another. It is said that the image of Diana of Ephesus was that of a female, from whose body in every part there seemed to be issuing all the various animals of creation, symbolizing the conception and production of all things. The Egyptians on one hand, and the Etruscans on the other, had their Isis, the same symbol, a female divinity whom they regarded as ‘the mother of the gods.’

“Even the Scandinavian mythology had its Freigha; and of the two great systems of religion that held possession of the platform of the Roman empire, namely, Judaism, and the classic mythology, the latter styled its Juno the ‘Queen of Heaven,’ and the former, when corrupted by the admixture of the heathenism around it, was charged by the prophet Jeremiah with having also its ‘Queen of Heaven.’ (Jer. vii. 18, and Jer. xlv. 17.) This divinity in all the systems had a mysterious and indefinite position. Her power and province were left very much to the imaginations of her votaries; it would seem as if it was an element congenial with all natural mythologies, as answering some impulse or feeling in the fallen and natural heart, that there should be the embodiment of some such idea, the symbol of creation or production of all things, enthroned among the gods as

the Queen of Heaven. Now, the argument against the Church of Rome is, that she has adopted that element of heathenism; that instead of imitating the prophet Jeremiah in denouncing this worship among the Jews, instead of following the Apostle Paul in opposing it among the Gentiles, instead of fighting against this tendency of the people of the Roman empire, she rather encouraged it; and though, perhaps, with the zealous but ill-regulated desire to induce a more easy and extended profession of Christianity, she allowed the easterns to accept the Virgin instead of Astarte, their former queen of heaven, and permitted the westerns to receive Mary instead of Juno, the queen of heaven they had previously worshipped. It is not the least striking fact connected with this, that the two favorite titles ascribed to Mary in the Church of Rome, namely, the 'queen of heaven' and 'mother of God,' are the very same titles ascribed to this female divinity, the goddess of the ancients. She was entitled, in the East, *the mother of the gods*, and in the West, *the queen of heaven!* But, however it originated, there is no doubt that Mary is now as much recognized and worshipped in the Roman Church as was the queen of heaven in the wide platform of the Roman empire. In all its essential elements the Roman empire and the Roman Church, the pagan Rome and the papal Rome, are in accord in this matter. The transfer to Mary of all the devotion previously paid to a Juno, an Astarte, an Ashtoreth, or an Isis, does not alter the essence of the thing. It is as much idolatry to worship Mary as it was to worship Juno as the queen of heaven.

"There are persons in Italy and Spain who freely and readily admit much of this, and say that the prevalence of this conception of a female divinity among so many ancient mythologies was, as it were, the dispersed and scattered element of a coming truth—a sort of all-pervading prophecy or anticipation of a future reality—a looking into the depths of the future, as 'coming events cast their shadows before,' and that all was to be fulfilled in the exaltation of the Virgin Mother. They imagine that, as the promise of a Messiah was once universally spread among the families of Noah, and as it passed by tradition through many generations, so the woman through whom he was to come became a hope, a creation in their mythologies, and was thus the great archetype of all these female divinities of the heathen world. Persons who believe this argue that, when the nations lost all knowledge of the true God, and created false gods for their worship, and worshipped them in his stead, their idolatry consisted, not in their worship of a god, but in their worshipping a false one; and in like manner the idolatry of the heathen was, not in their worshipping a female divinity, but in worshipping those that were false, instead of her who is revealed as the only true one, even Mary. This view of the subject is a favorite one in countries where Mary is worshipped, not, indeed, in name and title, *as a goddess*, but with all the same reverence and devotion and service and wor-



ship *as if she were a goddess*. There can be no question as to the fact that, in those countries, she is the divinity prayed to more frequently, loved more fervently, worshipped more devoutly, and depended on more entirely, than either God, the Son, or the Holy Spirit. Whether the Church of Rome approves of this is another question; but of the matter of fact there can be no doubt whatever.

“All this, it is apparent, only makes the charge of idolatry more strictly and painfully applicable. That which was the religion of Christ is gradually becoming the religion of Mary. And in these countries it is customary, as with us to speak of *the religion of Christ*, so with them to speak of *the religion of Mary*.

“The answer, however, which they usually give to this subject is, that they do not worship Mary *as a goddess* or *as a divinity*; that they regard her as a creature, the most exalted of all, even as queen of angels and of men, but a creature still; that they feel as strongly as ourselves the heinous sin of giving divine worship to a creature; that they give to her a different worship, an inferior worship, to that which they give to God; and that, inasmuch as they do not worship her *as God* or *as a goddess*, they are not liable to the charge of idolatry, which, in their view, consists of giving to a creature that kind and degree of worship which belongs only to the Creator.

“I have answered this by reminding them that our charge against the Church of Rome was, not that she worshipped Mary *as a goddess*; our charge was, that she worshipped her *as a creature*; that, knowing her to be only a creature, a woman, she worshipped her as God only ought to be worshipped. If the Church of Rome regarded her *as a goddess*, and worshipped her *as such*, it would, at least, be consistent; but, regarding her *as a creature*, and worshipping her *as a woman*, with a religious worship which belongs exclusively to God, is the very essence of idolatry.

“I have often asked yet further, Wherein consists the difference between *the worship paid to Mary* and *the worship rendered to God*? The offering of prayer, the presenting of hymns of praise, the making of solemn vows, the consecration of the votary to her service, the devoting of gifts and offerings of wealth, the dedication of children, the sacrifice of the mass—all these are done to Mary, and in honor of Mary, as well as to God, and in honor of God. They pray to her by her sufferings beneath the cross. They plead her merits even as they do those of Jesus Christ. And therefore I ask, Wherein consists the distinction in the Church of Rome between the worship *paid to Mary* and the worship *paid to God*?

“The following illustrates the full extent of the power she is supposed to possess, not, indeed, inherently, but by cession from her Son. We read in *The Glories of Mary*, by SAINT Alphonso de Liguori:

“‘Saint Bernardine, of Sienna, does not fear to advance that all, even

*God himself, is subject to the empire of Mary.* The saint wishes to insinuate thereby that God hears Mary's prayers as if they were commands. "The Lord, O Mary," says St. Anselm, "has so exalted you that his favor has rendered you omnipotent!" "Yes," says Richard of St. Lawrence, "Mary is omnipotent: for, according to all laws, the queen enjoys THE SAME PRIVILEGES as the king; and, that power may be EQUAL between the Son and the mother, Jesus has rendered MARY OMNIPOTENT; the one is omnipotent by nature, the other is omnipotent by grace." (Chap. VI., Sec. 1.)

"There is here an ascription of the divine attribute of OMNIPOTENCE to Mary. There is also an assertion of an EQUALITY in 'privilege' and in 'power' with Jesus Christ. There is also a statement that God himself is SUBJECT to the empire of Mary. As this awful statement professes to be founded on a saying of Saint Bernardine, the original words may here be cited. The words of SAINT Bernardine are these:

"*As many creatures serve the glorious Virgin Mary as serve THE TRINITY, namely, all created things, whatsoever degree they may hold in creation, whether spiritual as angels, or rational as men, or corporeal as the heavenly bodies or the elements. And all things that are in heaven and in earth, whether they be the damned or the blessed, all which are brought under the government of God, are likewise subject to the glorious Virgin.* Forasmuch as he, who is the Son of God and of the blessed Virgin, wishing to *make the sovereignty of his mother EQUAL in some sort to the sovereignty of his Father*, even he, who was God, served his mother on earth. Whence, in Luke ii. 51, it is written of the Virgin and the glorious Joseph, "He was subject unto them," that as this proposition is true, all things are subject to the command of God, even the Virgin herself, so this again is also true, *all things are subject to the command of the Virgin Mary, even God himself.*"

"These words make the government of the Virgin *co-extensive* with the government of God. They also expressly state that Christ has willed the sovereignty of the mother to be *equal* with the sovereignty of the Father. They also state, that as the Virgin is subject unto God, so it is *equally true* that God is subject to the Virgin!

"These are the sentiments of SAINT Bernardine and SAINT Alphonso de Liguori. And in the act of canonization of the saints it is declared by the Church of Rome that there is no error contained in their writings. These words, therefore, are pronounced to be free from error! And yet a Christian cannot read them without inexpressible sadness and dread."

The American Romanists endorse the foregoing doctrine and St. Alphonsus' work above cited. Brownson begins a review of this work thus: "*The Glories of Mary*, by St. Alphonso de Liguori, is a standard work on the subject of

which it treats, and too well known and too highly appreciated to require, or to admit, any other notice of it at our hands than the simple announcement of its publication. The works of the saints are to be read and meditated, not criticised, and whoever finds himself unable to relish the *Glories of Mary* must accuse himself, not the author. The edition before us is a new translation of the unabridged work of the saint, from the Italian, by an estimable lady of New York, like ourselves a convert from Unitarianism, and has been executed at the suggestion, and under the supervision, of the children of St. Alphonsus established in this country. The translator has, we doubt not, found in the performance of her pious labor an ample reward, for our lady never fails to obtain rich graces for those who devote themselves to her service." . . . "But we have named these works merely as the occasion of some remarks which we wish to offer, in the light of Catholic faith and theology, on the honor which we, as Catholics, pay to our lady, *the Most Holy Mother of God and Queen of Heaven, our life, our sweetness, and our hope.*" In the same article an argument is made upon Luke i. 38, to show that Mary's consent was necessary before the incarnation could take place. Brownson says: "There was, then, a moment when the salvation of the world depended on the consent of Mary. . . Man could not be redeemed, satisfaction could not be made for sin, and grace obtained, without the incarnation, and the incarnation could not take place without the free, voluntary consent of the humble Jewish maiden."<sup>1</sup> The imprimatur of twenty-odd bishops of the church in America is on the cover of this number. As to the extent of this endorsement, see *Critic*, Vol. I., pp. 320-329 :

"This system of placing Mary practically on an *equality* with Christ is carried out in a variety of ways. The following prayer is a well-known instance:

"Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, have mercy on us.

"Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, receive my last breath.

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<sup>1</sup> Brownson's *Quarterly Review*, January, 1853, pp. 1, 2, 15.

“‘Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, receive me now and in the hour of death.’

“Another illustration is in the closing words of the *Glories of Mary*:

“‘O Jesus! O Mary! may your names live in my heart and in the hearts of all men! may I forget all other names in order to remember your admirable names alone! O Jesus, my Redeemer! O Mary, my Mother! when my last hour shall come, when my soul shall be at the eve of its departure from the world, grant, I beseech you, that my last words may be—Jesus! Mary! I love you! Jesus! Mary! I give you my heart and my soul. Amen.’

“This certainly places Mary on an equality with Christ as one to be prayed to, invoked, and loved alike. The Spanish form of the doxology is still more striking:

“‘Glory be to the Father.

“‘Glory be to the Son.

“‘Glory be to the Holy Ghost.

“‘Glory be to the Most Holy Virgin.

“‘Throughout all ages, forever and ever. Amen!’<sup>1</sup>

“It is due to many Roman Catholics of the laity to say that I have never read these and similar passages from the devotional books of the Church of Rome, while conversing with her members, without observing shame and confusion in the faces of my opponents. It is the homage they are forced to pay to truth. It is always apparent that they feel such language to be blasphemous and idolatrous; or, at least, that it approaches thereto; that it justifies the strong feeling that we manifest against the practice; that such language completely cuts away the ground under their feet; and it comes before them vexatiously when arguing with us; and they have no answer or explanation further than that these passages have a meaning widely different from what they seem to convey; that they are to be understood in what they call a *Catholic sense*; that a Catholic reads them with a *Catholic sense*; and that they do no harm to one who knows that, however idolatrous and blasphemous the language may seem, yet it is not to be understood in that sense. I have asked what that Catholic sense was, and I never could learn it. It certainly must be something very different from the natural construction of the words.

“I have pressed this matter further; I have asserted that in these books they not only place Mary sometimes on an equality with Christ, but sometimes above him.

“And first for placing her on an equality with Christ.

“I can never, while I live, forget the shock I received when I first saw in their churches in Italy the Virgin Mary crowned as Queen of Heaven, seated on the same throne with Jesus crowned as King of Heaven. They

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<sup>1</sup> See Meyrick's *Working of the Church in Spain*.

were the God-man and the God-woman enthroned alike. In all my previous experience of Romanism it never occurred to me for a moment that anything so truly awful could possibly have been perpetrated. I felt the shock; every holy feeling felt its violence; no heathen idolatry could have done more. There were Jesus and Mary, crowned alike, enthroned alike, bearing a sceptre alike. There was nothing to distinguish one above the other. They appeared precisely like a Jupiter and Juno, like a man and wife, like a king and queen. And I loathed in my soul such representations as elevating the creature Mary to a level with the God Christ, or lowering the God Christ to a level with the creature Mary. It made them both on an equality. They were god and goddess, or they were merely man and woman. I soon found that this pervaded the whole region of Italy. However kindly I might be disposed to interpret or explain, and however gently I might be disposed to judge, I could not shut my eyes or ears to the evidence that there was a manifest tendency to exalt Mary to a level with Jesus, that she should be crowned, sceptered, and enthroned alike, and that she should be loved and served and worshipped alike, and that Christianity should be made the religion of Mary as well as the religion of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

“But this was by no means the only or most sad evidence of an equality. It is painful, it is saddening, to commit the dark and dreary reality to paper. It is enough to freeze the blood of any Christian man: and yet it is the common, I may say the universal, faith of Southern Europe. It is this: Whatever were the mysteries or glories connected with the miraculous conception, the miraculous birth, the miraculous resurrection, the miraculous ascension; whatever were the mysteries of wonder and of awe in the history of Jesus Christ, they are all copied, or rather travestied and applied to the Virgin Mary, so as that she may appear as wondrous a person as Jesus Christ, as having been characterized by an immaculate conception as miraculous, a birth as wonderful, a resurrection as marvellous, and an ascension or assumption as glorious. Whatever were the miracles of awe and of mystery and of glory connected with one are claimed and attributed to the other; and to such an extent is this carried that in some of their churches the paintings on one side represent the striking incidents that give wonder to the birth and life and death of Jesus Christ, and on the other side the very same or similar incidents as charac-

<sup>1</sup>In the Baptistry of Parma there is a representation of the Trinity. At the top of the triangle is the Father. At the two angles of the base are the Son and the mother: the two arms of the Father, resting on the heads of the Son and Mary, form the legs of the triangle, while the arms of the Son, extended to the head of Mary, form the base. I looked at it with horror! The sacristan smiled, and called it the Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Virgin.

teristic of the birth and life and death of the Virgin Mary. For example, if on one side of the church there is painted the angel announcing to Mary the miraculous conception of Jesus, it is paralleled by another on the other side representing an angel announcing to Anna the immaculate conception of Mary. If there be on one side the miraculous birth and the infancy of the Son, there will be on the other the birth and infancy of the mother. If here there is a representation of the reception of the child Jesus by the high priest in the temple, there is another representing the presentation of the child Mary under similar circumstances. In one compartment there may be seen represented the death of the Saviour, and opposite may be seen, in another compartment, a representation of all connected with the death of the Virgin. Here we see portrayed all connected with the resurrection of the Lord, and there we see, in like manner, all the apocryphal details of the resurrection of the mother. On one side may be seen all that human art can do to exhibit the glories of the ascension of Jesus Christ, and on the other side all that the most exquisite art can accomplish to represent the glories of the assumption of Mary. Here the eye is arrested to see the paintings of Jesus Christ entering the heavens, and enthroned and crowned as the King of heaven, and there the eye is attracted to another painting of Mary entering the heavens, and enthroned and crowned as queen of heaven. In all the miracles and mysteries of his life she is placed on a level with him. If she is not the rival, she certainly is the equal, in every wonder and mystery; and, therefore, in one-half the churches of Italy Mary may be seen crowned with a like crown, seated on the same throne, and holding a similar sceptre with Jesus Christ. It is impossible to see all this and not feel that it embodies an item in the popular faith of the Church of Rome, and that she, in authorizing these pictures in her churches, does authorize the notion, so prevalent, that the Virgin Mary is the equal of Jesus Christ, not, indeed, in the essence of her nature, but in something which she has never defined, and which is left to the imaginations of her votaries.

“The Church of Rome has taken away the Holy Scriptures, and has given these pictures to the people in their stead. God gave the Holy Scriptures to teach the people, and the Church of Rome has taken them away, on the ground that the people might mistake their meaning, and she has given in their stead these pictures, which are still more liable to lead them astray. God has permitted no error in that book which he has given; and the Church of Rome was bound to see that there was no error in these pictures which she has substituted for them. The truth is, that the Holy Scriptures do not teach the doctrines of Rome, and, therefore, she has removed them; while those pictures do teach her unscriptural tenets, and, therefore, she allows them. The people naturally think that what is permitted to be seen in the church is authorized by the church. These pic-

tures come before them with all the apparent sanction of the church, and no one can be surprised that, seeing them, they regard Mary as equal with Jesus Christ.

“I have sometimes called the attention of my Roman Catholic friends to the practice in the Church of Rome of taking those passages of the Holy Scripture which are applicable only to Jesus Christ and applying them to Mary, and even going so far as to apply to her the distinctive titles that belong to him. In the devotional books of that church, even in her authorized litanies, as the litany of the Virgin, the very titles that in Holy Scripture are applied to Jesus Christ are addressed to her. In the Holy Scripture he is styled ‘the Advocate with the Father’; in these books she is addressed as ‘our advocate.’ If in Holy Scripture he is called ‘the one Mediator,’ in these books she is called ‘our mediator, or mediatrix’; if in Holy Scripture he is described as ‘the Door,’ or Gate, in these books she is designated as ‘the gate’; if in Holy Scripture he is described as the ‘Refuge for sinners,’ in these books she is likewise declared to be the ‘refuge for sinners’; if in the word of God he is called ‘the Father of mercies,’ she is styled in these books ‘the mother of mercy’; if in Holy Scriptures he is ‘our Saviour,’ in these books she is also designated ‘our saviour’; if he is styled in Scripture ‘the Good Shepherd,’ she is called ‘the divine shepherdess’; if he is ‘our Lord,’ she is ‘our lady’; and if he is the ‘King of heaven,’ she is proclaimed the ‘queen of heaven.’ She is thus, as far as the language of Holy Scripture goes, placed on an equality with him, and although they profess not to mean or intend this, yet it is enough that they do it, and that every one who reads their devotional books may see it, and read it for themselves.”

Hear American popery again, through Brownson: “Mary is thus called, and rightly called, ‘The Mother of Grace,’ for she is it inasmuch as she is mother of the sacred flesh through which grace has been purchased and is communicated to us.” . . . “So long as spiritual life is dependent on God in his human nature, so long is Mary truly the mother of spiritual life, and so long as she is the mother of that life, so long is she our spiritual mother, and to be honored as such, and honored even more than our natural mother, for the spiritual life is infinitely more than the natural life. Mary is also our spiritual mother, inasmuch as it has been through her intercession that we have been regenerated, and hope to obtain the gift of perseverance.” . . .

“We are unworthy clients of Mary, and we may fail of beholding her and her Divine Son in heaven, but we have no hope to persevere unto the end but through her intercession for us; and we are sure that we become acceptable to her Son only in proportion as we love and honor her. She is our sweet mother; she is the mother of our life, of our hope, and we pray to her to obtain grace for us that we may be made worthy to be termed her son.”<sup>1</sup>

Of the same import are the following sentences from the *Freeman's Journal* of January 6, 1855. They are taken from the editorial leader: “The glorious news has reached us that on the 8th of December, Pope Pius IX., of immortal renown, in the presence of the cardinals and princes of the church, declared it an article of divine faith that THE MOTHER OF GOD, OUR MOST BLESSED LADY, WAS CONCEIVED WITHOUT ORIGINAL STAIN. He that has ears to hear, let him hear! He that is athirst, let him leave off waiting beside dry and broken cisterns” [*Query*, John iv. 10; vii. 37], “and make haste to this city of God, which is made glad by the torrent of a river flowing from the living fountain of waters.” [*Query*, The Virgin?] . . . “The very depths of human misery and anguish have plead before the throne of God for a *more powerful intercession*; and the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, has taught by his church truths that the world in earlier ages was not able to bear. A new banner is raised on the walls of our salvation. It is set up by a strong hand, and one that cannot fail.” . . . “Let the Catholics of America acknowledge their past tepidity of faith and hasten to shake it off. Let us betake ourselves to our great patroness—MARY OF IMMACULATE CONCEPTION. Let faith, and hope, and charity, grow strong within us, and let us remember that God has set our task before us—that of being, all of us, in our various places, missionaries of the *tabernacle of God with men*” [*Query*, The Virgin?], “whose great business

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<sup>1</sup> Article above cited, pp. 14, 19, 24.



is to save our own souls, and to convert this young and mighty nation to the love of God, who was born, for love of it and us, of the IMMACULATE VIRGIN."

We cite one more passage from Brownson, to show how the doctrine concerning Mary has been growing in his capacious and stable understanding in the lapse of three years. In the number of his *Review* for January, 1856, we have the following latest exposition of the theory of the church: "If it be asked, since the church in one sense is the congregation of the faithful, where was the church or what was the church organization prior to the gathering of believers? we might answer by asking, where or what was natural humanity prior to individual men and women? If humanity is inconceivable without individuals, individuals are equally inconceivable without humanity. But we will not insist on that answer. The church derives from Christ, through the incarnation, typified in the fact that Eve was taken from the side of Adam, and formed from him, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. Regarded as prior to the visible congregation of believers, *the church was in the blessed Virgin, from whom our Lord assumed his flesh.* Hence the blessed Virgin, a mother and yet a virgin, is termed the mother of God, and the spouse of the Holy Ghost. *She is the second Eve, as Christ is the second Adam; the mother, as he is the Father, of regenerated humanity.* In a certain sense we may even say that she is the church, and hence the saints apply to her those texts and epithets which they apply to the church herself. She is in more than a figurative sense our spiritual mother. *She is the mother of grace, through whom flows the Christian life, and through whom we receive from God his gifts and graces.* As the mother of our Redeemer, she is intimately connected with the work of our redemption, and participates in our regeneration. Hence the reasonableness and justice of that high honor and deep veneration which we Catholics render her, the filial love we bear her, and the

prominent place she holds in our devotions, so scandalous to no-church Protestants, and which they foolishly, not to say *blasphemously*, affect to brand as ‘Mariolatry.’ Poor men! How little do they understand of the mystery of the incarnation, and of the part of our lady, through the grace and election of God, in the conception, birth, and progress of the Christian life.”<sup>1</sup>

There lies upon our table a book with the following title: “*The Holy House of Loretto: or an Examination of the Historical Evidence of its Miraculous Translation.* By the very Rev. P. R. Kenrick, V. G. Philadelphia: Published by Eugene Cumiskey, 130 south Sixth street.” The author, we suppose, is the dignitary whose imprimatur appears on the cover of Brownson’s *Review* as “† Peter Richard, Archbishop of St. Louis.” He attempts to show that the house “in which the Virgin was born and brought up at Nazareth, in which she received the message of the Angel Gabriel, and conceived the Son of God, and in which her Divine Son lived with her, until the time of his manifestation among men,” was taken up from its foundation, and transported whole (through the air, or in some other miraculous way), first to Dalmatia, on the eastern shore of the Adriatic; then across the gulf to Italy, into the midst of a wood in the district called Lauretum (Loretto); then to a small hill not far distant from the road; and lastly, to its present site! We say, here are one hundred and eighty-odd pages written by an archbishop, the book, perhaps, being the cause of his promotion, to prove to the people of the United States, in this nineteenth century, the historical verity of a ridiculous old wives’ fable, which, according to his own showing, has been rejected by a number even of European papists!! *Quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementat.*

“And not only this: they have gone further, for in the well-known psalter of Saint Bonaventura, a portion of which was republished with au-

<sup>1</sup> *Review* for January, 1856, pp. 4, 5.

thority in Rome in 1844, every prayer, every blessing, every thanksgiving that the sacred Psalmist addressed to God is altered and adapted to the Virgin Mary as being to be ascribed to her, and prayed of her. The title 'God' is omitted, and 'Mary' substituted for it. The title 'Lord' is removed, and 'lady' inserted in its stead. The awful character of this blasphemy and sacrilege can only be understood by examples. Even the Lord's prayer is altered and addressed to her, 'Our lady who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,' etc.; and the *Te Deum* is changed and addressed to her, 'We praise thee, O Mary; we acknowledge thee to be the lady,' etc.

"And now as to elevating Mary *above* Christ.

"These devotional books proceed further. If they sometimes elevate Mary to be the equal with Christ, they also sometimes elevate her beyond and above him in all the attributes of mercy and love. I have myself been witness to this; for in my conversations with the priests at Rome they repeatedly asserted that as Christ was the Judge who must deal justice, and as Mary was the 'mother of mercy' who could exercise pity and love, so it was better for us to pray through her than through Christ; that his nature and characteristic was justice and not mercy; and that hers was mercy and not justice; and that God heard those prayers sooner which were offered through her than those that were offered through him. This belief is prevalent now universally in the south of Europe.

"The following passages from the *Glories of Mary* will illustrate this in their own words, Chap. IV., Section 1:

"In order to increase our confidence in Mary, SAINT Anselm assures us that *our prayers will often be more speedily heard in invoking her name than in calling on that of Jesus Christ*, and the reason he assigns is, that Jesus being no less our Judge than our Saviour, he must avenge the wrongs we do him by our sins; while the holy Virgin, being solely our advocate, is obliged to entertain only sentiments of pity for us. We are far from insinuating, nevertheless, that she is *more powerful* than her Son; Jesus Christ is our only Mediator, he alone has obtained our reconciliation with God the Father; but as in rendering to him whom we must necessarily consider a Judge who will punish the ungrateful it is probable a sentiment of fear may lessen the confidence necessary for being heard, it would seem that in applying to Mary, whose office is that of mercy, our hope would be so strong as to obtain all we ask for. *How is it, that whereas we ask many things of God without obtaining them, we no sooner ask through Mary than they are granted us?*

"This assuredly is strong language, and as strange as it is strong. It plainly teaches that prayers presented through Mary are more readily heard than prayers presented through Jesus Christ. It is practically dashing the mediatorial crown from the brow of Jesus, and hurling him from the mediatorial throne; and as a greater blasphemy could not be uttered,

so a greater sacrilege could not be committed by man or devil. But it does not stand alone. Let the following speak for itself:

“We read in the chronicles of St. Francis, that brother Leo once saw in a vision two ladders, one red, on the summit of which was Jesus Christ, and the other one white, on the top of which presided his blessed mother. He observed that many who endeavored to ascend the first ladder, after mounting a few steps fell down. And on trying again were equally unsuccessful, so that *they never attained the summit*. But a voice having told them to make trial of the white ladder *they soon gained the top*, the blessed Virgin having held forth her hands to help them.’ (Chap. VIII., Section 3.)

“These are the words of SAINT Alphonso, in whose writings it is asserted that there are no errors. And these words are from that very book of which a new edition has been published, with the authority and recommendation of Cardinal Wiseman. And yet these words plainly teach that those who seek to enter heaven by Jesus Christ ‘never attain the summit,’ while those who approach through the Virgin Mary ‘soon reach’ their place of glory!

“It is plainly implied by the former extract that Mary is more accessible, more pitiful, more merciful than Jesus Christ, at least, that he is a Judge to avenge, and she is an advocate to compassionate; that he is all justice, and she is all mercy; and that our prayers when offered through her are more easily and quickly answered than when offered through him. This certainly is placing Mary above Christ in that which is the gem of the royal diadem, mercy and compassion. In the second extract this is carried out to its natural sequence. Those that approach heaven by Christ fail. Those that approach by Mary succeed. And this at least is placing her above him in the matter of our salvation. The ladder or way red with his blood has failed, while that which is white with her virginity is found to succeed. Christ is described as giving no help. Mary is pictured as putting forth her hand and saving! . . . . .

“And now the question comes, What saith the Scripture?

“The contrast is striking indeed. The devotional books of the Church of Rome are full, even to overflowing, of *the religion of Mary*. The Holy Scriptures contain nothing of it, but only *the religion of Christ*.

“The Holy Scriptures, ‘given by inspiration of God,’ and ‘able to make us wise unto salvation through faith,’ say nothing whatever respecting her birth, as little as possible concerning her *life*, and not one word about her *death*. This silence is significant.

“But the Church of Rome, instead of imitating the divine silence, has supplied material in abundance; she professes to tell us all about the marriage of her parents, her own miraculous birth, the incidents of her childhood, her intercourse with Joseph, her betrothal and marriage, her conversations with the kings of the East, her after life, her death, burial, and

assumption into heaven, her coronation as queen of heaven, of angels, and of saints! An inventive genius has not been wanting.

“There is, in all that concerns Mary, a strange contrast indeed between the Holy Scriptures and the writings of the Church of Rome.

“It is not the least remarkable fact of the gospel history, that it does not give a single instance of our Lord’s having addressed Mary *as his mother*. The Gospels omit all mention of his childhood, except that he was subject to his parents, and of course that they directed him as his parents, and that he obeyed them as their child. But in all his ministerial life, from the moment of his manifesting his Messiahship, from the baptism in the Jordan, he never once addresses Mary *as his mother*. He seems never to have recognized her as such.

“There are only three instances in the Holy Scriptures where our Lord is described as speaking to Mary:

“I. The first occurred in his childhood. He left his parents, and they knew not where he was. They found him among the doctors in the temple. The Gospel narrates, Luke ii. 48–51, that ‘when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. And he went down with them, . . . and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.’ This incident occurred in his childhood, and these, his first words detailed as addressed to Mary, certainly do not justify any very extravagant devotional language toward her on our part.

“II. The next occasion was after he had commenced his public teaching. The Gospel narrates, John ii. 3, 4, that ‘when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.’ He here addresses her, not as his ‘mother,’ but simply as ‘woman,’ a term not of contempt or of slight, but the term of courtesy or respect ordinarily applied to females. He thus addresses her with no peculiar deference, but only with the same language in which he would have addressed any other woman present. And when he adds, ‘What have I to do with thee?’ or, as the Roman Catholics translate it, ‘What is it to me and to thee?’ the words seem to convey some gentle reproof for her interference, implying that he could not recognize anything in common between them—any relation which could justify her interfering; and, though she might think that the time was come for his intended miracle, he preferred waiting longer. ‘*My* time,’ he said, ‘is not yet come.’

“III. The last instance of his addressing Mary was when he was on the cross. He could then see her natural sorrows, the sorrows of a mother be-

side a dying son. One might suppose it the occasion of drawing from him language of touching endearment and tenderness; but no. He knew what was in man, and he knew that any tender and endearing words toward her might and would be perverted into words to justify the worship of a woman. He, therefore, would not even call her his mother; he addressed her only as he would have addressed any other female, 'woman.' And he commits her, now widowed, childless, destitute, to the care of his loved disciple, John, and desires her to regard John in future as her son, and desires John to protect her as his mother in future. 'Woman,' said he, 'behold thy son!' and, addressing John, 'Behold thy mother!' And, in obedience to this dying wish, the beloved disciple 'took her unto his own home.' John was to be a son to Mary, and Mary was to be a mother to John.

"In these, which are the only instances in which our Lord is described as having spoken to Mary, there certainly is nothing to warrant the high, extreme, extravagant language of devotion which characterizes the devotional books of the Church of Rome. On the other hand, the fact—the simple fact—that in all the gospel history these are the only instances recorded; the simple fact that there is a settled, formal, deliberate silence on the subject, is calculated to convey the feeling that the Holy Ghost designed to cut away all excuse or occasion or ground for such language of devotion and worship, as he, who knew the future as well as the present, foresaw would be introduced into the church.

"But the Holy Scriptures go further than this. Our Lord is described as speaking twice about his mother, and on both occasions his words bear a wonderful significance:

"I. The first is in Matthew xii. 46: 'While he yet spake to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.' He thus heard of Mary wishing to speak with him; he does not comply; he remains as he was: and, though he had then the opportunity of magnifying her before the eyes of all, he carefully avoids it, and seems not so much as to recognize her as his mother. He asks, 'Who is *my mother*?' and he answers the question himself: 'Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.' Whatever the tie or the love he owed a mother should now be the tie and the love which he would feel for all who do the will of God: and other relationship he recognized not. He was now the manifested Messiah, and he knew no ties

on earth but that common manhood which gave him sympathy with all the people of God.

“II. The second instance in which he is narrated as speaking of his mother is still more remarkable. Luke xi. 27: ‘It came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. But he said, Yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.’ Here is a woman, in the feeling so natural in a woman, blessing her who was the mother of Jesus. She blesses the womb that bore him, and the breast which suckled him. It is to this day the universal argument among the members of the Church of Rome. And here we learn how our Lord regarded it. His answer is remarkable: ‘Yea,’ was his confirmation of the words of the woman. She was indeed blessed who had borne and suckled him, but there was a greater blessedness still than this; and, however great was the blessedness of Mary as his mother, there was a blessedness still greater, which every Christian woman may possess: for, ‘rather blessed,’ that is, ‘more blessed,’ ‘are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.’ If, then, any woman among us would have a blessedness greater still than that which Mary possessed as his mother, she has only to hear the word of God and keep it.

“Truly there is a great contrast between the words of the Holy Scriptures and the teachings of the Church of Rome.

“Only one consideration remains: it is that connected with what is called, most untruly called, the angelical salutation.

“A young man, a fine, open, generous fellow, who was very earnest and zealous for the religion of Rome, stopped me one day to ask me whether ‘the angelical salutation’ was not in the Holy Scriptures, that a Protestant had denied it to him, and he wished to hear it from myself.

“I asked him to repeat it for me.

“He did so: ‘Hail, Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with thee.

“‘Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of the womb—JESUS.

“‘Holy Mary, pray for us now and at the hour of death. Amen.’

“I then said that it consisted of three parts. There was, first, the salutation of the angel; there was, next, the words of Elizabeth, the mother of the Baptist; and, lastly, there was a prayer of the Church of Rome, which is not in the Holy Scriptures at all.

“He did not seem to quite understand me, so I produced my little Roman Catholic translation of the New Testament, and showed him the place in Luke i. 28: ‘Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women.’ There is nothing more, I remarked, in the angel’s salutation.

“He read it again and again; he was inexpressibly puzzled, but he

asked me where was the rest of it. Was not the rest of it a part of the angelical salutation?

"I replied, of course, that it was not, and showed him the second part of it in Luke i. 42. It was not the angel, it was Elizabeth, who said, 'Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.' I desired him to read it for himself.

"He read it, and paused, and read it again and again, and asked where was the remainder of it? He seemed perplexed, and, as I thought, angered and chagrined.

"I said that the third part was, 'Holy Mary, pray for us now and at the hour of death,' and this was not spoken by the angel, nor by Elizabeth, and was not in the Holy Scriptures at all. It was the mere invention of the priests of Rome, and, I added, 'it was wickedly added to the angel's salutation: it has been wickedly taught to you under the name of the angel's salutation; it has been wickedly done to deceive you into the belief that the angel prayed to Mary, that you might be induced to think it could not be wrong for you to do what the angel did, and thus to pray to Mary to pray for you. Here is the Roman Catholic translation; you can judge for yourself.'

"He looked on the ground for a few moments, clasped his hands almost convulsively, covered his face with his hands, then, letting them fall, he said, with a voice of deep pathos: 'Oh! sir, when our clergy deceive us poor, ignorant people thus, what is to become of us, and what are we to believe?' He spoke with intense earnestness.

"I said, 'God has given to you his word, the Holy Scriptures: he has told you "they are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith"; he has commanded you to "search the Scriptures," read and believe them, and then no man shall be able to deceive you.'

"'I believe you are right,' was his only reply, as he left me very thoughtfully.

"It may here be noticed that there is nothing in the angel's salutation to justify either prayer or worship to the Virgin Mary.

"The word 'hail' does not justify it, for it was only the ordinary salute of the time, and was addressed by our Lord himself to his disciples. He said, 'All hail,' when certainly he did not pray to them nor worship them. (Matt. xxviii. 9.)

"The words, 'The Lord be with thee,' do not justify it, for the very same words are addressed also by the angel to Gideon, 'The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor' (Judges vi. 12), and certainly they do not entitle Gideon to any worship.

"The words, 'Thou art highly favored,' or, as the Romanists translate it, 'full of grace,' will not justify it, for the same words, indeed stronger, are addressed to the prophet Daniel, 'O man, greatly beloved' (Dan. x. 19), and such words do not imply prayer or worship to him.



“The words, ‘Blessed art thou among women,’ as spoken to Mary, are no more than the words spoken of Jael, ‘Blessed shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be: blessed shall she be above women in the tent.’ (Judges v. 24.) Such words do not justify prayer or worship either to Jael, on the one hand, or to the Virgin Mary, on the other.

“Let us think of Mary with tender affection, as of the mother of Jesus, but let us neither pray to her nor worship her, for prayer and worship belong exclusively to the Godhead.”

THE SUFFICIENCY OF THE SCRIPTURES—THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES—RATIONALISM AND TRADITIONALISM.<sup>1</sup>

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THE incarnate Word, during his personal ministry on earth, was accustomed to warn his disciples against the “leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees,” and the warning has been left upon the record for our learning, upon whom the ends of the world are come. The wheel of error, like that of fortune, is perpetually revolving, and ever and anon delusions, which we hoped were long ago exploded, and which we had begun to contemplate only as the mummied memorials of influences once terrible to mankind, have reappeared with almost the vitality and energy of eternal truth. Serpents, which Christianity had strangled in her cradle, have again and again revived after the torpor of ages, and assailed her in her maturity with a deadlier venom and a sharper sting. The Pharisees and Sadducees have survived innumerable transmigrations, and, at this very time, are exalting themselves against the righteousness of God, as they did in the days of their youthful freshness and vigor. Scriptural Christianity, over which is the superscription written, “The Bible, and the Bible alone our Religion,” is still crucified between the two thieves of ecclesiastical rationalism and ecclesiastical traditionalism.

A full enumeration of the points of resemblance between the ancient and modern Pharisees and Sadducees would obviously transcend the limits of a single article; and we shall, therefore, confine ourselves to the single point announced at the beginning, and signalize the two great forms

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<sup>1</sup> Appeared in the *Southern Presbyterian Review*, October, 1853.—ED.

of error in regard to the Scriptures as a sufficient rule of faith and practice.

The following general account of these ancient sects has been drawn up by an able hand, and will aid us in forming some adequate conception of their relative position and influence in church and state :

“The Sadducees exerted their influence over the Sanhedrim, the temple and the priesthood ; and the Pharisees had obtained the principal direction of the schools, the pulpits of the synagogues, and the prejudices of the populace. The Sadducees were supported by the most opulent of the inhabitants. Since the days of Hyrcanus, who united in his own person the supreme ecclesiastical power with the civil and the military, and who was, besides, an intolerant Sadducee, the influence of the council of elders, and of the great body of the priests, had been employed in favor of this sect.<sup>1</sup> During the reign of Jannæus, the Sanhedrim, with the exception of a solitary individual, consisted altogether of Sadducees. Annas and Caiaphas, well known in ecclesiastical history, belonged also to the same sect. The Sadducees rejected the doctrines of a special providence, of the immortality of the soul and of a future state. With such sentiments, the Jewish priesthood, supported by their tithes and by their learning, the wealth and the power of Judea, presented a formidable opposition to the progress of the gospel. They combined irreligion with a profession of the established system, which, on account of its emoluments, they did not hesitate to subscribe ; a combination which, however pernicious, is, alas ! far from being uncommon in other nations.

“The Pharisees had, upon *their* side, by far the greater part of the common people. Assisted by the scribes, they engrossed, in a great measure, the ministry of the synagogues. Animated with a superstitious zeal, making pretensions to an extraordinary piety, they contrived to inflame the minds of

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph. *Antiq.* l. 13, c. 11 ; and *De Bel. Jud.* l. 1, c. 3, 4.

their hearers with a spurious devotion, by their discourses from the pulpits, and their unwearied efforts to disseminate their sentiments by private conversation. They accommodated themselves to the ignorance of the lower classes; they adapted their doctrines to the gross conceptions, the prejudices and the passions of the multitude; they imposed upon the credulity, and succeeded in ensnaring the consciences of vast numbers in their own delusions. The Pharisees professed a strict adherence to the ceremonial law, an accurate observance of the traditions of the elders, and a patriotic attachment to the liberties and independence of the country; and while they urged the doctrine of a future state, they taught that salvation was secured to the Jews upon the sole condition of obedience to these external rites, which they uniformly represented as entitling them to covenanted mercy."<sup>1</sup>

Who does not recognize this as a graphic picture of the two great forms of delusion which now curse the church? Differing in the details, in attitude, in distribution of light and shade, the grand outlines and leading features are the same. The resemblance between the peculiar type of rationalism prevailing among the Sadducees, and begotten by their connection with an established religion, and the modern rationalism of the German and English establishments, is well worthy of remark. The Sadducees, to maintain their status in the church and enjoy the emoluments of place, must not utterly repudiate the canon of divine revelation; they must hold the law and the prophets, or they cannot hold the fat offices in the kingdom.<sup>2</sup> The most insidious and most dangerous form of rationalism, in modern times, has been begotten in the same way; the child of unbelief by avarice, or cupidity. There was something bold, manly, thoroughly

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<sup>1</sup>Mason's *Christian's Magazine*, Vol. III., pp. 33, 34.

<sup>2</sup>The notion that the Sadducees recognized only the books of Moses as of divine authority is, we believe, now generally abandoned.

consistent, in the old English rationalism; and qualities resembling these can be found even in that monstrous birth which reached its maturity in the *French Encyclopædia*; but the Wolfenbüttel fragments stole into the world after their author's death, who was, perhaps, too timid, or too honest to publish them; and his principles have been promulgated by pastors and professors, who must, by all means, retain the loaves and fishes, while they deny the miracle; and whose inventive faculty, aroused by necessity, has furnished the world with a critical machinery worthy of all admiration, an apparatus which will leave you the Gospels entire, after all supernatural salvation is gone; or, by its mysterious alchemy, transform the historical Jesus into a mythological Hercules, an imaginary wonder-worker, conqueror of hades, and restorer of a lost paradise; in a word, which will give you the residuum (yea, *caput mortuum*) of the play of Hamlet, with Hamlet's part left out. In both cases it is the church establishments which have given rise to that peculiar form of infidelity which we have called ecclesiastical rationalism, and which will live and thrive, not only in its native air, but wherever men can be found who would rather play the hypocrite, even at the risk of making merchandise of souls, than forego the profits of the merchandise. It is not for nothing that the apostles so often speak of "filthy lucre," and the "wages of unrighteousness," in connection with false teachers. Let us add, however, that charity compels us to think that in some cases those who are guilty of this madness know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm. They are not the followers of Balaam, but the reverse; they curse while they desire to bless the people of God.

Every neophyte in the philosophy of religion is now longing to be God, and is filled with sadness because he is not. The giants of former generations, who have given laws to philosophical investigation, whose glowing anticipations of

the progress of human knowledge, and of the beneficent practical results to mankind of that progress, seem to us more like the visions of prophecy than the conjectures of uninspired sagacity, received, with the simplicity of children, the "book-revelation" from God. Conscious of the limited range of the human faculties, and of the feebleness of those faculties within their range, they were thankful for any light from the unknown sphere beyond, for any valid testimony, and especially any divine testimony in regard to things which the eye could not see, nor the ear hear, and which could not enter into the heart of man; which were revealed neither through sense, nor reflection, nor the primitive judgments of the mind; they were thankful for any testimony which might explain the phenomena which could be, to a certain extent, cognized by their faculties, or teach them that these phenomena were, for the present at least, inexplicable. "*Franciscus de Verulamio sic cogitavit.*" The giants of the present generation are walking in their steps. "*Noscedo ignoratur, ignorando cognoscitur:*"—"Sit pia confessio ignorantiae magis quam temeraria professio scientiae,"—these are the utterances of the greatest thinker of the fourth century, endorsed by the greatest critic and the profoundest thinker of the nineteenth.<sup>1</sup> "All the true philosophy is learned ignorance" is the judgment of the metaphysical monarch of Scotland and of Europe. But our modern Sadducees have exhausted all the contents of the "logical revelation"; they have explored and mastered all the worlds of thought opened to them in the Bible; they weep whole volumes, because there are no more fields of conquest, and, as was said of Byron, "wipe their eyes with the public." They tell the world in books how vain a thing is all "book-revelation"; that the "earnest," "inquiring" spirit can never be satisfied with such tangible realities; that it is ever longing to gaze upon and be ab-

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<sup>1</sup>See Sir Wm. Hamilton's *Discussions*, etc., *Philosoph.* Appendix, B.

sorbed into the infinite.<sup>1</sup> So far are they from recognizing the perfection of the Scriptures as a rule of faith, that they with very great difficulty conceal their contempt for them. The faculty of intuition is the only efficient organon in the acquisition of spiritual truth, and the Scriptures, as the record of other men's intuitions, only furnish an aid to private and individual inspiration. These men are not infidels, but rational Christians; they have too much of the æsthetic to relish the ribaldry of Paine, too much faith for the Pyrrhonism of Hume, too much knowledge for the blundering ignorance of Voltaire. They sustain a relation to all these somewhat analogous to that which the Sadducean Herod bore to the pagan Pontius Pilate, and, like those worthies, will be ready to become friends when the "Amen, the faithful and true witness," is to be insulted and crucified. (Luke xxiii. 12.)

In the support of the view which we have taken of the text referred to in the first sentence of this article, we cite, without

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<sup>1</sup>The folly of this cant about an "external," "logical," "book-revelation" is ridiculed with proper severity and extraordinary felicity in the "*Eclipse of Faith*," ascribed to Henry Rogers, Esq., the author of "*Reason and Faith*," and other admirable contributions to the *Edinburgh Review*. We cannot account for the little notice which has been taken of this book, unless it be the not very happy selection of a title. We know of some instances in which it has been purchased under the impression that it belonged to the same class with the "*Phases of Faith*," and other effusions of the Martineau school. This is unfortunate. No book deserves to be more generally read. No book is better adapted to open the eyes of young men of certain constitutional susceptibilities, who have been bamboozled by the inflated nonsense and devotional atheism of the "spiritual" writers of the *Westminster Review*. It is thorough, and, at the same time, elegant and sprightly. Considered merely as a composition, it is worthy of all praise. We are glad to see that so popular a journal as "*Harper's Monthly*" has taken a decided stand on the right side. See the Editor's Table in the number for March last; though we cannot but think that the editor in the number referred to should have acknowledged his acquaintance with the "*Eclipse of Faith*."

If the Newman Brothers started from the same principles, and pursued the same method, they furnish another curious illustration of the "law of

apology, the following passage from an elaborate disquisition on Matthew xxii. 29 in a previous number of this journal (April, 1851):

“This little scene at Jerusalem (that recorded in Matthew xxii. 23–33), in which the great founder of Christianity vindicates the fundamental doctrine of all religion, whether natural or revealed, from the ignorant and captious objections of a conceited and arrogant group of skeptics, may be taken as a type, or miniature picture, of all the great battles which revelation has had to fight from that day to this, and of those other battles through which it must yet pass until the final triumph of the Son of man. It is true the Sadducees did not professedly reject revelation, they admitted the divine authority of Moses and the prophets, they conceded the inspiration of the whole Jewish canon. But there is no difference in principle betwixt rejecting a revelation wholly and

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development,” which one of them wrote a book to expound; a development something like the oriental doctrine of the depravity of matter in the Syrian and Alexandrian Gnostics respectively, leading, in the one, to asceticism, and, in the other, to abandoned sensualism. So, in this case, the *Via Media* has led to Rome, and is leading to Stockholm. But here, as elsewhere, extremes meet, and infidelity is conterminous with drivelling superstition. The intuitional men are at one with the slaves of Rome; they both look for “certitude” (see Morell, Theodore Parker, etc.) to the catholic sentiments of mankind. They both hold to the rule of Vincentius Lirinensis, “*quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*,” though differing as to where the universal consent is to be found, the one taking the whole human race as the basis of the induction, the other confining themselves to the area of the church. It is also a curious thing in the vagaries of the human understanding, that the Unitarians, who, fifty years ago, were materialists and swore by Priestly, should now, for the most part, be transcendental idealists. It is a history worthy of being traced by some competent hand. What a chasm between the chemist of Birmingham and the pantheist of Boston!

We have spoken of the *devotional atheism* of these writers. Comp. Cicero's remark (*De Nat. Deorum*): “*At etiam de sanctitate, de pietate adversus Deos libros scripsit Epicurus*.” It is no new thing under the sun. Robespierre and his confreres had a good deal of æsthetic piety after their fashion; they made offerings of flowers as well as blood to their divinity. *O cæcas hominum mentes!*



absolutely on the ground of objectionable doctrines, and denying that such doctrines can by possibility be taught in an admitted revelation. It is precisely the same thing to say the book is divine, and therefore the doctrine cannot be there, and to say, the doctrine is there, and therefore the book cannot be divine. He who would exclude the doctrine upon the ground that from its intrinsic incredibility it cannot be revealed, would exclude the revelation which professedly contained it. The Sadducees may, accordingly, be taken as the type of all who deny the possibility of any revelation, or the possibility that any particular doctrines are revealed from measures of natural probability. They are alike the representatives of rationalists in the church, who admit the divine authority of the Bible in general, while they deny the divine authority of everything in it which makes it of real value, and of rationalists out of the church, who treat all claims to inspiration as contradictory and absurd, and look upon prophets and apostles in the same light in which Festus contemplated Paul."

We turn now to the Pharisees. The other sect, as we have seen, was supported by the most opulent of the inhabitants; they exerted their influence over the Sanhedrim, the temple, and the priesthood. And so with their modern antitypes. The common people, busily employed in the solution of the three great questions, What shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed, have no leisure for fine-spun speculations. Absorbed in matters of fact, and weighed down by the pressure of the dull realities of life, they are unable to sublimate themselves into the ether, the congenial element of our spiritual seers; they know more of the wheel of Ixion than of the wings of Icarus; and the only response to such preachers is, "Ye bring certain strange things to our ears." The cloisters of universities and seminaries, the favorite abodes of melancholy musing, the secret cells in which the

soul, shut out from the din and bustle of mankind, can sink back upon itself and down into the absolute, are much more promising fields for our subjective apostles than the material and objective walks and work-shops of a week-day world. Hence the necessity for the Pharisees, men whose religion is altogether outward and tangible, demanding for its comprehension no mysterious faculty, no earnest gazing into the region of dimness and shadows, no Platonic longing after the beautiful and the good, but only eyes and ears, hands and mouth, nerves and muscle, a homely Socratic religion, come down from heaven to men. "*Les nerfs voila tout l'homme,*" said the sensational ideologists of France, and so say the Pharisees, ancient and modern. Bodily exercise profiteth much, and he who can fast the longest, and flog himself the hardest, and make the most painful pilgrimages, and show the largest tale of prayers, and wear the roughest and longest coat, and boast the loudest of the multitude who cry, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we," all of which obviously require only very strong nerves, is the holiest man. Let us look at some of the particulars in which the Pharisees of old and our ecclesiastical traditionalists resemble each other: They say and do not, binding heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they, themselves, will not move them with one of their fingers;<sup>1</sup> all their works they do for to be seen of men, making broad their phylacteries, and enlarging the borders of their garments, loving the uppermost rooms at feasts and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi,<sup>2</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> The common people fasting during Lent, for example, while the bishops and other clergy, Roman procurators, feast on terrapin dinners; the common people praying for masses which the priests, doubtless, are prevented from *saying*, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Witness Cardinal Wiseman going into a church in England, with two sons of gentlemen (oh, shame!) carrying his *scarlet* train. Loving to be called Rabbi, we fear, is not confined to the Pharisees, though we believe the title of "Lord Bishop" is.

Father. They shut up the kingdom of heaven against men, neither going in themselves, nor suffering them that are entering to go in. They devour widows' houses, and, for a pretense, make long prayers; they compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, they make him twofold more the child of hell than themselves.<sup>1</sup> They tithe the mint, anise and cummin, and omit the weightier matters of the law; straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel; making clean the outside of the cup and the platter, but within full of extortion and excess; whited sepulchres, which, indeed, appear beautiful outward, but within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness; building the tombs of the prophets, and garnishing the sepulchres of the righteous, while walking in the steps of those who slew them.<sup>2</sup>

These particulars have been drawn mainly from the twenty-third chapter of Matthew's Gospel. But the principal point still remains, the fundamental falsehood in which they agree, and from which, as a fountain, flow those streams of desolation and death, and that is, their corruption of the rule of faith and practice. "Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit, in vain do they worship me, teaching, for doctrines, the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups, and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition . . . making the word of God of none effect through your

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<sup>1</sup> Often make them editors of their public journals.—Witness *Freeman's Journal*, *Catholic Herald*, *Brownson's Review*.

<sup>2</sup> Canonizing Augustine, and persecuting the Jansenists.

tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye." (Mark vii. 5-13.) These traditions, originally delivered orally to Moses, had been handed down from generation to generation, and springing from the same source with the written word, were of equal authority with it, or, to use the language of Trent, were to be received "*pari pietatis affectu ac reverentia.*" How admirably these traditions harmonized with the law and the prophets was made manifest when their most eminent guardians and expounders took the lead in bringing to the shame and agony of the cross the incarnate Word, of whom "Moses in the law and the prophets did write." They were developments, no doubt, from the seminal principles of the law, in what the author of Tract No. 90 would call a "non-natural" sense, a sense in which a scorpion might be developed from the egg of a dove; a wolf from the embryonic vesicle of a lamb, or a cancerous tumor from the normal constitution of the physical frame. So, also, their modern imitators are the chosen custodians and interpreters of the traditions of Christ and his apostles, and act as if they had a plenipotentiary commission to "rise, kill, and eat" everything common or unclean, that is, beyond the pale of covenanted mercy, within the four corners of the globe. They abstain, with Levitical preciseness, from meats which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth, and devour without scruple the body, blood, and divinity of the Son of God in the sacrifice of the mass, besides giving to the fowls of heaven and the worms of earth thousands of those whose only crime it was that they loved Christ too well.<sup>1</sup> The controversy be-

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<sup>1</sup>Macrobius (Saturn, cited by Trench in his *Star of the Wise Men*,) has preserved the following sarcasm of Augustus upon Herod the Great, who could sometimes "strain out a gnat," as well as "swallow a camel": "*Quum audisset (Augustus) inter pueros, quos in Syria Herodes rex Judæorum intra bimatum jussit interfici, filium quoque ejus occisum; ait, melius est Herodis porcum (ορ) quam filium (οιον).*" This sanglant pun, as Trench

tween will-worship and a worship regulated by the will of God, begun in Cain and Abel, and continuing through all the periods of Jewish history, has been marked, on one side, by deeds of violence and blood, and, on the other, by a meek and steadfast testimony for truth and righteousness, even unto death. The father of lies has been a murderer from the beginning, and will be unto the end; and as the Saviour concluded his denunciations of the Pharisees of old by warning them that upon them should come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom they slew between the temple and the altar, so when he shall come the second time without sin unto salvation to vindicate his cause, and to reward those who have been with him in his temptations, the same crushing burden of "righteous blood" will sink the modern successors of the Pharisees like a mill-stone in the mighty waters. The curse of Cain shall then be branded upon them all, and they shall be "wanderers" from the "presence of the Lord" for ever and ever. (2 Thess i. 9-ii. 8.) The controversy will then be settled, and the enemies of God shall know whose word shall stand, his or theirs, the Bible or tradition.<sup>1</sup>

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calls it, is not altogether out of place here. A man had better be a swine in Lent than a heretical son at any time.

"The mother of Dominick, it is said, dreamt, before his birth, that she was to be delivered of a wolf with a torch in his mouth;" an augury abundantly realized in the founder of the Inquisition and the "acts of faith."

<sup>1</sup>We cannot refrain from noticing one other point of resemblance between the ancient and modern traditionalists alluded to in the extract from the *Christian's Magazine*: it is their anxiety to get control of the "schools" of the public education of the country. The Reformation, which did so much for the common mind, not only took religion out of the hands of mercenary priests, but knowledge also. Its tendency, and, in a great degree, its aim, was to convert the mass of the people from a race of slaves, thinking, praying, worshipping by proxy, into a race of men, conscious of their dignity and their individual responsibility as the intellectual offspring of God; to remove all barriers erected by the avarice and ambition of unprin-

While denying absolutely and most emphatically the claim of tradition to constitute any part of the rule of faith and practice, and repudiating with horror the theory of the de-

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ciplined churchmen, and to bring the soul into immediate contact with the Father of mercies and the Father of lights. The traditionalists, from that time to this, have been educating in *self-defence*; it is Hobson's choice with them now, either a free Protestant education, or a popish mockery of it. We have no time now to discuss the movement they are making in concert all over the country to obtain a portion of the public school fund, nor is it necessary. The unparalleled absurdity and impudence of the claim, upon every consideration of reason and justice, have been amply exposed. We would only remind our countrymen that "perpetual vigilance is the price of liberty," that the leading organs of the hierarchy in this country now openly avow, what they have been denying for twenty years, that they are, on principle, a persecuting church, the legitimate successors of the men who deluged the valleys of Piedmont and the plains of Languedoc with blood; that they have defended the Duke of Tuscany in his barbarous cruelty to the Medici in the year of our Lord 1853, and declared their intention to destroy heretics on this American soil when they get the power, which, of course, will be as soon as possible. In short, let us say, the question which will have to be decided is, whether they shall rule us or we rule them. Let those Protestants who are thoughtless enough to send their children to Roman Catholic schools think of these things, and ask themselves whether they are willing to entrust their children to men who have placed the greatest masters of thought and style, not to say the Bible itself, in their Index Purgatorius, and will cramp the minds, as well as destroy the souls, of the victims of their ambition. Let them ask, as has been pertinently asked before, why the priests and nuns who are too holy to have children of their own should exhibit such inordinate anxiety to have charge of the children of other people. Let them remember, finally, that a sense of personal responsibility, which is always strengthened under the ministry of the only true Priest, the Son of God, in our nature, and always impaired under the ministry of every other priest, lies at the very foundation of our government, both in theory and practice.

Since writing the above, we have seen a paragraph from one of the metropolitan popish journals, rejoicing in the passage of a bill by the legislature of California to allow the papists a portion of the public school fund. If the statement be true (and we cannot believe it till we have other testimony), it is only another example of the folly of wasting the time of the people in speech-making, and then hurrying important measures through at the heel of the session. If the law be not speedily repealed, the young Samson of the West will find, when he awakes, that he is in the hand of

velopment of doctrine as held by Newman and others, we hold that there is a development of Scripture, and cordially subscribe to the views presented in Mr. Trench's fifth Hulsean Lecture for 1845 (entitled "The Past Development of Scripture"), the purpose of which is to show "how this treasure of divine truth, once given, has only gradually revealed itself; how the history of the church, the difficulties, the trials, the struggles, the temptations in which it has been involved, have interpreted to it its own records, brought out their latent significance, and caused it to discover all which in them it had; how there was much written for it there as in sympathetic ink, invisible for a season, yet ready to flash out in lines and characters of light whenever the appointed day and hour had arrived. So that in this way the Scripture has been to the church as their garments to the children of Israel, which, during all the years of their pilgrimage in the desert, waxed not old; yea, according to rabbinical tradition, kept pace and measure with their bodies, growing with their growth, fitting the man as they had fitted the

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the Philistines, and that all his strength is gone. The papists are putting his eyes out, and the next thing will be the grinding in the mill. These enemies of God and man will not allow American citizens the rights of public worship when they have the power; they are not satisfied to be on an equal footing in this country with Protestants; and, as we said before, one or the other must be supreme; either they must rule us or we them. Under the operation of the California law, Protestants will sustain Roman Catholic schools, for it is notorious that the latter pay only an infinitesimal proportion of the taxes. Let the Californians crown this wise and equitable legislation with another act, vesting the whole property of that church in the person of the bishop, and they will soon be nearer the Mexicans, socially and politically, than they are geographically. If the American people endure such diabolical treachery to all that constitutes their peculiar glory as a nation, they deserve to be slaves. The signs of the times seem to indicate that the great question will be finally submitted to the arbitration of the sword. Hughes has his military companies in New York, it is said, and a German Catholic company is about to be formed in Baltimore. The clouds are gathering; let every man who loves his God and his country prepare himself for the storm.

child, and this until the forty years of their sojourn in the wilderness had expired. Or, to use another comparison which may help to illustrate our meaning: Holy Scripture, thus progressively unfolding what it contains, might be likened fitly to some magnificent landscape on which the sun is gradually rising, and ever as it rises is bringing out one headland into light and prominence, and then another; anon kindling the gloomy-smitten summit of some far mountain, and presently lighting up the recesses of some near valley which had hitherto abided in gloom; and so, travelling on till nothing remains in shadow, no nook nor corner hid from the light and heat of it, but the whole prospect stands out in the clearness and splendor of the highest noon." And again, he says, "the true idea of Scriptural development is this, that the church, informed and quickened by the Spirit of God, more and more discovers what in Holy Scripture is given her; but it is *not* this, that she unfolds by an independent power anything further therefrom. She has always possessed what she now possesses of doctrine and truth, only not always with the same distinctness of consciousness. She has not added to her wealth, but she has become more and more aware of that wealth; her dowry has remained always the same, but that dowry was so rich, and so rare, that only little by little she has counted over and taken stock and inventory of her jewels. She has consolidated her doctrine, compelled thereto by the provocation of enemies, or induced to it by the growing sense of her own needs. She has brought together utterances in Holy Writ, and those which, apart, were comparatively barren, when thus married, when each had thus found its complement in the other, have been fruitful to her. Those which, apart, meant little to her, have been seen to mean much when thus brought together, and read each by the light of the other. In these senses, she has enlarged her dominion, her dominion having become larger to her."



It is obvious, from this view of the case, that the true "development" is only a "development" in the *knowledge* of Scripture, the written word, and differs from the Roman and Anglican theory as widely as the *Westminster Confession of Faith* differs from the *Decrees and Canons of Trent* or the *Anglican Prayer-Book*. There has been a progress in the knowledge of the church somewhat analogous to that which takes place in the individual Christian; heresies, persecutions, social and political convulsions, as well as the calm studies of philologists and the researches of travellers, have contributed to it. Wilkinson and Champollion, Young and Rosellini, Layard and Laborde, have all been elements in it. As to the distinctive doctrines of the gospel, they have always been learned most rapidly and effectually in the furnace; its flames have brought out, to use the figure of Trench, "the characters in sympathetic ink," and revealed the presence of the Son of God in the midst. In this way apostate Babylon has been of more service to the saints in the development of doctrine than by all her infallible decisions of popes and councils. Thousands have written upon her dungeon-walls sentences from the Bible, which the place itself eloquently expounded, and which the eye of infidel curiosity has been compelled to read. Thousands will be thankful, for ever, for the dragonades of Louis XIV., and the hell-hounds of Claverhouse, as the means by which, in the providence of God, and under the illumination of his Spirit, they have grown in practical appreciation of the preciousness of the promises, and of the comfort to be derived from knowing that there is an avenging judge. We know more, and more accurately, of the doctrine of the Trinity, for the controversies of Arius and Socinus; more of the doctrine of grace, for the heresies of Pelagius and the aberrations of Arminius; more of the true nature of ecclesiastical power, for the usurping ambition of a Hildebrand; more of the true marks of the church of Jesus Christ, for the misrepresentations of Bellar-

mine; more of the morality of the Bible, for the detestable casuistry of the Jesuits; more of the value of a personal God, for the fancies of Swedenborg and the visions of Theodore Parker. There has been a great development of Bible knowledge, by the favor of its enemies, and we doubt not the development will go on, till the church militant shall throw off her armor at the coming of her Lord and rejoice in her millennial glory. "And as it was at the Reformation" (I quote again from Trench) "with the Pauline Epistles as it is now with the Gospels, so, I cannot doubt, a day will come when all the significance of the Apocalypse for the church of God will be apparent, which hitherto it can scarcely be said to have been; that a time will arrive when it will be plainly shown how costly a gift, yea, rather, how necessary an armor was this for the church of the redeemed. Then, when the last things are about to be, and the trumpet of the last angel to sound, when the great drama is hastening with ever briefer pauses to its catastrophe, then, in one unlooked for way or another, the veil will be lifted up from this wondrous book, and it will be to the church collectively, what, even partially understood, it has been already to tens of thousand of her children, strength in the fires, giving her 'songs in the night,' songs of joy and deliverance in that darkest night of her trial, which shall precede the break of her everlasting day; and enabling her, even when the triumph of anti-Christ is at the highest, to look securely on to his near doom and her own perfect victory."

How different a theory is this from that "which, refusing the Scriptures as first and last, authoritative in and liminary of the truth, assumes that in the course of ages there was intended to be, not only the discovery of the truth which is there, but also, by independent accretion and addition, the further growth of doctrine, *besides* what is there, which recognizes such accretions, when they fall in with its own notions, for legitimate outgrowths, and not, as indeed they are,

for noxious misgrowths, of doctrine, and which thus makes the church from time to time the creator of new truth, and not merely the guardian and definer and drawer out of the old."

"Ye make the word of God of none effect by your traditions!" What a load of guilt, and what a crushing doom are contained in this terrible utterance of the incarnate Word! Well may he who places himself in the throne of the eternal, and claims to thunder with a voice like him, be called the "Man of Sin," the "Son of Perdition." The stroke which shall transfix the "Lawless One," at the coming of the Son of man, will be no "*brutum fulmen*," but a lightning-bolt whose flash shall be seen from one end of heaven to the other, and which, while it sinks its victim in the bottomless abyss of hell, shall awaken among the morning stars and the sons of God that song of exultation and triumph: "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her." "Let the heavens rejoice, and the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein; then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord; for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth; he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth."

These two gigantic forms of error formally impugn the sufficiency of the Scriptures as a rule; but as they both spring from the darkened understandings and alienated hearts of apostate men, and are "mysteries of iniquity," the leaven is often working unconsciously in those who truly love God, and cordially abhor any system which dishonors his name, if they know that it does so. Our Saviour warns us against the "*leaven*," the silent, insensible, gradual influence of such principles. What is it but rationalism to say, as good men have often allowed themselves under the excitement of partisan zeal and theological debate to say, that if the Bible teaches this or that doctrine it ought to be burnt, or thrown away? What is it but traditionalism in the root to say, as

good men, in their anxiety to make some innovation in worship, or to carry some measure of reform, have allowed themselves to say, that whatever is expedient is right? Whence all the fierce opposition to the doctrines of grace, as contrary to reason, and the intemperate denunciation of those whose conscience will not let them approve of human inventions in the house of God? Are these things of him that called us? Are they the offspring of his Spirit, who said, "My sheep hear *my* voice, and the voice of a stranger will they not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers"? Whence the gross departures from Presbyterian and primitive simplicity in our meeting-houses, and our forms of worship? Why have we gone back to the Middle Ages for models of ecclesiastical architecture? Is there anything in the history of the old cathedrals, designed in sin, founded in iniquity, cemented with the tears and blood of the living temples of Christ, the monuments of idolatry and tyranny, dark and gloomy, chilly and fear-inspiring, to commend them to us who rejoice in the liberty and light of the gospel? Is there anything in the notes of an organ which has been so often used to celebrate the *Te Deum* and the *Gloria in Excelsis* over the slaughtered bodies of the true witnesses of Christ to commend it to us who profess "to sing with the spirit and the understanding also"? Why do we abuse the papists, and then imitate them? Why do we denounce the Epicurean morality which teaches that "the end justifies the means," that "evil may be done that good may come," and then act so inconsistently? How do we differ practically, except in the extent to which the principle is carried? Building churches by lottery, or paying for them by raffling (which, in plain English, is *gambling*), holding fairs and concerts, and in other ways converting the house of God into a house of merchandise (and, must we add, in some instances, into "a den of thieves"?) or a fashionable music hall; ought not such things to be left to those who are without hope

and without God in the world? What strange infatuation has seized us? May we not ask, with Luther, *is God dead?* Is there no living Saviour, who has said, "Lo! I am with you alway"? "Because I live, ye shall live also"? "Of all that the Father hath given me, I will lose nothing, but will raise it up at the last day"? Is there no Holy Ghost to give efficacy to his own ordinances? Is there no God and Father of all, who is mindful of his covenant? Why, then, should our "faith stand in the wisdom of man"? Oh, that God would write in characters of fire on the hearts of his people those pregnant words, "that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."<sup>1</sup>

Against all these delusions we oppose the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. The credibility of the Scriptures once established, their sufficiency as a rule follows

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<sup>1</sup> See 1 Cor. ii. 5. The confusion of thought which exists, even among intelligent men, in regard to the real nature of Christian expediency is almost incredible. We once heard, in a debate in one of the largest Synods in this country, one of the leading debaters contend that a resolution which he was defending, and which made total abstinence from intoxicating drinks a term of communion in the churches of the Synod, was not at all inconsistent with the action of the General Assembly of 1848, which made the whole matter of total abstinence an affair of Christian liberty. The argument was, that it was not expedient to drink, therefore, it was a sin to drink, and, therefore, a church member should be disciplined for drinking. It never seemed to occur to him and the gentlemen on his side that the Scriptures never spoke of expediency except in regard to things, the lawfulness of which had been previously, and upon independent grounds, established. "All things are lawful for me," says Paul, "but all things (evidently all *lawful* things) are not expedient." The Scriptures know man too well to allow him to judge of what is expedient in such matters, much less to make his notion of expediency the rule of duty; and the history of his attempts in this kind justify their caution abundantly. Many, too, are led into error by too generous an interpretation of the words in the *Confession of Faith* (Chap. I.) about circumstances which are common to human actions and societies and to the church. The circumstances here referred to are the necessary adjuncts of human actions, such as time and place, decency and order. If there is to be social worship, the

by inevitable necessity, for they claim to be sufficient. They pronounce a curse upon the Sadducees, who take away, and upon the Pharisees, who add, anything. "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book," says the last of the prophets, in closing the canon of Revelation, "if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." And again, "I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed. How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies? Yea, they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart, which think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams, which they tell every man to his neighbor, as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal. The prophet that hath a

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worshippers must agree upon the time and place; if there be a deliberative body, its proceedings require an organization, a presiding officer, etc. If any man can prove that instrumental music is a necessary adjunct of singing, then its lawfulness will be established: till then it must be deemed and taken for an abomination. The fourteenth chapter of First Corinthians, which is argued mainly upon the acknowledged principles of common sense, wears a very unfavorable aspect towards these inventions for making the simple, spiritual worship of the gospel more attractive to the carnal heart. Considered merely in the light of expediency, such measures are to be condemned. They are fostering a taste which Rome alone can fully gratify: and by virtue of the connection which God has ordained between the forms of worship and the doctrinal character of the dispensations of religion to which they belong, an innovation in worship is sure to lead, sooner or later, to a corruption of doctrine. Splendid churches, which sprung from corruption, will lead back to it. There must be a correspondence between architecture and the inner life of man, and the worshippers will be led gradually to ignore the "true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man," and the boldness of their access into the holiest of all, and come again under that yoke of bondage from which they were delivered. But this is a tempting subject, and we must forbear.

dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord. Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces? Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that steal my words every one from his neighbor. Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that use their tongues, and say, He saith. Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord." (Jer. xxiii. 25-32.) And again, "Your kerchiefs also will I tear, and deliver my people out of your hand, and they shall be no more in your hand to be hunted; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life; therefore ye shall see no more vanity, nor divine divinations: for I will deliver my people out of your hand: and ye shall know that I am the Lord." (Ezek. xiii. 21-23.) We do not deny the possibility of some future revelation; but if it should ever be, it will be in entire harmony with all that has gone before; it will neither "make the righteous sad" nor "strengthen the hands of the wicked by promising him life," which are the characteristics of the visions and traditions of the day; and it will be authenticated by the *signs* of prophets and apostles. Let their *soi-disant* successors perform real miracles, raise the dead and cast out devils, and we will believe them; but let not their mighty works be impostures of Jannes and Jambres, the enchantments of the chemist or the legerdemain of the juggler, whose only effect is to withstand the prophet and resist the truth of God.

But to the law and the testimony again: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God; and it is profitable for teach-

ing, for refutation, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.) This is a testimony covering the whole ground, and annihilating all the pretensions of rationalism and traditionalism; the utterance of that Spirit who sees the end from the beginning, who has numbered and labelled, in his omniscience, all the poisonous delusions which can ever threaten the health or vitality of the church, and has repositied in his word the antidote appropriate to each. It is full of instruction. It teaches us, among others, the following things :

*First*, That the written Bible has been given by inspiration of God. The inspiration is not predicated of the man, but of the writing; not of the instrument, but of the product. So that all disputes touching degrees of inspiration, whether plenary or partial, *ad verbum* or *ad sensum*, of superintendence, of direction, of elevation, control or suggestion; all disputes touching the *modus operandi* of the Spirit upon the souls of men selected to be his organs; all nice distinctions between revelation and inspiration (distinctions which we believe to be real, and, in their proper places, valuable), all are beside the mark, and impertinent in the discussion of the Bible as an authoritative rule of faith and practice. The whole record is from God, every word of it; every word rests upon the same authority. The salutations of Paul, his message to Timothy about his cloak, all the little epistolary details which so beautifully illustrate the spirit of Christianity in the mutual affection, the common interests, sufferings and perils of the followers of the Lamb, speak to us in tones as imperative as the incomprehensible statements concerning the being and personality of God, the mystery of the incarnation, or the all-comprehending relations of the sacrifice on the cross. In the shallows in which a lamb may wade, in the depths in which an elephant may swim; at the base of the burning mount with the carnal men of Israel, or on the summit in the midst of blackness, darkness and tem-



pest with the favored prophet of the Lord ; instructed by the homely wisdom of James, or entranced by "rapt Isaiah's fire" ; while contemplating the history of the church under the law, or, with the apostle in the Isle of Patmos, gazing upon the church of Christ, as scene after scene of "the high and stately tragedy" is brought before the eye, the baptisms of blood and martyrdoms of fire, the conflicts and the victory ; wherever we are in the Bible, it is the voice of God that meets the ear. It is the low view men take of the inspiration of the Bible, the perverse and unwarranted application of the law of parsimony, which has given rise to the vanity and folly of rationalism, or the rationalists have framed their theory to meet the necessities of their creed. It matters not which.

*Second*, It teaches us that the Scriptures are sufficient "for all good works" ; that for every exercise of the active powers of man, for every exercise of his intellectual faculties, in the business of religion, or in the relations which he sustains to the object of all worship, and in the relations which he sustains to his fellow-men, so far as moral obligation is involved, he is fully equipped and furnished in the word of God. There is nothing which a minister of religion needs to teach, there is nothing which a Christian man needs to learn, no good to work which the one ought to exhort or which the other ought to perform, which is not expressly set down here, or necessarily involved in what is set down. But the particulars are stated :

1. It is profitable for "doctrine" or "teaching," and for "refutation" ; for the positive inculcation of truth, and for the refutation of error ; for didactic and polemic theology. We do not mean that it contains an encyclopædia of all knowledge, that it will make men astronomers, geologists or chemists, though we protest against the notion of a dualism in doctrine : that what is theologically true may be philosophically or scientifically false, and vice-versa, the author of the constitution and course of nature, and the

author of the Bible being the same.<sup>1</sup> And so, also, for "refutation," the only weapon needed is the sword of the Spirit. Both of these, didactics and polemics, are necessary in our present state, in which we are to be educated in the lessons of faith in the midst of prevailing error and unbelief. We are to be witnesses for the one, and against the other; for the Father of Lights, and against the father of lies.

2. It is profitable for "correction" and for "instruction in righteousness"; the whole sum of human duty is here contained, and the contrary sins are rebuked; the positive and negative moral education of men is amply provided for their reformation and their edification, both which are necessary to a fallen man.

In conclusion, it may be added, that the method by which the Bible teaches is as admirable as the matter of its teaching. He who, to the Jews, the trustees of the oracles of God and the students of prophecy, presented himself as "the Root and the Offspring of David"; who, to the Gentiles from the East, in possession, it may be, of some hereditary knowledge of the "Star" of Gentile prophecy, but, at any rate, accustomed to associate the changes in the heavens with the movements and occurrences of earth, presented himself as "the Bright and Morning Star"; and who, to the Gentiles from the West (John xii. 20-24), accustomed to con-

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<sup>1</sup> We cannot sympathize with those of our brethren whose sensitiveness has led them to acknowledge the validity of the present theory of geology, and to interpret the Bible in harmony with it. The discovery of a single fossil may compel them to abandon their position or to turn infidels. Let us wait till geology understands itself; the votaries of it have "run too fast," to use Bacon's image (Wisdom of the Ancients, under Prometheus), "and extinguished their torch." The author of the "Vestiges" made a triumphant use of geology, and men began to think that they had sprung from a tadpole or an "acarus crossii"; but Hugh Miller's *Asterolepis* extinguished the theory, and restored the race of men to their self-complacency. Before the end of this year, the current theory may be as dead as those which have already passed away. Have faith in the word, and it will take care of itself; or rather, have faith in God, who spake it.

template the processes of vegetable life as, in some sort, the symbols of laws in the spiritual constitution of man, and especially to celebrate the joyous bursting of spring after the long and dreary desolation of the winter's night, as an adumbration of the final restoration of a lost life to man, presented himself as a "corn of wheat," which must die in order to be fruitful; he, who clothes himself in all the names which suggest the sweet and tender sympathies of life in order to attract us to himself, the fountain and complement of them all, has made provision in his word for all diversities of mind and taste and vocation, has become all things to all men, if, by any means, he might save some. To the logical he has become a Reasoner; to the fanciful, a Poet; to the grave and practical, an Utterer of Proverbs; to the curious about the future, a Prophet; to the curious about the past, a Historian. To the refined and educated he speaks in the exquisite diction of Isaiah; to the rude and uncultivated he speaks the language of Amos. The ardent are justified by the fiery zeal and impetuous thinking of Paul. The gentle and loving have their sympathies enchained by the calm and affectionate style of John. Human instruments all, all musical with the breath of the same Spirit, all uttering the same tune, and alive, as it were, with the same melody, "Glory to God in the highest," but ranging, in the character of the sound, from the sweetness of "the flute and soft recorder" to the terrible-ness of the trumpet's blast.<sup>1</sup> Like the drops of the morning dew, they all reflect and refract the rays of the same sun, but with the varied and beautiful colors of the spectrum. When man makes a manual of faith or duty (unless he borrows from the Bible), it is a repulsive mass of dry bones, a Loyola's "Spiritual Exercises"; when God presents us with one, it lives and breathes and smiles; it combines, like the Word of whom it testifies, the attractions of humanity with the awe-compelling majesty of God.

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<sup>1</sup>See Gaussen's *Thopneusty* and Hamilton's *Lamp and Lantern* for some beautiful illustrations of the variety of Scripture.

## THE MISSIONS OF PROTESTANTS AND ROMANISTS COMPARED.<sup>1</sup>

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THE Christian church has always acknowledged, in theory at least, its duty to preach the gospel to the whole world. This acknowledgment it would hardly be possible to evade without resigning its claim to the right of existing at all. The charter to which it refers as the origin of its existence, of its rights and its privileges, provides that it shall extend itself until its boundaries shall be commensurate with the boundaries of the world. Upon no other condition can it maintain itself in the enjoyment of its rights and privileges. Rights and duties will not submit to that divorce to which our fallen nature is so prone to subject them; nay, in a very high sense, they are identical. It was, at once, the highest duty and the highest joy of the Saviour himself to glorify the Father. In glorifying the Father on the earth, he himself was glorified; and so the church, which is his body, must recognize it as her chief end, the end to which all minor ends must be held in the strictest subordination, to glorify and enjoy him forever; to glorify and enjoy *both*; to glorify and enjoy *at the same time*; to enjoy in glorifying, to glorify in enjoying. This is the law of the church's being, and it has never neglected this law for any long period without being reminded of the neglect by alarming symptoms of declension in life and vigor. These symptoms have admonished it that the very condition of continuing to live is aggression upon the outlying regions of darkness; that the conquests already made can only be secured by going on conquering and to conquer. The mis-

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<sup>1</sup>This fragment is offered because, though brief and imperfect, it suggests much.—Ed.

sionary spirit of the church is the truly *conservative* spirit of the church.

Profoundly was this conviction impressed upon the heart of the primitive church, and nobly did its impulses and labors correspond with its convictions. Before the last of the apostles fell asleep, it could be said with truth that the gospel had been preached throughout the then known world, the *οικουμένη*, the *orbis terrarum*. From the Indus to the pillars of Hercules, from the upper waters of the Nile to the Danube, had the glad tidings of salvation been proclaimed. In the second century, the ardent African, Tertullian, could say to the Jews:<sup>1</sup> "In whom but the Christ now come have all nations believed? . . . the various tribes of the Getuli, and the numerous hordes of the Mauri, all the Spanish clans, the different nations of Gauls, and the regions of the Britons inaccessible to the Romans but subject to Christ, and the Sarmatians and Dacians and Germans and Scythians, and many unexplored nations and countries and islands unknown to us, and which we cannot enumerate; in all which places the name of the Christ who has already come now reigns."

So rapid was the extension of Christianity that its enemies have been baffled and confounded in the attempt to account for it by causes merely human and secondary. The signal failure of Gibbon, one of the most malignant and relentless, as he was one of the subtlest and ablest, of its enemies, is the failure of all. We are not now concerned, however, with the question of his success or failure in the argument of the famous fifteenth chapter, but simply with the fact which he labors to account for, that "while," to use his own words, "the empire was invaded by open violence, or undermined by slow decay, a pure and humble religion gently insinuated itself into the minds of men, grew up in silence and obscurity, derived new vigor from opposition, and finally erected the triumphant banner of the cross on the ruins of the capitol."

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<sup>1</sup>Tertull. *adv. Judæos*, c. 7; *apud* Mosheim, I., p. 98.

The missionary zeal of the church never became entirely extinct during those long and, in many respects, melancholy ages which intervened between the establishment of the Christian religion by Constantine, and the Reformation. In the Western church, in the Eastern church, among the Nestorians and the Monophysites, and other bodies of Christians which had withdrawn from the Catholic church, or had been expelled from it, the name of Christ continued to be preached to those who knew it not. The Nestorians, particularly, in the East, and in the West the Christians of Ireland, are to be had in everlasting honor for the heroic energy and patience with which their missions were sustained. The Nestorians seem to have carried the gospel into the very heart of China before the end of the seventh century; and it would appear as if nothing but the ambitious meddling of the Roman pontiffs of a later age prevented the gospel from extending like a broad belt of light from the Mediterranean to the Chinese seas.<sup>1</sup> The Irish Christians, while Ireland was still called *Scotia*, and before it had been handed over by the pope to the tender mercies of the English king,<sup>2</sup> had a purer religion than the continent of Europe, and missionaries were sent by them to the heathen tribes of the Netherlands, Germany, and Switzerland. But we cannot dwell upon these interesting manifestations of the missionary spirit of the mediæval churches. We hasten to the era of the Reformation.

And, first, candor compels us to concede that, in the sixteenth century, the palm of superior missionary zeal belongs to the Romanists. Several reasons have been assigned for this, the chief of which are: 1. That the maritime discoveries of the preceding century had been made by navigators belonging to nations acknowledging subjection to the Roman See, especially Spain and Portugal. The countries

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<sup>1</sup> See Mosheim, Vol. II., 77, Murdock's Note.

<sup>2</sup> The pope was Adrian IV. (an Englishman, Nicholas Breakspear); the king, Henry II.

so discovered were claimed by the popes as the sovereign proprietors of the world under Christ, of whom they pretended to be the vicars. The dominion of the New World was given to Spain by that monster of all villainy, Pope Alexander VI. Columbus himself professed to be animated by a desire to promote the Christian faith, a profession very naturally made by a man enlightened beyond the age in which he lived, in dealing with the ignorance and superstition of the princes and prelates around him. As the facilities for reaching the lands recently discovered were in the hands of the Romanists, it would have been strange indeed if the Romanists had not been foremost in missionary enterprises. This view of the case is confirmed by the fact that, as between the two great bodies into which the Protestants themselves were divided, the Lutheran and the Reformed, the Lutherans were far behind the Reformed in efforts to send the gospel to the heathen nations. There was more maritime commerce among the nations that adopted the Reformed type of Protestantism than among those that adopted the Lutheran type. The English and the Dutch, next to the Spaniards and the Portuguese, were the great maritime powers of Europe, and they were the great missionary nations of the Protestant faith. If the situations of the Lutheran and the Reformed countries had been reversed, the Lutherans would, perhaps, have had the honor which now belongs to the Reformed. I say "*perhaps*," because it must be remembered that there were difficulties growing out of the theological position of Lutheranism, and out of its connection with the civil power, which might have prevented the church from forming any scheme of foreign missions, or, if formed, might have embarrassed the prosecution of them.

2. Another reason which has been assigned for the comparative apathy of Protestants in the cause of missions is, that the work of reconstruction at home was of such magnitude as to absorb all the energies of the church. There is

great force in this. Like the Jews in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, the Protestants were compelled to stand with the trowel in one hand and a sword in the other. From the time that Luther committed to the flames the pope's bull and the canon law, the work of organizing had to begin, and, having been begun, was carried on under an incessant and galling fire from the enemy. The Romanists also had to defend, but they had not to organize. Their compact and well-disciplined hosts, under the command of a hierarchy which wielded the experience of centuries, were entrenched in positions so strong that only a portion of the force of the whole body was required for defence. The rest was free to expend itself in making foreign conquests which might compensate for the losses already sustained, and might infuse a new vigor for the defence of what was still retained at home. Yet, after making all due allowance for difficulties and embarrassments, the questions put to the Lutheran Church by the noble Justinian Ernest<sup>1</sup> in the seventeenth century might not have been answered with entire satisfaction to their consciences by the Protestants of the sixteenth century: "Is it right that we evangelical Christians should keep the gospel to ourselves, and not seek to spread it abroad? Is it right that we should expend so much in dress, high living, useless amusements, and expensive fashions, yet hitherto have never thought of any means for spreading the gospel?" And as to the other difficulty of the want of seaports and of foreign commerce, the splendid success of the Moravian missions is a sufficient answer to that. "Where there is a will, there is a way," saith the homely proverb.

In whatever way we may dispose of the moral question, it cannot be denied that the Romanists constitute a missionary body.

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<sup>1</sup> Mosheim, III., p. 258.



## MARTIN LUTHER.<sup>1</sup>

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THERE is a pretty little story which many of you have seen which I will use as an introduction to this lecture: "On a cold, dark night, when the wind was blowing hard and the snow was falling fast, Conrad Cotta, a worthy citizen of a little town in Germany, sat playing his flute, while Ursula, his wife, was preparing supper. They heard a sweet voice singing outside :

'Foxes to their holes have gone,  
Every bird into its nest;  
But I wander here alone,  
And for me there is no rest,  
Yet I neither faint nor fear,  
For the Saviour, Christ, is here.'

"Tears filled the good man's eyes as he said, 'What a fine, sweet voice! what a pity it should be spoiled by being tried in such weather!' 'I think it is the voice of a child. Let us open the door and see,' said his wife, who had lost a little boy not long before, and whose heart was opened to take pity on the little wanderer. Conrad opened the door and saw a ragged child, who said, 'Charity, good sir, for Christ's sake!' 'Come in, my little one,' said he, 'you shall rest with me for the night.' The boy said, 'Thank God!' and entered. The heat of the room made him faint, but Ursula's kind care soon revived him. They gave him some supper, and then he told them he was the son of a poor miner, and wanted to be a scholar. He wandered about, and sang and lived on the money people gave him. His kind friends would not let him talk much, but sent him to bed. When he was asleep they looked in on him, and were so pleased with

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<sup>1</sup>This lecture was prepared in 1872.—ED.

his pleasant countenance that they determined to keep him if he was willing. In the morning they found he was only too glad to remain with them. They sent him to school, and afterwards he went into a monastery. There one day he found a Bible which he read, and learned the way of life. The sweet voice of the little singer became the strong echo of the good news—'Justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.' Conrad and Ursula when they took that little singer into their house little thought that they were nourishing the great champion of the Reformation. The poor child was Martin Luther."

Luther, then, was the child of poverty, and the painful discipline of this low condition contributed to form that strong character which confronted without dismay the mightiest powers of church and state in his day.

"Sweet are the uses of adversity,  
Which, like a toad ugly and venomous,  
Wears yet a precious jewel in its head."

He, himself, at a later period in his life, said: "The young should learn especially to endure suffering and want, for such suffering doth them no harm. It doth more harm for one to prosper without toil than it doth to endure suffering. It is God's way, of beggars to make men of power, just as he made the world out of nothing. Look upon the courts of kings and princes, upon cities and parishes. You will find there jurists, doctors, counsellors, secretaries, and preachers who were commonly poor, and always such have been students, and have risen and flown so high through the quill that they are become lords. I have been a beggar of crumbs, and have taken my bread at the door, especially in Eisenbach, my favorite town, although my dear father with all love and fidelity sustained me at school in Erfurt, and by his sweat helped to that whereunto I have attained; nevertheless, I have been a beggar of bread, and have prospered so far forth with the pen that I would not exchange my art for all

the wealth of the Turkish empire. Nay, I would not exchange it for all the wealth of the world many times over. Therefore, doubt not to put your boy to study, and if he must needs beg his bread, you nevertheless give unto God a noble piece of timber whereof he will carve a great man. So it must always be; your son and mine, that is, the children of common people, must govern the world both in the church and in the commonwealth."

It is no part of my purpose to recount the leading incidents in Luther's career, nor can such a recital be needed. It will be more instructive to consider some of the traits of his intellectual, spiritual, and social life.

In dealing with such a character, it is not easy to hold the critical scales with a steady hand. He was a *power* in the world. He stirred the hearts of men to their profoundest depths. He was a man to whom none who knew him could be indifferent. All must either love or hate. These strong sentiments have not been excited by the mere exhibition of power, or of extraordinary genius. Luther was successful. His glory was not that of the sheet lightning whose play in the evening sky it is pleasant to behold, but it was that of the flaming thunderbolt which rends and blasts. Thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers trembled and shook under his tremendous blows. He was the instrument of a revolution which extended to the business and bosoms of all mankind. There was no dark recess of priestly villainy, no dismal dungeon of suffering innocence, no den of human beasts, no crypt of hearts broken for sin and sighing for peace which his voice did not seem to penetrate, either to console or to alarm. It was impossible to be indifferent while this giant was striding along and the earth was shaking beneath his tread. It is impossible even *now*, for the truth which he proclaimed is eternal truth, "set for the fall and the rising again of many, and for a sign which shall be spoken against." And so it must continue to be, until the sound of

the last trump, and the sound of final victory shall ring through the universe, and the mystery of God's patience and long-suffering shall be finished.

Romanists and Romanisms, of course, feel an invincible repugnance to him. He was a good, hearty hater of their system of religion, and they have repaid his hatred with compound interest. This Augustinian eremite published to the world the doctrines of the illustrious teacher by whose name his order was called, and he had learned these doctrines in a convent which had been founded probably by the heroic missionaries from Ireland a whole millennium before. Two great streams of influence, springing up a thousand years before, one in North Africa and the other in the Ultima Thule of the West, unite in the cell of the solitary recluse of Erfurt, and he preaches a gospel which was honored by those whom his church delighted to honor. But he has not the less been hated on that account. Indeed, all the more. The name of Augustine, who had been canonized by the church, when associated with doctrines which the church abhorred, made these doctrines more offensive. The name was a painful remembrancer of change, if not of apostasy, in an infallible communion. So the Jansenists and Port Royalists found it at a later day. Luther stood by the teaching of antiquity; he uncovered the old paths and invited the nations to walk in them. He demonstrated that the pope and the Roman curiæ had forsaken them and were walking in the light of their own eyes, and after the imagination of their own hearts. He showed that the schoolmen, the angelic doctors, the seraphic doctors, the irrefragable doctors, had been blind leaders of the blind, and had gone astray just in proportion as they had receded from those great doctrines of grace which had been defended by the sainted Augustine. In short, he made it plain that in sainting and glorifying the Bishop of Hippo they meant only to appropriate the glory of his name, not at all to walk in the footsteps of his faith

which had made his name glorious; that they builded the sepulchres of the prophets to keep the prophets in their sepulchres, rather than to do honor to their teaching. They, therefore, hated the Augustinian Luther, and hated him for the same reason that Demetrius of Ephesus hated Paul: he interfered with the craft by which they had their wealth. It is the makers and venders of the silver shrines of Diana who raise the cry for the disinterested crowd to join in, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!"

Hence, all the bad things which Luther ever did have been raked up with laborious malice, and many bad things which he never did have been invented, for the purpose of loading his name with reproach. Now it is natural to every thinking man to ask, why is this done by *Romanists*? Do they hold that if a man's moral character is bad his teaching must be unsound? Does moral corruption necessarily discredit a man's claims to a divine legation? They would be the last people in the world to take such a position as this, because the slightest acquaintance with the lives of their popes would make their enemies to retort the argument with overwhelming effect. In the *Pope and Council*, a work issued by the "Old Catholics" (now making such a stir in Europe), there is quoted a saying of some defender of the Roman See in answer to the charge of notorious ignorance of theology among the popes as militating somewhat against the claim of infallibility. The saying is, in substance, that it is not necessary that the popes should know theology in order to be infallible, for God once spoke by the mouth of an ass. In like manner, when we allege the character of the popes as an objection to their divine inspiration; when we ask, can it be possible that a holy God employed an Alexander VI., a John XXII., or a Leo X., as his chosen vehicles for conveying his truth to men? the Romanist might answer that God spake by the mouth of Balaam, whose heart was set on the wages of unrighteousness, who was more than willing to

curse those whom God had blessed, if only he were well paid for it. Let the character of Luther be as bad as his enemies represent it, it is yet a dangerous stone for the Romanists to pelt with. It may rebound with fatal effects on their own heads. We believe, indeed, that the argument, when stated with its proper limitations, is a good one. We cannot believe, simply because God has used in a single instance a very bad man or his ass as an instrument to speak through, that moral character has nothing to do with a divine commission to teach. He who was the first pope according to the Romanists, Peter himself, says, that "*holy* men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." We can believe a great deal, but we cannot believe that the popes of the ninth and tenth centuries were infallible, when we see Cardinal Baronius himself, in beginning his annals of the tenth, breaking out in passionate lamentations over the corruptions of the chair of St. Peter. If we could believe what Luther's enemies say of him, we should more than question his divine call, though we should not question the doctrine of Paul, the apostle, which he preached. The Romanists are right in attaching some importance to moral character in the teachers of religion, and they have to thank the Saxon reformer and his work for the gratifying change for the better in the moral character of the post-Reformation popes. We are thankful that when we speak of a "good reformer," or "a good Protestant bishop," we are not obliged to explain and qualify the expression as the famous Italian historian, Guicciardini, is quoted as doing when he calls one of the popes "a good pope." "I mean not," says he, "goodness apostolical, for in those days *he* was esteemed a good pope that did not exceed the wickedness of the worst of men."

But many sympathize strongly with the negative aspects of Luther's work who have no sympathy at all with his positive faith. They laud the Reformation as the first act in the emancipation of the human mind from all authority, as the

prelude to that ideal elysium in which everybody is to do as he pleases and to think as he chooses, but damn with faint praise whenever the Reformation appears as an uncompromising witness of eternal truth. "The very intensity of Luther's convictions," says Archdeacon Hare, "the vehemence with which he contended for them, cannot but seem utterly extravagant to those who do not share in them, or feel what questions of weal or woe, of life or death, for the whole race of men were at stake. There are many, moreover, to whom that vehemence in itself is repulsive, persons who like the spectacle of rhetorical or scholastic expression better than the strife and tug of the forum." They take pleasure in Erasmus, but are shocked and startled by Luther. Luther was a man of faith, and the men of no faith do not like him. These men like not a true and radical reform. A man like Erasmus, cultivating the graces of an elegant scholarship in dignified retirement and repose, laughing at the follies of the monks and lashing the asinine logic of the mendicant doctors of the universities, and yet with no spirit of a martyr to the truth, ready to retract opinions deliberately formed at the demand of those same asinine doctors backed by the authority of an infallible church, a man like Erasmus is altogether to their taste. But Luther was of a different mould altogether, and his mission was altogether different, his work was *reform*, and the Reformation was the expression of his life. It was the enacting upon the public theatre of Europe of a drama which had been previously rehearsed in the secrecy of his own bosom; "his work," to use again the language of Hare, "was not something external to him, like Saturn's ring, on which he shone, and within which he revolved; it was his own very self that grew out of him, while he grew out of his work." "It was the scattering," to use the nervous words of Milton, "of that pitchy cloud of infernal darkness in which the nations were involved, in which they could neither see the sun of divine truth, nor greet the cheerful dawn, nor

hear the bird of morning sing." There is an insight into character, as has been well observed, which is never granted except to love; and if a man does not rightly estimate and feel thankful for the Reformation, he cannot rightly understand Luther. It is only upon this principle that we can account for the gratuitous assaults which have been made upon the character of the reformer by such men as Hallam and Sir William Hamilton, while they profess the highest admiration of him as a great and good man. It had been well for Hamilton if he had not meddled with Luther. His reputation would not then have been tarnished as it is now by a disingenuous and ostentatious parade of borrowed learning.

The mere men of literature, as might be expected, have no great admiration for our hero, unless they chance to be, like Carlyle, hero-worshippers, worshippers of mere force, without reference to the mode in which, or the ends for which, the force is exerted. "The reformer's mind," as Henry Rogers observes, "did not belong exclusively, or even prevailingly, to either of the two principal types with which we usually associate genius and which almost divide the page of literary history between them. The one is the prevailing philosophical temperament, with numberless specific differences; the other, the prevailing poetical, with differences equally numerous. The passion of the one class of minds is speculative and scientific truth; that of the other, ideal beauty; yet there is another and not less imposing form of human genius, though it does not figure much on the page of literary history, which has men as illustrious as man was ever made either by depth or subtlety of speculation, or by opulence or brilliancy of fancy. This class of minds unites some of the rarest endowments of the philosophical and poetical temperaments; and though the reason in such men is not such as would have made an Aristotle, nor the imagination such as would have made a Homer, these ele-



ments are mingled in such proportions and combinations as render the product, the *tertium quid*, not less wonderful than the greatest expansion of either element alone. To these are superadded some qualities which neither bard nor philosopher ever possessed, and the whole is subjected to an energetic will and powerful passions. Such are the minds that are destined to change the face of the world, to originate and control great revolutions, to govern the actions of men by a sagacious calculation of motives, or to govern their very thoughts by the magical power of their eloquence. They are the stuff of which great statesmen, great conquerors, great orators are made, by the last, however, not meaning the mere mob-orator, who attains and preserves a powerful influence by just following the multitude he appears to lead, and who, if popular, is popular in virtue of Swift's receipt for becoming a wise man, that is, by agreeing with whatever any one may say; we mean the man who, if need be, can stem the torrent as well as drift upon it; who upon occasion can tell unpalatable truths and yet rivet attention. To be *such* an orator requires many of the qualities of the philosophical statesman, the same deep knowledge of the mechanism of human nature in general, the same keen perception of the motives and feelings of the so-conditioned humanity with which it has to deal, the same ready appreciation of the topics and arguments likely to prevail, the same sagacity in calculating moral causes and effects; and we need not wonder, therefore, that the great statesman and the persuasive orator are so often found united in the same individual."

"Now to achieve any of the great tasks to which this class of minds seems born; to manage vast and difficult affairs with address and bring them to an unexpectedly prosperous issue; to know how to seize the critical moment of action with proper decision, or to exercise patience and self-control in waiting for it; to penetrate the springs of human conduct,

whether in the genus or the individual; to sway the minds of whole communities, as whole forests bow at once before the voice of the tempest; to comprehend and calculate the interaction of numberless causes and effects; to originate and execute daring enterprises in the face of many obstacles, physical and moral, and not only in the midst of opposite wills and conflicting interests, but often by means of them—all this seems to us to imply as wonderful a combination of intellectual qualities as that which enables the mathematical analyst to disentangle the intricacies of a transcendental equation, or the metaphysician to speculate profoundly on the freedom of the human will, or the origin of evil. Nor do those who have thus been both authors and actors in the real drama of history appear to us to be less worthy of our admiration than those who have but imagined what the former have achieved. There are, unquestionably, men who have been as famous for what they have done as others can be, or have been, for what they have written."

"It is precisely," continues Mr. Rogers, "to such an order of genius, whatever his merits or defects as a writer, that the intellect of Luther is, in our judgment, to be referred, and, considered in this point of view, we doubt whether it is very possible to exaggerate his greatness. No one ever denies the intellect of Pericles or Alexander, Cromwell or Napoleon, to be of the highest order merely because none of these have left ingenious treatises of philosophy, or exquisite strains of poetry, or exhibited any of the traces either of a calm or beautiful intellect; and it is enough for Luther to be known as the author of the Reformation."

It is not at all wonderful that men of polished taste, living in an age of peace, and that, too, a peace purchased by the sweat and blood of the Reformers, should be offended by the vehemence and coarseness of Luther. He did not mince his words. He was terribly in earnest, and we may say of his words as he said of Paul's, that they are "living creatures,

and have hands and feet." Not seldom they seem to have claws and talons which tear the flesh of his luckless adversaries. His eloquence, as we have already said, is often like the lightning that blasts and scathes wherever it strikes. The immense force of his language corresponds with the intensity of his convictions and emotions; but for this very reason they often seem to a reader who is calm and unmoved to border on sheer extravagance and rant. His arrogance of tone and rudeness of invective, the natural expression of the enthusiasm and vehemence of his character, were also systematically adopted as most subservient to his purpose. "Timidity and irresolution," as has been well observed by the eloquent writer already quoted, "would have been his ruin. On the other hand, his self-reliance and fearlessness, the grandeur and dilation of his carriage, his very contempt of his adversaries, all tended to give courage and confidence to those who possessed them not, and to inspire his party with his own spirit. His voice never failed to act like a trumpet call upon the hearts of his followers, to reassure them when depressed, and to rally them when defeated. No other tone, no other language, could have had the same effect. Considering his position, there is a sort of sublimity in his audacity." "I know and am certain," says he, in a letter to Spalatin (1521), "that Jesus Christ lives and reigns, and buoyant in this knowledge and confidence, I will not fear a hundred thousand popes." "My doctrine will stand," he says, in his reply to Henry VIII., "and the pope will fall in spite of all the powers of air, earth, and hell. They have provoked me to war, they shall have it; they scorned the peace I offered them, peace they shall have no longer. God shall look to it, which of the two shall first retire from the struggle, the pope or Luther."

It is simply ridiculous for a small critic like Hallam, "learned Hallam, renowned for Greek," to deny the praise of eloquence to Luther. Eloquence, according to the standard

of Blair's rhetoric, indeed, he had none. But a multitude of sentences has been collected from his writings worthy of that prince of orators who of old "fulminated over Greece." When he received the sentence of excommunication, he defied it in these terms: "As they have excommunicated me in defence of their sacrilegious heresy, so do I excommunicate them on behalf of the holy truth of God; and let Christ, our judge, decide whether of the two excommunications has the greater weight with him." So, also, when he dropped the papal bull into the flames: "As thou hast troubled and put to shame the Holy One of God, so be thou troubled and consumed in the eternal fires of hell." So, also, his famous declaration of Worms: "Since your majesty requires of me a simple and direct answer, I will give one, and it is this: I cannot submit my faith either to popes or to councils, since it is clear as noonday that they have often erred and even opposed one another. If, then, I am not confuted by Scripture or by cogent reasons, I neither can nor will retract anything, for it cannot be right for a Christian to do anything against his conscience. Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise; God help me!" On another occasion, he says: "I am looking daily for the anathema from Rome, and setting all things in order, so that when they arrive I may go forth prepared and girded like Abraham, ignorant whither I shall go, nay, rather well assured whither, for God is everywhere."

The coarseness and extravagance of Luther's language at times has been a fruitful theme of remark to the Romanists, who take special pains to pass over in silence the atrocious blasphemy and obscenity of their man Tetzl in his preaching of indulgences for sin. But Luther's education must be remembered. He sprang from one of the lower strata of society, and passed thence into a monastery. A man can scarcely be expected to have refined and eloquent manners who has no other society than that of men, and of men, too, who are monks like himself. It is hard for a man to be

anything but coarse who is not subjugated to the humanizing influence of virtuous and cultivated women. Further, it must be remembered that the scholastic casuistry which Luther had studied so long was accustomed to enunciate its propositions in a paradoxical and startling form. The Jesuits became great masters of this style, and whoever has read Pascal's *Provincial Letters* knows that the most monstrous exaggerations of Luther are chaste and temperate in comparison with the statements of those most holy and revered fathers. Although it cannot be denied that extravagance of expression found a genial dwelling in Luther's mind, yet let no nice ears be too much offended. "When a Titan is walking about among the pygmies," says Archdeacon Hare, "the earth seems to rock beneath his tread. Mount Blanc would be out of keeping in the Regent's Park, and what would be the outcry if it were to toss its head and shake off an avalanche or two? Such is the dullness of the elementary powers, they have not apprehended the distinction between force and violence. In like manner, when the adamantine bondage in which men's hearts, and souls, and minds had been held for centuries was to be burst, it was almost inevitable that the power that was to burst this bondage should not measure its movements by the rules of polished life."

"The old Adam in Martin Luther" (a favorite subject of his discourse), says Sir James Stephen, "was a very formidable personage lodged in a bodily frame of surpassing vigor, solicited by vehement appetites, and alive to all the passions by which man is armed for offensive and defensive warfare with his fellows. In accordance with a general law, that temperament was sustained by nerves which shrunk neither from the endurance nor the infliction of unnecessary pain, and by a courage which rose at the approach of difficulty and exulted in the presence of danger. A rarer prodigality of nature combined with these endowments an inflexible reliance on the conclusions of his own understanding and on

the energy of his own will. He came forth on the theatre of life another *Samson Agonistes*, with plain, heroic magnitude of mind, and celestial vigor, armed ready to wage an unequal contest with the haughtiest of the giants of Gath, or to shake down, though it were on his own head, the columns of the proudest of her temples. Viewed in his belligerent aspect, he might have seemed a being cut off from the common brotherhood of mankind, and bearing from on high a commission to bring to pass the remote ends of divine benevolence by means appalling to human guilt and human weakness. But he was reclaimed into the bosom of the great family of man by bonds fashioned in strength and number proportioned to the vigor of the propensities they were intended to control. There brooded over him a constitutional melancholy, sometimes engendering sadness, but more often giving birth to dreams so wild that, if vivified by the imagination of Dante, they might have passed into visions as awful and majestic as those of the *Inferno*. As these mists rolled away, bright gleams of sunshine took their place, and that robust mind yielded itself to social enjoyments with the hearty relish, the broad humor, and the glorious profusion of sense and nonsense which betoken the relaxations of those who are for the moment abdicating the mastery to become the companions of ordinary man. Luther had other and yet more potent spells with which to exorcise the demons which haunted him. He had ascertained and taught that the spirit of darkness abhors sweet sounds not less than light itself, for music, while it chases away the evil suggestions, effectually baffles the wiles of the tempter. His lute and hand and voice accompanying his own solemn melodies were, therefore, used to repel the more vehement aggressions of the enemy of mankind, whose feebler assaults he encountered by studying the politics of a rookery, by assigning to each beautiful creation of his flower-beds an appropriate sylph or genius, by the company of his Catherine von Bora,

and the sports of their saucy John and playful Magdalene."

The mention of Catherine's name reminds us of that in the life of Luther which, in the eyes of some Romanists, is the greatest of all his sins, next to his rebellion against the pope. He broke by his marriage with Catherine his monastic vow of celibacy, and induced her to break hers. We shall not stay to discuss the question of casuistry. There is a sort of conscience which strains out a gnat and swallows a camel; a conscience which is shocked at the destruction of an idol image, and yet has no scruple about destroying with fire and sword the living images of God; a conscience which restrains a man from eating flesh on Friday, but does not restrain him from taking his neighbor's purse, or from cutting his throat. If most pernicious results can demonstrate a vow to be wrong, then no reasonable man can doubt that monastic vows and the enforced celibacy of the clergy are wrong. But, we repeat, this is not the occasion to discuss this question with those who make marriage a holy sacrament, and at the same time make it a mark of eminent holiness to abstain from it. We are content with the simple statement of the Scripture, that "marriage is honorable in all."

Luther's marriage may have been indiscreet. How few marriages there are which are not by somebody so considered! It was certainly a happy marriage, and the glimpses of Luther's home-life are amongst the most attractive that individual history affords. Let us contemplate it in company with a writer who has already entertained us, Sir James Stephen: "Catherine was a lady of noble birth, and was still young when she renounced the ancient faith, her convent, and her vows, to become the wife of Martin Luther. From this portentous union of a monk and nun, the 'obscure men' confidently predicted the birth of anti-Christ, while the wits and scholars greeted their nuptials with a thick hail-storm of epigrams, hymns, and dithyrambics, the learned

Eck himself chiming into the loud chorus with an elaborate epithalium. The bridegroom met the tempest with the spirit of another Benedict, by a counter-blast of invectives and sarcasms, which, afterwards collected under the title of *The Lion and the Ass*, perpetuated the memory of this redoubtable controversy. 'My enemies,' he exclaimed, 'triumphed; they shouted, Io! Io! I was resolved to show that, old and feeble as I am, I am not going to sound a retreat. I trust I shall do still more to spoil their merriment.'

"Catherine was a very pretty woman, if Holbein's portrait may be believed; although even her personal charms have been rudely impugned by her husband's enemies, in grave disquisitions devoted to that momentous question. Better still, she was a faithful and affectionate wife. But there is a no less famous Catherine to whom she bore a strong family resemblance. She brought from her nunnery an anxious mind, a shrewish temper, and great volubility of speech. Luther's arts were not those of Petruchio. With him reverence for a woman was at once a natural instinct and a point of doctrine. He observed that when the first woman was brought to the first man to receive her name, he called her not wife, but mother: 'Eve, the mother of all living'; 'a word,' he says, 'more eloquent than ever fell from the lips of Demosthenes.' So, like a wise and kind-hearted man, when his Catherine prattled, he smiled; when she frowned, he playfully stole away her anger, and chided her anxieties with the gentlest soothing. A happier or more peaceful home was not to be found in that land of domestic tenderness. Yet the confession must be made that, from the first to the last, this love-tale is nothing less than a case of *læsa majestas* against the sovereignty of romance. Luther and his bride did not meet on either side with the rapture of a first affection. He had long before sighed for the fair Ave Shonfelden, and she had not concealed her attachment for a certain Jerome Baumgartun. Ave had bestowed herself in



marriage on a physician of Prussia, and before Luther's irrevocable vows were pledged, Jerome received from his great rival an intimation that he (Jerome) still possessed the heart, and, with common activity, might even yet secure the hand of Catherine. But honest Jerome was not a man to be hurried. He silently resigned his pretensions to his illustrious competitor, who, even in the moment of success, had the discernment to perceive, and the frankness to acknowledge, that his love was not of a flaming and ungovernable nature.

“‘Nothing on earth’ said the good dame Ursula with whom Luther boarded when at school at Eisenbach, ‘is of such inestimable value as a woman’s love.’ This maxim, recommended more, perhaps, by its truth than by its originality, dwelt long on the mind and on the tongue of the reformer. To have dismissed this or any other text without a commentary would have been abhorrent from his temper; and in one of his letters to Catherine he thus insists on a kindred doctrine, the converse of the first: ‘The greatest favor of God is to have a good and pious husband, to whom you can entrust your all, your person and your life, whose children and yours are the same. Catherine, you have a pious husband, who loves you. You are an empress; thank God for it.’ His conjugal meditations are often in a gayer mood, as for example: ‘If I were going to make love again, I would carve an obedient woman out of marble, in despair of finding one in any other way.’ He addresses her sometimes as ‘my lord Catherine,’ or ‘Catherine, the queen,’ the ‘empress,’ the ‘doctress,’ or as ‘Catherine, the rich and noble lady of Teilsdorf,’ where they had a cottage and a few roods of ground. But as age advanced, these playful sallies were abandoned for the following grave and more affectionate style: ‘To the gracious Lady Catherine Luther, my dear wife who vexes herself overmuch, grace and peace in the Lord! Dear Catherine, you should read St. John, and what

is said in the Catechism of the confidence to be reposed in God. Indeed, you torment yourself as though he were not almighty, and could not produce new doctors Martin by the score if the old doctor should drown himself in the Saale. There is one who watches over me more effectually than thou canst, or than all the angels. He sits at the right hand of the Father Almighty. Therefore be calm!"

From the same source we might quote many more examples of Luther's genial humor in the domestic circle. He, like many other great men who have administered vast interests and have been the soul of great undertakings, was not only "for dignity composed and high exploits," but was endowed with large affections. Never was a falser theory of morals devised than that which supposes a necessary conflict between public and private affections. He who rolls the adamantine spheres along in the void immense has his eye at the same time on the meanest of his creatures. He who hung upon the cross, a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, in the midst of his infinite agonies for the human race did not forget that lowly member of it through whom his humanity was born, but commended her to the care of the beloved disciple. Love, indeed, is a force which "spreads undivided and operates unspent" through all the concentric circles of which it is the centre.

Sir James gives us some examples of the adroitness with which Luther contrived to gratify at once his tenderness as a father and his taste as a theologian. When the brightening eye of one of the urchins around his table confessed the allurements of a downy peach, Luther said it was "the image of a soul rejoicing in hope." Over an infant pressed to his mother's bosom, the severe but affectionate reformer thus moralized: "That babe and everything else which belongs to us is hated by the pope, by Duke George, by their adherents, and by all the devils. Yet, dear little fellow, he troubles himself not a whit for all these powerful enemies ;

he gaily sucks the breast, looks around with a loud laugh, and lets them storm as they like."

But we must turn from these charming domestic scenes to graver matters. Luther was a Samson, indeed, girded with supernatural might by the Spirit of God, able to carry off upon his shoulders the gates of the heathen strongholds, and heroic enough to pull down the columns of their temples upon their heads; yet, like Samson, he was sometimes weak, and left the church another warning not to place implicit trust in man. In the matter of the second marriage of Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, there can be no doubt that both he and Melancthon grievously sinned, through their want of faith. We shall not dwell upon this painful subject. Those who desire to see the documents may find them in the appendix to the sixth book of Bossuet's *History of Protestant Variations*, and so far as a defence can be made, it may be found in Archdeacon Hare's vindication of Luther. The courage of Ambrose in administering the discipline of the church upon the great Emperor Theodosius it would have been well for the great reformer to imitate.

Luther had serious faults as a theologian. He was sound in his soteriology and anthropology; but we can never cease to wonder at his errors, or at the obstinacy, violence, and uncharitableness with which he defended them, concerning the Lord's supper. None saw clearer than he that the church had been practically put in the place of the Saviour by the mediæval theology, and that the doctrine of the real presence was that which gave nearly all its power for mischief to the doctrine of sacramental grace. The power to give the flesh and blood of Christ to his people was the power claimed by the Romish priesthood; and a tremendous power it was. It put the salvation of men into the priest's hands absolutely, and made a slave of every man who had a conscience. How *could* Luther hold to such a doctrine when he saw so clearly that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of men, and not the church;

*i. e.*, the human and mortal priesthood? We cannot answer this question save by saying that it did not please the Lord that his eyes should be opened to see the truth upon this point. This is one of the matters of which the Lord gives us no account. He suffered Augustine to hold opinions about the church which were inconsistent with those doctrines of grace which that father saw so clearly. These contradictory views lay side by side in Augustine's mind without any conflict. But the conflict came afterwards in the church which inherited his writings, and the false doctrine vanquished the true in the course of the Middle Ages. Part of Luther's mission was to oppose this very view of the church which Augustine had held, and which the mediæval church had worked out. And yet Luther himself was allowed to retain one of the most powerful bulwarks of the falsehood as an article of his own faith! True, he held it in the form of consubstantiation, and not in the form of transubstantiation, but they are not worth the trouble of a distinction. They are both absurd to the last degree; both are dishonoring to Christ and his word; both have a fatal tendency in the matter of men's salvation. There was no conflict in Luther's mind between his evangelical faith and his errors concerning the Lord's supper. The conflict came after his death, and his beloved Melanchthon commenced it.

I will close these remarks with a description of Erasmus from the same master-hand which has furnished us so much entertainment and instruction,<sup>1</sup> together with some extracts from a letter of Luther to that great scholar. This will serve by the contrast to give you a juster appreciation of Luther: "The supremacy of Erasmus in the world of letters was such as no other writer ever lived to enjoy. Literature had then a universal language, and the learned of all nations acknowledged him as their guide and model. In an age of intense mental activity, no other mind was so impatient of repose;

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<sup>1</sup> Sir James Stephen's *Essays*, p. 133.

at a period when freedom of thought was asserted with the enthusiasm of new-born hope, he emulated the most sanguine of the insurgents against the ancient dynasties. The restorer, almost the inventor, of the popular interpretation of the Scriptures, he was excelled by few, if any, in the more ambitious science of biblical criticism. His philosophy (if in deference to custom it must so be called) was but the application to those inquiries in which the present and future welfare of mankind is chiefly involved, of an admirable good sense, penetrating sophisms under the most specious disguise, and repelling mere verbal subtleties, however imposing their pretensions, or however illustrious their patrons. Alternately a man of the world and a recluse scholar, he was ever wide-awake to the real business of life, even in those studies which usually conduct the mere prisoners of the cloister into dreamy and transcendental speculations. In his hands the Latin language was bent to uses of which Cicero himself might have thought it incapable; and without any barbarous innovations became, almost for the first time, the vehicle of playful banter and of high and mysterious doctrines treated in a familiar and easy tone. Of the two imperial virtues, industry and self-denial, the literary character of Erasmus was adorned by the first much more than by the second. Grasping at universal excellence and immediate renown, he poured out orations, verses, essays, dialogues, aphorisms, biographies, translations, and new editions of the classical writers, with a rapidity which at once dazzled the world and exhausted himself. Deeply as the impress of his mind was fastened on his own generation, those only of his countless works retain their charm in later times which he regarded but as the pastime of a few leisure hours. His real glory is to have opened at once new channels of popular and of abstruse knowledge, . . . and to have prepared the way for the Reformation. For the *soul* of this great man did not partake of the energy of his intellectual

faculties. He repeatedly confesses that he had none of the spirit of a martyr, and the acknowledgment is made in the tone of sarcasm rather than in that of regret. He belonged to that class of actors on the scene of life who have always appeared as the harbingers of great social changes; men gifted with the power to discern, and the hardihood to proclaim, truths of which they want the power to encounter the infallible results; who outrun their generation in thought, but lag behind it in action; players at the sport of reform so long as reform itself appears at an indefinite distance; more ostentatious of their mental superiority than anxious for the well-being of mankind; dreaming that the dark passage of history may hereafter become a fairy tale, in which enchantment will bring to pass a glorious catastrophe, unbought by intervening strife and agony and suffering; and, therefore, overwhelmed with alarm when the edifice begins to totter, of which their own hands have sapped the foundation. He was a reformer until the Reformation became a fearful reality; a jester at the bulwarks of the papacy until they began to give way; a propagator of the Scriptures until men betook themselves to the study and the application of them; in short, a learned, ingenious, benevolent, amiable, timid, irresolute man, who, fearing the responsibility, resigned to others the glory of rescuing the human mind from the bondage of a thousand years. The distance between his career and that of Luther was, therefore, continually enlarging, until at length they moved in opposite directions, and met each other with mutual animosity. The reformer foresaw and deprecated this collision; and Bossuet has condemned as servile the celebrated letter in which Luther endeavored to avert the impending contest. In common with many of his censures of the great father of the Protestant church, this is evidently the result of prejudice. The letter was conceived with tenderness, and expressed with becoming dignity.

“‘I do not,’ says Luther to Erasmus, ‘reproach you in

your estrangements from us, fearing lest I should hinder the cause which you maintain against our common enemies, the papists. For the same reason, it gives me no displeasure that in many of your works you have sought to obtain their favor, or to appease their hostility, by assailing us with undeserved reproaches and sarcasms. It is obvious that God has not given you the energy or courage requisite for an open and fearless attack on these monsters, nor am I of a temper to exact from you what is beyond your strength. I have respected your infirmity, and that measure of the gifts of God which is in you. None can deny that you have promoted the cause of literature, thus opening the way to the right understanding of the Scriptures; or that the endowment you have thus received from God is magnificent and worthy of all admiration. Here is a just cause for gratitude. I have never desired that you should quit your cautious and measured course to enter our camp. Great are the services which you render by your genius and eloquence, and as your heart fails you, it is best that you should serve God with such powers as he has given you. My only apprehension is lest you should permit yourself to be dragged by our enemies to publish an attack upon our doctrines, for then I should be compelled to resist you to the face. Things have now reached a point at which we should feel no anxiety for our cause, even though Erasmus himself should direct all his abilities against us. It is no wonder that our party should be impatient of your attacks. Human weakness is alarmed and oppressed by the weight of the name of Erasmus. Once to be lashed by Erasmus is a far different thing from being exposed to the assaults of all the papists put together. I have written all this in proof of my candor, and because I desire that God may give you a spirit worthy of your name. If that spirit be withheld, at least let me implore you to remain a mere spectator of our tragedy. Do not join your forces to our enemies. Abstain from writing against me, and I will write nothing against you.’”

## BLAISE PASCAL.<sup>1</sup>

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THIS great genius was born at Clermont, in Auvergne, in the year 1623, and died in the year 1662, at the early age of thirty-nine. In this short life he made for himself a name which the world will not willingly let die; a name which by a singular felicity of fortune has never seemed to suffer even a temporary eclipse. His countryman, Des Cartes, himself a king of thought and a creator of sciences, evincing greater aptitude, perhaps, even than Pascal for the highest walks of speculation, was not so fortunate. He has been the occasion of fierce controversies, and the enemies of his philosophy have loaded his name with reproach. In some of the universities of Europe in the seventeenth century Cartesian was equivalent almost to atheist. But the world, notoriously fickle in its judgments, has inflicted no such disgrace upon the memory of Pascal. The firmament of genius shows no brighter star than his; it has shone for more than two hundred years; it shines still with a lustre undimmed, while the other stars of the first magnitude, if they have not been obscured by calumny and envy, have, at least, lost themselves in the greater light of other stars which have since ascended the heavens. His name is not the property of France only, which had the honor of giving birth to him, nor is it the property only of the vast brotherhood of science of which he was so brilliant an ornament; neither can the vaster communion of scholars and men devoted to the muses

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<sup>1</sup> See *Eloge de Pascal*, par M. Bordas-Demoulin (Prefixed to Paris Edition of the *Provincial Letters*, 1846); H. Rogers' *Essay on the Genius of Pascal*; McCrie's *Introduction to his Translation of the Provincial Letters*; Sir James Stephen's *Miscellanies*, article on the Port Royalists.

This lecture was prepared in 1871.—ED.



make any exclusive claim to it; much less can Rome claim as one of her peculiar jewels one whose heart she allowed to be broken by her pet agents and theologians, the Jesuits. Pascal's name is the property of the human race. He bore upon his forehead, like Shakspeare, that seal of popular force before which the generations of men delight to bow themselves; and his triumphal march across the ages has been marred or interrupted by no cry of distress or hatred or revenge such as that which has often disturbed the triumph and stained the glory of other conquerors of the people. The people have been led unreluctant captives behind the wheels of his chariot.

His glory seems to be as various as it is great and abiding. His precocious intelligence, the shortness of his life, compared with the number and magnitude of his achievements, his heroic courage in action, his equally heroic fortitude in suffering, his imperial thinking, the noble, penetrating, nervous, unique style in which his thoughts find their appropriate expression—all these are elements of his glory. His is a glory which has equal charms for men of science and men of letters; for geometricians and for theologians. This universal power of fascination is doubtless due, in a great degree, to the marvellous felicity of his style, which approaches, we suppose, perfection in that kind as nearly as is possible to man in his present state. It has been well described<sup>1</sup> as “a style great without exaggeration, filled throughout with strong emotion, and yet self-controlled, full of life, yet without turbulence; with the impress of strong individuality, yet without pedantry and without self-love, lofty and humble at the same time”—a style “so identified with the soul of the writer that it might be described as merely the thought itself set off by its chaste nudity like an antique statue.” “By the confession of the first French critics,” says Mr. Rogers, “the *Provincial Letters* did more

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<sup>1</sup> *Faugère*, in Rogers, p. 156.

than any other composition to fix the French language." On this point the suffrages of all the most competent judges—of Voltaire and Bossuet, D'Alembert and Condorcet—are unanimous. "Not a single word occurs," says the first, "partaking of that vicissitude to which living languages are so subject. Here, then, we may fix the epoch when our language may be said to have assumed a settled form." "The French language," says D'Alembert, "was very far from being formed, as we may judge by the greater part of works published at that time, and of which it is impossible to endure the reading. In the *Provincial Letters* there is not a single word that has become obsolete; and that book, though written above a century ago, seems as if it had been written but yesterday. And as these letters were the first model of French prose, so they still remain the objects of unqualified admiration. The writings of Pascal have, indeed, a paradoxical destiny; flourishing in immortal youth, all that time can do is to superadd to the charms of perpetual beauty the veneration which belongs to age. His style cannot grow old."

"When we reflect on the condition of the language when he appeared, this is truly wonderful. It was but partially reclaimed from barbarism; it was still an imperfect instrument of genius. He had no adequate models; he was to create them. Thus to seize a language in its nude state, and compel it, in spite of its hardness and intractability, to become a malleable material of thought, is the exclusive prerogative of the highest species of minds; nothing but the intense fire of genius can fuse these heterogeneous elements and mould them into forms of beauty. As a proof, it may be remarked that none but the highest genius *has* ever been equal to this task. Genius of less than the highest order will often make improvements in the existing state of a language, and give it a perceptible impulse; but none but the most creative and plastic power can at once mould a nude

language into forms which cannot become obsolete, which remain in perpetuity a part of the current literature, amidst all the changes of time and the caprices of fashion. Thus, it required a Luther to mould the harsh German into the language of his still unrivalled translation of the Scriptures, in which, and in his vernacular compositions, he first fairly reclaimed his native language from its wild state, brought it under the yokes, and subjected it to the purposes of literature. Pascal was in a similar manner the creator of the French. Yet each performed his task in a mode as characteristic as the materials on which they operated were different. Energy was the predominant quality of Luther's genius; beauty, of Pascal's. The rugged German, under the hand of Luther, is compelled to yield to an irresistible application of force; it is the lightning splitting the oak and granite. The French, under that of Pascal, assumes forms of beauty by a still and noiseless movement, and as by a sort of enchantment, it is 'the west wind ungirding the bosom of the earth, and calling forth bud and flower at its bidding.' This complete mastery of an unformed language is an index of the highest genius. If even when language has reached its full development we never see the full capacities of this delicate instrument put forth except by great genius, how can we expect it when the language is still imperfect? As used in this rude state, language resembles the harsh music of the Alpine horn blown by the rude Swiss herd-boy; it is only when the lofty peaks around take it up that it is transmuted by their echoes into exquisite melody."

This exquisite style was not formed without labor. Genius cannot dispense with toil if it is ever to achieve anything worthy of its noble gifts and its high calling. Pascal's friend Nicole,<sup>1</sup> himself an illustrious man, informs us that "Pascal was not without rules of art, not, indeed, the vulgar rules

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<sup>1</sup> *Hist. des Provinciales* (Wendrock) *ad calcem* of the Paris edition of the *Prov'l*, 1846, p. 378.

which are found in books, but rules which he had derived from nature herself by a profound reflection upon her recondite principles and instincts. By this standard he judged the composition of other writers. With a criticism equally severe, nay, more severe, he judged his own. Not seldom did he re-write his letters six or even ten times, and often spent twenty days upon a single letter. He never wrote until he was master of the subject, acting upon the maxim of Horace, "*Scribendi recte sapere est et principium et fons.*" No wonder when such genius and such labor were combined that these letters became immortal. As to the matter of the letters and the occasion upon which they were written, we shall speak more fully in the sequel.

Pascal's genius was not only very great, but very precocious. "The vulgar," says M. Bordas-Demoulin, "are so struck with the displays of genius that they are unable to persuade themselves that it is not something supernatural, and, therefore, to be heralded by prodigies. Hence, the ancients tell us of bees lighting upon the lips of infants predestined to greatness, of swans sporting in their cradles, and the like. The less poetic imagination of the moderns finds in precociousness the prophetic wonder. Bossuet, at the age of sixteen, ravished with his eloquence an assembly of wits and scholars. Pascal, at the age of twelve, invented, without the aid of books or masters, a department of geometry upon which the ancient philosophers had expended ages of toil. His sister tells us that she found her little brother one day tracing on the pavement the diagram which was used to demonstrate the thirty-second proposition of the First Book of Euclid. (Proposition, that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles.) He abandoned scientific pursuits almost entirely before he reached the age of twenty-seven, and yet in that time he did many things, any one of which would have been enough to give almost any other man a name. He invented his arithmetical ma-

chine, in which he seemed to realize the dream of materialism by conferring upon matter the power of calculating. He said himself that his machine produced results much more like thinking than any which the brutes are capable of. Surely no machine could be more honored than that which Pascal invented and Leibnitz labored to bring to perfection. He was the first to solve some of the problems of the cycloid. He also came within a step of the fluxions of Newton and the calculus of Leibnitz. But the felicity and precocious maturity of his genius appeared most conspicuously in the experiments by which he confirmed the theories of Galileo and Torricelli concerning the weight of the air, and annihilated forever that singular chimæra of the schools, nature's horror of a vacuum."

The highest praise that can be given to Pascal is to say that his virtue shone with even greater lustre than his genius. He is one of the few master-spirits of the world who have exalted moral greatness above greatness of every other kind, and that, too, in practice as well as in theory.<sup>1</sup> He himself divides greatness into three distinct orders—power, intellect, and goodness. The admiration inspired by power and intellect is much greater generally than the admiration inspired by goodness. A Bacon or a Shakspeare excites a sentiment in the young and ardent far more vivid than a Howard or a Martyn. So it is in our fallen world; but is not so in those writings which we revere as the records and standards of our faith. "The ideal of greatness which is presented to us in the Gospels is very unlike that which usually fixes the enthusiastic gaze of men. It is not one in which power and intellect constitute the predominant qualities, associated with just so much virtue as serves to make the picture free from all grave reproach; but the perfection of truth, rectitude, and love, to which even the attributes of superhuman power and superhuman wisdom, with which they are blended, are so

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<sup>1</sup> *Pensées*, cited by Rogers, p. 163.

wonderfully subordinated that they seem as they are, intrinsically of inferior lustre. Glorious as is their light, it is absolutely quenched in the brighter effulgence of ineffable and supernal goodness. We think of Cæsar as the great warrior and the great statesman; of Shakspeare as the great poet; of Newton as the great philosopher; when the Christian thinks of his Master, though he believes him to be possessed of immeasurably greater power and wisdom than these, his first, last thought is, that he is *THE GOOD*.”<sup>1</sup>

“Few men have ever dwelt on this ideal of moral perfection, or sought to realize its image in themselves, with more ardor than Pascal—not always, indeed, as regards the mode, with as much wisdom as ardor. His humility and simplicity were as great as his genius and acquisitions. The favorite of science, repeatedly crowned, as an old Greek might have said of some distinguished young hero at Olympia, with the fairest laurels of the successful mathematician and the unrivalled polemic, making discoveries even in his youth which would have intoxicated many men even to madness, neither pride nor vanity found admission into his heart. His perfect love of truth was beautifully blended with the gentlest charity; and his contempt of fraud and sophistry never made him forget, while indignantly exposing them, the courtesies of a gentleman and the moderation of a Christian; and thus the severest raillery that probably ever fell from human lips flows on in a stream undiscoured by one particle of malevolence and unruffled by one expression of coarseness or bitterness. The transparency and integrity of his character not only shone conspicuously in all the transactions of his life, but seem even now to beam upon us as from an open, ingenuous countenance in the inimitable frankness and clearness of his style. As to his benevolence, he absolutely beggared himself by his prodigal benefactions; he did what few do, mortgaged even his expectancies to charity. To all

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<sup>1</sup> See Rogers, p. 165.

which we may add, that he bore the prolonged and excruciating sufferings of his latter years with a patience and fortitude which astonished all who witnessed them."

The faults of Pascal were the results of the abominable religion in which he had been trained. One cannot read the *Provincial Letters* without burning with indignation against a body calling itself a church of Christ which could hold in such ignominious bondage a soul so noble; which could so far pervert the honesty of his reason as to bring him sometimes to the very verge of the villainous tricks of argument which he was exposing and denouncing in the Jesuits; which could compel him to hold a position the only logical result of which was either infidelity or blank Pyrrhonism. It is not altogether without some color of plausibility that Cousin charges him with universal skepticism, though we think that Rogers has disproved that charge. At the very best, it must be acknowledged by every candid mind that in Pascal we have a mind capable of the very highest achievements fettered by a remorseless spiritual tyranny; a Samson with his eyes partially put out and doomed to make sport for the enemies of God and truth. Blessed be God for the assurance that Rome did not succeed in putting out his eyes altogether; that he saw clearly enough to inflict upon that apostate communion blows which resounded through the world, and blows under which Rome is staggering to this day! The same unhappy effect of his religious training is seen in his devotion to the most grievous extravagances of asceticism. We cannot refrain from hanging our poor heads with shame for our poor nature when we read of the gloomy, suicidal discipline of the Port Royalists, men of genius and learning, many of them gentlemen of the highest rank, and some of them of almost royal blood, descending without necessity to the meanest, most menial, and even disgusting offices, rivalling the fanatical flagellants of the Middle Ages in their fantastic penances, and even deliberately fasting themselves to death

under the delusion that they were commending themselves to God as "sacred victims of penitence" consumed in the fire of divine love. *O caecus hominum mentes!* Alas! that men so sincere and so earnest in seeking salvation, and, as we must believe of Pascal and others of them, men who truly loved and worshipped the Saviour of sinners, should be driven by this foul superstition from the pit to treat him as a stern, relentless tyrant, to be appeased only by groans, and tears, and blood! Pascal not only lived on the plainest fare and performed the most menial offices for himself, but he wore beneath his clothes a girdle of iron, with sharp points affixed to it, and when he found his mind disposed to wander from religious subjects, or take delight in things around him, he struck the girdle with his elbow, and forced the sharp points of the iron into his side. The consequence of such a view of religion was inevitable. His views of life became perverted. He cherished mistrust even of its blessings, and acted, though he meant it not, as if the very gifts of God were to be received with suspicion, as the smiling tempters of evil, the secret enemies of our well-being. "I can approve" he says in one place, "only of those who seek in tears for happiness." "Disease," he says again, "is the natural state of Christians." What a morbid and ghastly piety is this! What a reproach upon the wisdom of him who distributes light as well as shade, sunshine as well as cloud and storm, to the plants which are the objects of his celestial husbandry! Passing strange does it seem that a mind as pure as Pascal's could read the Epistle to the Colossians or the pastoral epistles, and not see that such ascetic practices are pointedly condemned as signs of apostasy from the gospel! That so far from being a crucifixion of the flesh in the sense of our evil nature, they are a "satisfying of the flesh"!

But the unhappy effect of this superstition upon the life is still more painfully exemplified in Pascal's treatment of the members of his own family. It led him to refrain from the



natural expressions of fondness and gratitude towards his sisters and attendants, lest that affection with which they regarded him should become inordinate; lest they should transfer to an earthly creature the affection due to the supreme alone. To restrain, even in his dying hours, expressions of tenderness towards those whom he loved and who loved him, to simulate a coldness which his feelings belied, to repress the sensibilities of a grateful and confiding nature, to inflict a pang by affected indifference on hearts as fond as his own, here was indeed a proof of the truth upon which he so passionately meditated, "the greatness and the misery of man," of his strength and his weakness; weakness in supposing that such perversion of all nature could ever be a dictate of duty, strength in performing, without wincing, a task so hard. But such is the religion of Rome at its best estate, a hideous caricature of the religion of Christ and his apostles, requiring men to crucify not only natural affection, but even the graces of the Holy Ghost. Such has been the success of the devil in making even Christ's true people regard him as a stern, unbending lawgiver, insisting upon the pound of flesh, rather than a Saviour full of compassion, ready not only to relieve the distresses of men, but to supply even their superfluities, when these superfluities minister to the grace, beauty, and courtesy of life, ready not only to cleanse the leper, but to create wine at a wedding.

Let us pause here for a moment and mark the goodness of God in delivering us from this bondage of Roman superstition; let us learn the weakness of our nature in the case of one of the mightiest souls that the Creator has ever exhibited to the world, and above all, let our languid pursuit of salvation be rebuked by the earnestness, an earnestness misdirected and unenlightened, but still the blood-earnestness of a votary of Rome. Let us take heed that Pascal do not rise up in the judgment to condemn us!

We proceed now to notice the labors of this great genius.

His labors in the sphere of science have already been adverted to, and we say no more about them. His other writings are his "*Pensées*" and his "*Letters*." His "*Thoughts*," as the title implies, are only the *project* of a great work on the fundamental principles of religion, which he was meditating when death cut short his career. He required for its completion "ten years of health and leisure," but those years were not given him. No part of it was completed. Nothing was found after his death but detached "thoughts" on the principal topics appropriate to such a work. These were written on any scrap of paper that came to hand, often on the backs of old letters. The Sibyl herself was not more careless about those leaves, *rapidis ludebria ventis*, on which she inscribed her prophetic truths, than was Pascal about his. "It is humiliating," says Rogers,<sup>1</sup> "to think of the casualties which possibly, in many cases, have robbed posterity of some of the most precious fruits of the meditations of the wise; perhaps arrested trains of thought which would have expanded into brilliant theories or grand discoveries, trains which, when the genial moment of inspiration has passed, it has been found impossible to recall, or which, if recalled up to the point at which they were broken off, terminate only in a wall of rock in which the mountain path, which had been before so clearly seen, exists no longer. It is humiliating to think that a fit of the toothache, or a twinge of the gout, *might* have arrested, no more to return, the opening germ of conjecture, which led on to the discovery of the differential calculus, or the theory of gravitation. The condition of man, in this respect, affords another striking proof of the combined 'greatness and misery' of his nature. It is wonderful that a being, such as he, should achieve so much; it is humiliating that he must depend on such casualties for success. On the precarious control which even the greatest men have over their own minds, Pascal himself justly says: 'The mind of

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<sup>1</sup> Page 145, *et seq.*

this sovereign of the world is not so independent as not to be discouraged by the first *tintamarre* that may be made around him. It does not need the war of artillery to hinder him from thinking; the creaking of a vane or a pulley will answer the purpose. Be not surprised that he reasons ill just now; a fly is buzzing in his ear, it is amply sufficient to render him incapable of sound deliberation. If you wish him to discern truth, be pleased to chase away that insect which holds his reason in check, and troubles that mighty intellect that governs cities and kingdoms.’”

The *Thoughts* has been printed many times. The only trustworthy edition is that of Faugère, of which Mr. Rogers has given us a luminous account in the essay so often quoted. Pascal had been before very unfortunate in his editors. Some of them were afraid of the Jesuits, and left out many passages; others omitted many of the most devout sentiments and expressions, under the influence of a very different feeling; for infidelity has its bigots as well as superstition, and free thinkers are not in favor of free thinking. “Unhappy Pascal!” exclaims Mr. Rogers. “Between his old editors and his new, he seemed to be in the condition of the persecuted bigamist in the fable, whose elder wife would have robbed him of all his black hairs, and his younger of the grey.” But M. Faugère has printed the *Thoughts* just as he found them, fragmentary, sometimes ending in the middle of a sentence, even of a word. He has not attempted, as some previous editors did, to supply a lost thought of Pascal’s, an attempt exhibiting as little modesty as that of creating the lost Decades of Livy.

The work on which the fame of Pascal mainly rests is the *Provincial Letters*. The occasion for the writing of these letters was the disputes about grace between the Jesuits and the Jansenists.<sup>1</sup> The disputes, however, between the Jesuits and the Jansenists were only a revival of disputes

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<sup>1</sup> See McCrie's *Translation of the Letters*, Introduction.

which had existed in the Church of Rome for ages. For it must be borne in mind that the boasted unity of Rome is not an organic unity, a unity of faith and life, but an external, mechanical unity, admitting as great a variety of opinions as the various denominations of Protestants. It may be doubted whether any two Protestant sects have ever waged as fierce a war with each other as that which was waged between the Dominicans and the Franciscans, or between the Dominicans and the Jesuits, or between the Jesuits and the Jansenists. There is a great deal of truth as well as wit in the saying of an Edinburgh reviewer, that "the unity of Rome is the unity of chaos; there was but one chaos, but in that one there was infinite confusion." It is the unity of a cage in which "the happy family" is confined.

The origin of these disputes about grace must be sought in the controversy of Augustine with Pelagius in the fifth century. Efficacious grace was the motto of the one, free will the motto of the other. The heretical leanings of Pelagius are said to have been first betrayed by his publicly disapproving the sentiment involved in the famous prayer of Augustine, "*Da quod jubes et jube quod vis*," which he heard quoted by a bishop. Augustine, though a great man, was by no means a consistent one, and this accounts for the veneration in which his name is held in a church which has long since repudiated his doctrine of grace. For, along with this doctrine, we find the absurd conceit of baptismal regeneration and the germ of the Romish doctrine of justifying faith in his voluminous writings. It might be said of Augustine that there were two manner of churches in his brain, the evangelical and the Romish. He had the unusual candor and humility to write a book of Retractations before he died; and if he could have lived to the age of Methuselah, I doubt not his last book of Retractations would have contained all the more serious errors which Rome afterwards adopted. But he did not live long enough to admit the fermentation

and conflict of his doctrines to take place. This was bequeathed as a matter of necessity to the church which received both sets of doctrine from him; and in a little more than a millennium the conflict was decided in a way directly the opposite of that which we have supposed in the case of Augustine himself. It was decided in favor of Pelagianism, or at least of semi-Pelagianism, and against the doctrine of grace. But the struggle was long and bitter. Its chief *momenta* are represented by the names which we have already mentioned. The chief eras of the conflict are the times of the Thomists,<sup>1</sup> of Molina,<sup>2</sup> and of Pascal.<sup>3</sup> The struggle between the Jesuit Molinists and the Dominicans was essentially the same with that between the Thomists and the Scotists of the fourteenth century, aggravated in some degree, no doubt, by the quickening of the public mind of Europe produced by the Reformation. The settlement of the controversy had finally to be assumed by the pope,<sup>4</sup> who had the cunning not to pronounce any sentence at all. He referred the matter<sup>5</sup> to a committee or board of commissioners in Rome, whose sessions were called congregations "*De Auxilliis Gratiæ*" (or, the aids of grace), and the result illustrates the witty saying of the *London Punch*, that "the best way to crush a thing is to get a committee to sit on it." The pope himself presided over the trial for three years.<sup>6</sup> He was cut off by death on the 4th of March, 1605, when just ready to pronounce sentence. The Jesuits and the Dominicans, of course, each claimed that the sentence would have been in their favor; and no one can determine which of them is to be believed without inspecting the records of the trial, which are kept most carefully concealed at Rome. The probability is, that we should be none the wiser if the records were open to us, as the policy of the Roman court, in such cases, has generally been non-committal. Whatever the de-

<sup>1</sup> Fourteenth century.    <sup>2</sup> 1588.    <sup>3</sup> 1656.    <sup>4</sup> Clement VIII.    <sup>5</sup> In 1598.

<sup>6</sup> From 20th of March, 1602, to 22d January, 1605.

cision of the pope was, we know what Molinism is. It is simply semi-Pelagianism, the doctrine which was condemned by the Catholic councils of Valence (855), of Langres (859), and of Toul (860), and by the Protestant synod of Dort in 1618.

The war broke out again about the year 1640, upon the occasion of the publication of the work of Jansenius, Bishop of Ypres, in the Netherlands, entitled *Augustinus*. As this title implies, the book is little more than a compilation of the statements and reasonings of Augustine, for the most part in his own words; and the main subject of it is that of free will and grace. This is not the place to dwell on the bitter and obstinate struggle of the Jansenists against the Jesuits, supported by the pope and the court of Rome, which ended, of course, in the overthrow of the unhappy Jansenists. I will only say a word to show the connection of the dispute with the Port Royalists and Pascal. John Duvergier de Hauranne (better known as the Abbé de St. Cyran) was the class-mate and intimate friend of Jansenius, and had a good deal to do with the composition of the *Augustinus*. Under his auspices was formed the community of Port Royal, a place not very distant from Paris, which had been the seat of a Cistercian nunnery. The scholars who retired to this place were not monks, though devoted to the most rigorous ascetic discipline. They have filled the world with their renown as polished writers, as accomplished scholars, as heroic sufferers and martyrs. From the gloomy, unhealthy forests of Port Royal proceeded the famous French translation of the Scriptures by Saci (Isaac Le Maitre—the name Saci is an anagram of Isaac). “This society presented to the world the rare anomaly of a Roman Catholic community distinguished for the devout and diligent study of the Bible. Protestants they certainly were not. Firm believers in the infallibility of their church, and fond devotees in the observance of her rites, they held it a point of merit to yield a blind obedience, in matters

of faith, to the dogmas of Rome. None were more hostile to Protestantism. St. Cyran, it is said, would never open a Protestant book, even for the purpose of refuting it, without first making the sign of the cross upon it, to exorcise the evil spirit which he believed to lurk within its pages. From no community did there emanate more learned apologies for Rome than from Port Royal. Still, it must be owned, that, in attachment to the doctrine of grace, so far as they went, and in the exhibition of the Christian virtues, attested by their suffering lives and writings, the Port Royalists, including under this name both the nuns and recluses, greatly surpassed many Protestant communities. Their piety, indeed, partook of the failings which have always characterized the religion of the cloister. It seems to have hovered between superstition and mysticism. Afraid to fight against the world, they fled from it; and forgetting that our Saviour was driven into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, they retired into the wilderness to avoid temptation. Port Royalism was popery in its mildest type, as Jesuitism is popery in its perfection; and had it been possible to present that system in a form calculated to cover its native deformities, the task might have been achieved by the pious devotees of Les Granges.<sup>1</sup> But the same merciful Providence which, for the preservation of the human species, has furnished the snake with its rattle, and taught the lion to 'roar after his prey,' has so ordered it that the Romish Church should betray her real character in order that his people might come out of her, and not be partakers of her sins or of her plagues. The whole system adopted at Port Royal was regarded from the first with extreme jealousy by the authorities of that church; the schools were soon dispersed, and the Jesuits never rested till they had destroyed every vestige of the obnoxious establishment."

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<sup>1</sup> Les Granges, a farm-house on the hillside, was the residence of the recluses; the monastery was occupied by the nuns. (See Sir J. Stephen's *Miscellanies*, p. 275.)

The Jesuits, indeed, could endure no brother near the throne. They were in a perpetual quarrel with all the other orders or brotherhoods in the church whose popularity or power they had reason to fear. The interests of the church were of smaller consequence in their eyes than the glory of their own order. The pope himself, though the Jesuits professed to be *perinde cadavera*, just like corpses in his hands, to be moved according to his pleasure without any will of their own, the pope himself has been made to feel that this powerful order is obedient only when he commands them to do what they desire to do. The popularity of the Port Royalists was sufficient to make them the objects of the vengeance of the Jesuits. They must be destroyed, or the influence of the Jesuits must be diminished. St. Cyran, the leader of the Port Royalists, must first be disposed of. By the aid of Cardinal Richelieu, and the power of the French monarch Louis XIV., they succeeded in getting this illustrious man buried in a dungeon of Vincennes, from which he emerged only to die. His place, however, as leader of the Jansenists, was supplied by a man destined to trouble the Jesuits even more than St. Cyran. This man was the celebrated Anthony Arnauld. Arnauld was an hereditary enemy of the Jesuits. His father, a famous lawyer, had pleaded, in behalf of the University of Paris, that they should be interdicted from the education of youth and even expelled from the kingdom. His son was no Protestant. He wrote with almost equal vehemence against the Protestants and the Jesuits. His natural temper was austere and indomitable. Expelled from the Sorbonne, driven out of France and hunted from place to place by the Jesuit hounds, he continued to fight to the last. On one occasion, his friend Nicole, on being asked to assist him in a new work, observed, "We are now old, is it not time to rest?" "Rest!" exclaimed Arnauld, "Have we not all eternity to rest in?"

Arnauld's<sup>1</sup> first offence was the publication of a treatise on

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<sup>1</sup> See McCrie's *Introduction to Provincial Letters*, p. 43.



“Frequent Communion,”<sup>1</sup> in which he inculcated the necessity of spiritual preparation for the eucharist, in opposition to the Jesuit doctrine that a man might go reeking with the most abominable crimes to the communion. His next was in the shape of two *Letters*,<sup>2</sup> in which he declared that he had not been able to find in Jansenius the propositions which had been condemned by the pope at the instigation of the Jesuits, and he added some opinions on the subject of grace. The Jesuits succeeded in getting him expelled from the Sorbonne, or theological college of the University of Paris. The dishonest pretext upon which this was done, a pretext sufficient to cover with infamy any body of men who could be guilty of it, is terribly exposed in the first *Provincial Letters*. It was at this juncture of the controversy that Pascal appeared, “like one of those closely-visored knights of whom we read of in romance, who enter the field at the critical moment and with their single arm turn the tide of battle.”

The *Letters* in which this noble knight showed his prowess, and by which he inflicted blows upon the Jesuits from which they have never entirely recovered, purported to be written by one Louis de Montalte, residing in Paris, to a friend in one of the provinces, and hence were called the “*Provincial Letters*.” As the term *Provincial* was used by the Parisians of one residing in the provinces in the sense of an unpolished man, or a clown, the Jesuits endeavored to hide their confusion by ridiculing the title of the *Letters*. One of them, Father Bonhours, says, he is surprised that the *Letters* were not rather entitled, “Letters from a Country Bumpkin to his Friends.” But this was a poor expedient. The laugh was against them. They could not shake off or pull out the poi-

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<sup>1</sup>Such was the fury of the Jesuits that the Marshal De Vitré sagaciously observed, “There must be some secret in all this. The Jesuits are never so excited when nothing but the glory of God is at stake.”

<sup>2</sup>Published in 1656.

soned arrows which rankled in their flesh. Pascal, with the instinct of true genius, pitched upon the form and tone which were adapted to arrest the attention and enlist the sympathy of the public mind. The theology of the schools was translated into the pleasantries of comedy and the familiarities of dialogue. The *Letters* were seldom longer than eight pages quarto, and were hence called the "*Little Letters*." The *Little Letters* were read by everybody. They were found on the merchant's counter, the lawyer's desk, the doctor's table, the lady's boudoir. The Jesuits were fairly checkmated. Their confessionals and churches were deserted, while those of their opponents were crowded by admiring thousands, which is the more surprising when we consider that, at that time, the influence of the Jesuits was so much in the ascendancy that Arnauld had to contend with the pope, the king, the chancellor, the clergy, the Sorbonne, the universities, and the great body of the populace; and that Jansenism never was at a lower ebb, or more generally anathematized, than when the first *Provincial Letters* appeared. And yet the Jesuits became the objects of universal derision. The names of their favorite casuists were converted into proverbs; "Escobarde" came to signify the same thing with one who "palters in a double sense." The proud and self-conceited society was stung to the quick. They indulged themselves now in calumnies and threats of vengeance, and now in puerile lamentations. It was amusing to hear these stalwart divines, after breathing out fire and slaughter against their enemies, assume the querulous tone of injured innocence. "The persecutions which the Jesuits suffer from the buffooneries of Port Royal," they said, "is perfectly intolerable; the wheel and the gibbet are nothing to it; it can only be compared to the torture inflicted upon the ancient martyrs, who were first rubbed over with honey, and then left to be stung to death by wasps and wild bees. Their tyrants have subjected them to empoisoned raillery, and the world leaves

them unpitied to suffer a sweet death, more cruel in its sweetness than the bitterest punishment."<sup>1</sup>

But the Jesuits had power on their side, and the popularity of the Jansenists availed them nothing. The *Provincial Letters* were condemned by the pope, Alexander VIII., in a decree issued 6th September, 1657; they were prohibited and condemned under the pains and censures contained in the Council of Trent, and in the index of prohibited books. This decree, of course, did not refute the *Letters*, nor did it prevent them from being read. Pascal adhered to his convictions to the last, in spite of his reverence for the authority of the church. In his "*Thoughts*" he says: "I feared that I might have written erroneously when I saw myself condemned; but the example of so many pious witnesses made me think differently. It is no longer permitted to write truth. If my *Letters* are condemned at Rome, that which *I* condemn in them is condemned in heaven." When on his death-bed, the priest had administered to him the last rites of the church, and afterwards discovered that Pascal was the author of the *Provincial Letters*, the priest returned and asked him if it was true, and if he had no remorse of conscience on that account. Pascal replied that he could assure him, as one who was about to appear in the presence of God, that his conscience gave him no trouble on that score. After his death the Jesuits practiced their old trade of calumny, and asserted that Pascal had expressed repentance for having written the *Letters*; but this calumny was triumphantly refuted by his friends, and the Jesuits would have again been put to shame if it had been possible to make them feel shame. The only real defence of any worth which has ever been made for the Jesuits against the terrible indictment of these *Letters* consists in showing that their casuistry is only the casuistry of the Church of Rome *developed*; that the eggs from which these monstrous reptiles were hatched were laid by the

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<sup>1</sup> Nicole, cited by McCrie.

schoolmen in the Middle Ages. The Jesuits merely did the incubation and the hatching. They were, therefore, not the *only* sinners, nor the *first*. True, it is, that the church has occasionally condemned this casuistry; but it is also true that the same church has refused to condemn it. This only proves that its claim to infallibility is a stupendous lie; that it is a prevaricating witness, and, therefore, that Jesuitism is the legitimate development of Romanism, and not, in any sense, a misgrowth or deformity.

The unhappy influence of this prevaricating spirit of the church is seen even in the case of the pure-minded Pascal. His fear of being considered a Calvinist on account of his doctrine concerning grace, and his fear of being considered wanting in reverence for the pope and the authority of the church, lead him to make the same kind of subtle, unreal distinctions which he so mercilessly ridicules in his adversaries. This appears very strikingly in the last two *Letters*. Yet, at bottom, Pascal was in sympathy with the true witnesses of God in all ages, and had an abiding confidence in the final victory of truth. Take, in proof, these golden words which could not have been written by a mere advocate, by one who was contending merely for victory in a cause. They occur in the close of the twelfth *Letter*: "You think," he says to the Jesuits, "you think you have power and impunity on your side; and I think that I have truth and innocence on mine. It is a strange and tedious war where violence attempts to vanquish truth. All the efforts of violence cannot weaken truth, and only serve to give it fresh vigor; all the lights of truth cannot arrest violence, and only serve to exasperate it. When force meets force, the weaker must succumb to the stronger; when argument is opposed to argument, the solid and convincing triumphs over the empty and the false; but violence and verity can make no impression on each other. Let none suppose, however, that the two are, therefore, equal to each other, for there is this vast difference

between them, that violence has only a certain course to run, limited by the appointment of heaven, which overrules its effects to the glory of the truth which it assails; whereas truth endures forever, and eventually triumphs over its enemies, being eternal and almighty as God himself."

We conclude this notice of Pascal and his witness with the following eloquent paragraph from Henry Rogers:<sup>1</sup> "On the whole, in contemplating the richly diversified characteristics of this exalted genius in its different moods and phases, the combination of sublimity and depth with lightness and grace, of the noblest aptitudes for abstract speculation with the utmost delicacy of taste and sensibility of feeling, of profound melancholy with the happiest and most refined humor and raillery, the grandeur of many aspects of his character and the loveliness of others, we seem to be reminded of the contradictory features of Alpine scenery, where all forms of sublimity and beauty, of loveliness and terror, are found in singular proximity; where upland valleys of exquisite verdure and softness lie at the foot of the eternal glaciers; where spots of purest pastoral repose and beauty smile under the very shadow of large, snowy peaks and form the entrance of those savage gorges, in which reigns perpetual, but sublime, desolation; where the very silence is appalling, broken only by the roar of the distant cataract and the lonely thunder of the avalanche."

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<sup>1</sup> *Essays*, p. 174.

A MEMORIAL OF THE LIFE AND LABORS OF THE REV.  
STUART ROBINSON.<sup>1</sup>

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STUART ROBINSON was born November 14, 1814, in Strabane, Tyrone County, Ireland. He was the fourth son of James and Martha Porter Robinson. His mother was the daughter of a ruling elder and granddaughter of a Presbyterian minister. His father was a prosperous linen merchant. In the year 1815 he became involved in debt by becoming security for a friend, and determined to come to America in the hope of retrieving his fortune. He landed in New York in 1816, where, in the course of eighteen months, his family joined him. The elder children were sent to school, and Stuart soon attracted the attention of his teachers by his great intelligence. One of them wrote in his book: "This is a remarkable child, and will one day make his mark in the world," a prediction which has been fulfilled in the life and labors of the man.

During his infancy in Ireland, Stuart was injured by a fall from the arms of his nurse. His right shoulder was dislocated and his arm and thumb crushed. The blow upon his head at the same time was so serious that his physicians feared he would be idiotic; indeed, gave little hope of his surviving the shock.

After several years' residence in New York, Mr. Robinson, in consequence of failing health, removed to Berkeley County, Virginia. It was here that Mrs. Robinson proved her Christian fortitude, exhibited those virtues for which her early training and education had prepared her, and laid the foundation in her son of his future usefulness and greatness. The

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<sup>1</sup> Appeared in the *Southern Presbyterian Review*, April, 1882.—Ed.

Sabbath was a holy day in their home. Mrs. Robinson took her children to church, often walking six miles to "Falling Water" to hear the gospel from the mouth of the Rev. Mr. Hoge.

She assisted in organizing a Sabbath-school, which, at that time, was something new in that part of the country. She instructed her children in the Bible and in the Catechisms of our church. In about four years this "sainted mother," as she was called by all who knew her, died, leaving a family of six sons.

Mr. Robinson could only look to kind friends for their assistance in the care of his motherless children. Their home was desolate, and they were scattered. Stuart went to live with a German farmer, Mr. Troutman, who soon became attached to the child. He saw, however, that the boy's crippled condition would prevent his laboring with his hands, while his intelligence and brightness fitted him for an education, and accordingly gave him up, though with great reluctance, to become the inmate of the family of the young pastor, the Rev. James M. Brown, then in charge of Tuscarora, Falling Water, and Gerrardstown churches.

In this truly Christian home, the motherless boy, at the age of thirteen, was received and shielded and protected, in answer to his parents' prayers; was treated as a beloved child, encouraged to study, and obtained aid in educating himself. He ever cherished the greatest admiration for the loved friends of his childhood. Gratitude was one of the most beautiful traits of his character. To Mrs. Brown, who yet lives to mourn his departure, he gave the affection of a son. To these friends belong the honor of giving to our church one whose young life was entirely consecrated to the Master's service, and whose subsequent career attested the sincerity of his devotion.

In his new home he began the work of his life, studying with other boys under the care of Mr. and Mrs. Brown. He

was a good student and became a fine scholar. He was beloved for his many noble traits of character. Being always "full of fun and mischief," and having a keen sensibility to the ludicrous in everything,<sup>1</sup> he was a very attractive companion. At an early age he gave his heart to the Saviour, and dedicated himself to the work of the ministry. The missionary work seemed his first choice; but he waited for the leadings of Providence to decide for him.

After some time spent in preparation for college under the Rev. Dr. W. H. Foote, of Virginia, who took great interest in his subsequent labors and expressed the warmest affection for him, he went to Amherst College to pursue his studies. An extract from a letter dated "May, 1832," when he was not yet eighteen years old, and written a few months before he went to Amherst, will serve to show the state of his mind in regard to the great concern. After giving an account of a great revival of religion at Romney, Va., he adds: "For about the last three weeks I have felt my heart at times much more drawn out than usual in love to God and the souls of my dying fellow-creatures. I seemed to be able to get near him in prayer, and loved to pray more than formerly. I could not help thinking that God was about to be merciful to us in this part of his vineyard; and when he really did come to bless us and I was permitted to have still nearer communion with him, I then enjoyed more true happiness

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<sup>1</sup> In this feature, also, the child was the father of the man. Mr. Robinson's overflowing humor made him one of the most fascinating speakers in the country before a promiscuous crowd, assembled on an occasion which would justify him in giving free course to it. Everybody, cultivated or uncultivated, male or female, went away delighted. He would have made one of the greatest "stump-speakers" in the world. Yet he always abstained from everything which could offend even a woman's delicacy and modesty. As pathos and humor often flow from the same source, so, in his case, the audience often alternated between laughter and tears. We never heard a man whom we thought his equal in this respect, except the late Dr. Plumer.



in one hour than I enjoyed in six months while in a cold and lukewarm state."

He was matriculated in Amherst in October, 1832, and finished the whole course there without returning to Virginia. He spent his vacations in teaching, in order to assist in defraying the expenses of his education. He was graduated with honor in 1836. In his class were men of great ability, and not a few of them have held posts of honor and usefulness in church and state—among them Rev. Dr. B. M. Palmer; Dr. Hitchcock, of Union Seminary, New York; Dr. Daman, of the Sandwich Islands Mission; Governor Bullock, and Dr. Nathan Allen, of Massachusetts.

The letters written by Mr. Robinson during his sojourn for four years in New England exhibit powers of keen and discriminating observation of men and things very uncommon in men of his age. His mind was evidently revolving over those questions of sociology and ecclesiology with which, in his maturer years, he grappled with as much success as has been allotted to many other great men. He recognized the good features in New England society without reluctance, and censured without bitterness, or even severity, what he regarded as defective or erroneous. He was confirmed in his convictions as to the superiority of the Presbyterian polity over that of Congregationalism; and his zeal for orthodox doctrine was on all proper occasions fearlessly manifested. These letters, written in all the unrestrained freedom of a friendly private correspondence, also reveal his sense of the grave responsibility of a candidate for the ministry, and his earnest desire for that spiritual preparation for his work without which he could not hope to be a workman that needed not to be ashamed. It is pleasant and instructive to get these glimpses of the method by which God was fashioning for himself an instrument which he designed to make so effective in advancing the interests of his kingdom on earth.

From Amherst Mr. Robinson went to Union Theological Seminary, Virginia, in 1837. After spending a year in that institution, he went to Charleston, West Virginia, where Mr. Brown, the friend of his childhood, had become pastor; again became an inmate of his family, and engaged in teaching in order to obtain means to finish his course of professional study. In 1840 he went to Princeton Seminary, and returned to Charleston in 1841, and was soon after licensed to preach the gospel by the Presbytery of Greenbrier.

In the little church of Malden, in this Presbytery, he began the labors of his useful life, preaching and doing missionary work among the mountains, wherever he could gather a congregation to hear the good news of salvation. As his salary was too small for the support of his family, he taught for six years in the academy, during the period of his ministry at Malden.<sup>1</sup>

In 1846 he was invited to supply the church of which Dr. E. P. Humphrey was pastor in Louisville, Ky., and spent nine months preaching to that congregation. On his return home he received several calls to other churches, and finally accepted that of the church in Frankfort, Ky. During his residence there he became thoroughly identified with the Kentucky church, and labored for its advancement in truth and the principles of a sound Presbyterianism.<sup>2</sup>

A writer in the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, who professes to write from personal knowledge of Mr. Robinson's labors in Frankfort, says:

<sup>1</sup> He was united in marriage September 5, 1841, with Miss Mary E. Brigham, the daughter of pious parents. Those who had the happiness of knowing Miss Brigham will remember her as a most lovely Christian woman.

<sup>2</sup> The narrative thus far has followed, almost to the very words, documents furnished by the family of Dr. Robinson. This fact is stated because the accounts in the papers are full of mistakes. *This* account may be relied on. The facts that follow have been derived either from the memory of the writer or from authentic documents.

“At that time he made the impression of a man of tremendous physical vigor, thirty years of age; and even the crippled arm served to make the sledge-hammer logic of his discourses seem more powerful. Thrown into this pleasant, delightful, yet at that time non-progressive town, his keen eye descried at once what was needed, viz., a new church and a female school. He soon had both; and everything was moving forward with all the force of a steam-engine. Selecting a location in South Frankfort for his school, he gathered many young ladies from the Blue-Grass region under his instruction and influence, and doubtless there are many who can recollect those happy days with pleasure. The vast energy of Stuart Robinson at this period of his life made him restless; so he waked up the sleepy denizens of South Frankfort, and represented the importance of their becoming a part of the corporation of North Frankfort. When this was accomplished they demanded of him to allow them to select him as their councilman. He could not refuse, and so he infused a life into South Frankfort it has never lost unto this day.

“About this time a new bank was established, and prompted by public spirit to advance the city in its new life, he accepted the nominal appointment of director. It is a mistake about his being the president of a cotton-mill and a turnpike company. His duties as councilman and bank director absorbed very little of his time. It is certain that he did not neglect the church. Beside the Friday night lecture, he conducted a Bible class, composed of young men, and would frequently write out leading questions the previous week. Such interest did statesmen and lawyers and officials take in his able, ingenious way of putting things, that he formed them into a Bible class at one time. Among the attendants was the Secretary of State. Governors Owsley and Crittenden were attendants upon his preaching; so, also, Judge Simpson and others of the Supreme Court. Early in his

pastorate Mr. Robinson began his celebrated series of lectures on the Old Testament on Sabbath nights. The congregation, from dislike at first, soon began to take equal interest in the lectures with the morning service. It will always be a matter of regret that a short-hand reporter was not present to take down these admirable lectures. They ran through the whole six years of his stay in Frankfort. The suggestiveness of Scripture and applicability to all states of society were most powerfully developed. We need just such lectures to put to shame the blasphemous scurrility of the Ingersolls. . . . About this time he delivered at the University of Virginia his lecture on the 'Difficulties of Infidelity.' In the summer of 1849 a powerful revival of religion signalized his ministry, putting the seal of the Spirit upon his labors. Until the close of his labors the church and congregation increased in numbers."

In May, 1852, he was called to the Associate Reformed Church in Fayette street, Baltimore, of which Dr. John Leyburn is now the minister. This church, originally Presbyterian, had declared itself independent about twenty-five years before, under the ministry of Dr. John Mason Duncan, a nephew and pupil of the celebrated Dr. John M. Mason of New York. The success of Mr. Robinson as a preacher in this congregation was what might have been expected from his ability, zeal, and popular gifts. His sermons and his lectures on the Old Testament history were delivered to overflowing and delighted houses; and hundreds of souls will bless him forever as the means of their salvation, or of the revival of their faith and love. His burning missionary zeal, however, could not be satisfied with his success in Fayette street. A mission chapel was opened in South Baltimore, and questions soon arose in connection with the continued prosecution of the work in that quarter of the city, which revealed the wide and irreconcilable difference of views between the minister and his congregation as to church polity and organi-

zation; and Mr. Robinson resigned his place.<sup>1</sup> A large portion of the congregation, however, determined not to part with him, and persuaded him to remain and organize another church. It was determined to build a house at the corner of Saratoga and Liberty streets, a few squares distant from the old building in Fayette street. While the house was building, the congregation worshipped in the "New Assembly Rooms." When the church was organized, it was called the "Central Presbyterian Church."<sup>2</sup>

While Mr. Robinson was in Baltimore he began the publication of the *Presbyterial Critic*, a journal devoted to the discussion of ecclesiastical questions mainly, and specially to questions mooted in the Presbyterian Church. "We propose a journal," says Mr. Robinson, in the opening article, "which, whilst it shall aim to occupy, in common with others, the general field of doctrinal truth and religious literature, shall be more distinctively for the discussion and the elucidation of the principles of Presbyterianism as they bear upon the efforts and measures of the church for her own expansion." It was called the *Presbyterial* (not Presbyterian) *Critic*, because it was designed for the discussion of questions which the members of our church courts are called officially to act upon, often without either the means or the opportunity for that mature consideration so necessary to wise and efficient action. It was called "*Critic*," in the true and proper sense of the word—a "discerner," a "discriminator," and therefore a "judge." The journal was conducted for "an association of gentlemen," who contributed to its pages. Among these

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<sup>1</sup> He began his ministry in this church September, 1852; resigned March 19, 1853; the Central Church was organized immediately with eighty-five members, and Mr. Robinson was installed as pastor by the Presbytery of Baltimore at the ensuing meeting, in April. The congregation removed to their new edifice (Saratoga and Liberty streets) in April, 1855, having grown to 205 communicants.

<sup>2</sup> The building was burned some eight or ten years ago. The congregation now worship on or near "Entaw Place."

gentlemen were Rev. Drs. R. J. Breckinridge, R. L. Dabney, B. M. Smith, John H. Boccock, C. R. Vaughan, and Wm. H. Ruffner. Their contributions were all gratuitous—not paid for. The *Critic* was short-lived, however; it was published only two years—the last year as a bi-monthly.<sup>1</sup> It never paid for itself. The subscription price was one dollar per annum, a ridiculously low price for more matter than is usually given in our quarterlies. Mr. Robinson assumed the whole pecuniary responsibility, and bore all the loss. The obituary notices of the dead journal, even from the brethren of the other side, were respectful. The *Philadelphia Presbyterian* said: “However much we may have disapproved of the spirit sometimes manifested, we respect them for the open and manly manner in which they carried on their warfare. No one can accuse them of disingenuousness.” A friend of the *Critic* said in the *Southern Presbyterian*: “I regret the suspension of this journal because it has been what its name imports, a presbyterial critic. Its discussions have related to matters of moment to the Presbyterian Church. No one can say that the work failed to answer to its title. Its columns were filled, not with vague generalities, not with useful and good things equally acceptable to all denominations of Christian people, but what it had to say concerned us especially. Again, I regret its suspension because its discussions of these Presbyterian matters are always earnest and hearty. Never having written one line for it, I can say with the more freedom, that I always looked eagerly for its coming, and never read one number of it without having my mind waked up and stimulated. The establishment of this journal supplied a want that was real; its suspension leaves unsupplied a want not only real, but a want which I

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<sup>1</sup> Before the second year of the *Critic* had expired, Mr. Robinson was transferred to the Professorship of Church Government and Pastoral Theology in the Danville Theological Seminary, to which he had been elected by the General Assembly of 1856; and the associate editor being unwilling to attempt to carry it on alone, it ceased to be published.

think will be felt." We quote these notices to confirm the opinion expressed by Mr. Robinson himself in his "valedictory note," that "these two years of editorial labor were, perhaps, the most efficient two years' service he had yet been able to render to the church."

Mr. Robinson, as has been said, was transferred to the professorship in Danville Seminary, in the autumn of 1856. It was the opinion of many that he was too brilliant a man to make a good professor; at least, that a man far his inferior in those popular gifts which give a preacher power in the pulpit might do the work of a teacher in a seminary equally as well as he. To this it may be replied, that he did not cease to preach; that he preached almost every Sunday. And as to his success as a teacher, his book on *The Church of God as an Essential Element of the Gospel*, published in 1858, shows a thorough acquaintance with the subject; and the originality and freshness of the treatment must have awakened a lively interest and inspired an enthusiasm in those whose privilege it was to have the outpourings of his brilliant, full, and vigorous mind on a subject which had engaged its attention for many years. We feel assured that Mr. Robinson would have done great things in this department of theology if it had been the pleasure of the Head of the church to retain him in the seminary. But in fact he was at Danville not more than two years.<sup>1</sup>

There were two capital aims in his teaching concerning the church of God: 1. To state clearly the idea of the church, and then to show the relations of this idea to the eternal purpose of redemption; to the manifestation of this purpose as revealed in the Scriptures; to the principles of

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<sup>1</sup>The directors of the institution say, in their report to the Assembly of 1858: "The Board have to report, with extreme regret, the resignation of Rev. Stuart Robinson. He has felt himself constrained to take this step by peculiar circumstances in his private relations which are not within his control." (See Assembly's printed Minutes.)

church government as set forth in Scripture; to the ordinances of worship set forth in Scripture. 2. To define with precision the spheres of church and state, and the relations of the powers, civil and ecclesiastical. In reference to both of these, he professed to have no other guide than the Scriptures. The conclusion to which all his painful researches brought him, as expressed in the end of his book, is, that "the true organon of the service of the church is the word of God."

The first aim only was realized in the work on *The Church of God*, where he shows that the church is "an essential element of the gospel." How admirably this was done, the reader may see by consulting the review of his book in the *Southern Presbyterian Review* for October, 1858.

The other point mentioned, the precise definition of the relations of the powers, civil and ecclesiastical, was a favorite one with Mr. Robinson. Many discourses were delivered upon it in the large cities, and always, we are certain, to crowded houses. The substance of his teaching upon this important subject may be given by quoting some paragraphs from the Appendix to the *Discourses of Redemption*, note to Discourse IV.: "Touching the distinction between the power ecclesiastical and the civil power, which latter is also ordained of God, the points of contrast are so numerous and so fundamental that nothing but the confusion of mind arising from the oppression of Cæsar and antichrist, backed by the power of Cæsar, could ever have caused the obscurity and inconsistency of the church's testimony in modern times. For they have nothing in common, except that both powers are of divine authority, both concern the race of mankind, and both were instituted for the glory of God as a final end. In respect to all else, their origin, nature, and immediate end, and their mode of exercising the power, they differ fundamentally." "Thus they differ:

"1. In that the civil power derives its authority from God



as the Author of nature, whilst the ecclesiastical comes alone from Jesus as Mediator.

“2. In that the rule for the guidance of the civil power in its existence is the light of nature and reason, the law which the Author of nature reveals through reason to man; but the rule for the guidance of ecclesiastical power in its exercise is that light which, as Prophet of the church, Jesus Christ has revealed in his word. It is a government under statute laws already enacted by the King.

“3. They differ in that the scope and aim of the civil power are limited properly to things seen and temporal; the scope and aim of ecclesiastical power are things unseen and spiritual. *Religious* is a term not predicable of the acts of the state; *political* is a term not predicable of the acts of the church. The things pertaining to the kingdom of Christ are things concerning which Cæsar can have rightfully no cognizance, except indirectly and incidentally, as these things palpably affect the temporal and civil concerns of men; and even then Cæsar cannot be too jealously watched by the church. The things pertaining to the kingdom of Cæsar are matters of which the church of Christ, as an organic government, can have no cognizance, except incidentally and remotely, as affecting the spiritual interests of men; and even then the church cannot watch herself too jealously.

“4. They differ in that the significant symbol of the civil power is the sword; its government is one of force, a terror to evil-doers; but the significant symbol of church power is the keys, its government only ministerial, the functions of its officers to open and close and have a care of a house already complete as to its structure externally, and internally organized and provided.

“5. They differ in that civil power may be exercised as a ‘*several*’ power by one judge, magistrate, or governor; but all ecclesiastical power pertaining to government is a joint power only, and to be exercised by tribunals. The Head of

the government has not seen fit to confer spiritual power of jurisdiction in any power upon a single man, nor authorized the exercise of the functions of rule in the spiritual commonwealth as a several power."

During the sessions of the Kentucky Convention of 1849, while Mr. Robinson was pastor in Frankfort, he had an opportunity of showing how thoroughly he understood the great principles which he afterwards expounded so clearly and defended so ably. In the report of the debates and proceedings of that body (page 630) is a memorial presented by him and the Rev. Mr. Brush against the proposition to make ministers of the gospel ineligible to the General Assembly (legislature). It is an exceedingly well-written, compact, and conclusive argument against the competency of the civil government to define the character and functions of the gospel ministry, and to disfranchise the ministers of the gospel as such. Though the memorial was not successful, we feel assured that such an argument could not have failed to make a profound impression upon a body so intelligent as that convention.<sup>1</sup>

To resume our narrative: Mr. Robinson was called, in 1858, to the pastoral charge of the Second Presbyterian Church in Louisville, which had become vacant by the resignation of Dr. E. P. Humphrey. Here he labored with the same indefatigable diligence which had distinguished him everywhere else; with this difference, however, that he was in a wider field, which made larger demands upon his time, his energies, and his public spirit. It is remarkable

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<sup>1</sup> It is hardly necessary to say that Mr. Robinson did not advocate the propriety of ministers of the gospel meddling with politics. He strongly affirmed the inconsistency of such a course with their ordination engagements; but urged that of this inconsistency the church and not the state must be the judge. He also protested against the confounding the Christian ministry of the word with a priesthood, and, above all, the priesthood of the papacy, which has always meddled, and, by its principles, is obliged to meddle, with politics. *Aut Cæsar, aut nihil.*

that in all his pastoral charges, in Malden, in Frankfort, in Baltimore, and in Louisville, a new church edifice was built for him. But the last was the greatest; and we doubt whether any corner in any of our large cities presents a more imposing appearance than the corner of Broadway and Second streets in the city of Louisville, where the Second Presbyterian Church stands. It was a great undertaking, an undertaking which very few men could have carried through under the circumstances. But Mr. Robinson seemed equal to any work which could be done by man.

Three years after he became pastor in Louisville, the war between the States began. He had become conspicuous before July, 1862, for his protests and arguments against the commingling of the affairs of God and Cæsar. Shortly after his removal to Louisville he purchased the *Presbyterian Herald*, which was published in that city by Dr. W. W. Hill, and changed its title to the *True Presbyterian*. It was in this journal that he bore his most public testimony against the sin and madness of bringing political issues into the church, standing upon the same ground which was taken by Dr. Hodge and the Protestants in the General Assembly of 1861, in Philadelphia, and by Dr. Breckinridge and Dr. Humphrey in the Synod of Kentucky in the autumn of the same year. He was, of course, too outspoken for the military authorities, and his paper was suppressed in 1862. In July of this year he went to Canada. He had left the city for the purpose of visiting an invalid brother, and while absent was urged by his friends not to return if he would avoid arrest. Accordingly, he remained in Canada until the close of the war.

It would, of course, be impossible for such a man to be idle in his exile. He spent the time in study; in writing for his paper; in comforting and aiding the many Southern refugees; in preaching to large congregations, composed, in great part, of students attending the different schools and

the University of Toronto. While he was here he exhibited his characteristic fearlessness and faithfulness as a witness for the truth by delivering in the course of his Sabbath evening discourses on the laws of Moses one on the subject of "Slavery as Recognized in the Mosaic Civil Law, and as Recognized also, and Allowed, in the Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Christian Church." This discourse was afterwards expanded, its positions sustained by abundant citations from orthodox British and continental biblical critics and commentators, and published in a pamphlet of ninety pages by Rollo & Adam, of Toronto, in 1865. The spirit of the man comes out in the exordium of this lecture: "You will remember that while expounding the Abrahamic covenant I took occasion to define my position as a preacher of the word in regard to the vexed question of slavery; that, except as the subject comes in my way in the exposition of the Scriptures, I feel that I have little to do with it here in a country where no such institution exists; for having little confidence in, I do not wish to give countenance by my example to, that sort of religion which exercises itself about the sins of other people rather than its own, and whose repentance, like the Pharisee's, having no sins of its own to mourn over, wastes its sighs over those of the Publican standing afar off. But on the other hand, having undertaken to expound the great book, I dare not allow the fear of having sectional prejudices imputed to me, or the consideration that I must here run counter to the almost universal popular prejudices of the country, so to restrain me that I should 'shun to declare the whole counsel of God.'" Admirably, boldly, and wisely spoken! We know of no moment in the life of our departed friend in which the nobleness, the manliness, and the purity of his character, stand out more conspicuously than in this discourse delivered to an anti-slavery audience in a British province, and amidst the expiring throes of the Confederate States.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>This discourse was delivered in February, 1865.

It was during his exile also that he prepared for the press his *Discourses of Redemption*. In reference to this work we need only repeat some things which we said in an article upon it in the *Southern Presbyterian Review* for December, 1866: "Mr. Robinson informs us, in the preface to this work, that 'the result of an attempt to give permanent form, so far as oral instruction can be transferred to the printed page, to such outline specimens of the author's biblical expositions in the several sections of the inspired word as might be most suggestive to younger preachers in their attempts to develop the various parts of Scripture to the comprehension of the people, and at the same time be instructive to Christians and inquirers and other earnest persons troubled with doubts touching inspiration or the doctrines of the Bible.' His idea of preaching is not that of theological disquisition, ethical essay, rhetorical, persuasive, or emotional appeal, founded upon a shred of the sacred text chosen as a motto, or, at best, as suggesting simply the theological topic of the occasion, but that of giving the sense of Scripture, of showing the people how to read the word of God, and leading them to feel that 'this day is the Scripture fulfilled in their ears,' and that these are the words of a Jesus, who not only *spoke* by holy men of old, but *is now speaking* with living utterance to the men of his generation.

"If any man is qualified to pronounce upon the best method of reaching the popular ear, that man is certainly the author of these *Discourses of Redemption*. He has been preaching for twenty years to congregations variously composed, in four different cities, to professional and public men in the capital of Kentucky, to business men in Louisville and Baltimore, to students and professors of law, medicine, and the arts in Toronto, and everywhere with large crowds hanging upon his lips. Now what has been the secret of his popularity? He is not a 'star preacher'—to use the miserable slang of the day—a pulpit harlequin or

buffoon, amusing his audience with jests upon things sacred and profane, making the church and the ordinances of Christ the instruments of gain to himself, or prostituting the awful office of a preacher for the mere display of his own gifts and for the admiration and applause of the crowd. Nor is he a 'political' preacher, trimming his sails to the breeze of popular passion and partisan excitement, accepting his doctrines from the caucus or the convention of the party to which he belongs, and preaching the preaching which *it* bids him, the poor slave of the majority of the hour. No! He is a preacher who stands before the people with the conviction that he is the anointed ambassador of the King of kings, commissioned to deal with his rebellious subjects upon questions no less awful than the majesty of his throne and their own eternal destiny, authoritatively setting forth the divine terms of reconciliation, and praying men, *in Christ's stead*, to be reconciled to God. Wonderfully gifted indeed, and capable of interesting men in anything, yet, as a preacher and ambassador, confining himself to his written instructions, he has demonstrated that the people need no other attraction to draw them to the house of God than a simple, rational, and practical exposition and illustration of the Bible. He has never needed advertisements in the Saturday newspapers of sermons on this or that sensational subject, or any other theatrical clap-trap to get an audience. The secret of his popularity is his aiming to make the Bible a living message from God to men, by translating it into the current forms of thought and speech. And we doubt not that men of far inferior natural gifts, if they would *study* to approve themselves unto God as workmen needing not to be ashamed, in the orthotomy of the truth, while they might not have such unbounded popularity as Mr. Robinson, would yet have a larger number of sinners to hear the glad tidings from their lips than they now have.

"The theme of these discourses is redemption, in the broad

sense of that term, including not only the sacrifice of Christ, which is the centre and foundation of the whole scheme, but the whole work of Christ and the doctrine of the church. These great topics are discussed with a perspicuity and an unction worthy of all praise. We had the pleasure of hearing many of these discussions from the pulpit; and now, after years of darkness and blood, we return our hearty thanks to the author for the high privilege of possessing them in a permanent form, and of refreshing ourselves in the reading of them. It is a matter of wonder to many that a man of war like Mr. Robinson, incessantly battling for the truth against overwhelming odds; an exile from his country and the object of a venomous and unrelenting persecution from men who, having no conscience themselves, cannot conceive of a life governed by a higher conviction of duty, should be able to write a book like this. To us there is no wonder in the case, any more than there is in Bunyan's writing the *Pilgrim's Progress* in Bedford jail, or in Luther's translating the Bible in the Wartburg, or in Rutherford's dictating his letters in prison-bonds at Aberdeen. 'Out of the eater comes forth meat,' and the fragrance of the 'Saints' Rest' and 'O mother dear, Jerusalem,' is due to the bruising of Baxter and David Dickson. Persecution and exile have been 'Christ's palace' to our friend. While we could not but be burdened with his afflictions, we now thank his Master and ours for this precious fruit. We hail this work as the first-fruits of a religious literature which will make our Southern Church a blessing to the world.

"It is a book of principles, of *semina rerum*, which, if lodged in the mind, will germinate and bring forth fruit; a book which shows the author to be one of the leading thinkers, as well as one of the most popular preachers, of the age; a book which none of our young men who are in training for the ministry of the gospel can afford to be without; which every plain Christian, who would have the word of

God to dwell in him richly, can study with profit and delight.”

But to return to our narrative: Mr. Robinson returned to Louisville in April, 1866, in opposition to the earnest solicitations of the numerous friends he had made in Canada, who, it is said, offered to build a church for him there if he would consent to remain with them. From the time of his return to a few months before his death, he continued the active pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church. In addition to his pastoral work, he took a prominent, generally a leading, part in all the great questions which were agitated in the Presbyterian Church in the United States, or in the Synod of Kentucky, and in the measures adopted by the people of Louisville for the relief of distress, or for the promotion of the temporal interests of that fine city. Scarcely anything was undertaken for these purposes, in regard to which he might not have said truly and with pardonable self-congratulation, *quorum magna pars fui*.

The publication of his paper was resumed under the title of the *Free Christian Commonwealth*; and, as this title implies, he continued to devote himself to the defence of the independence of the church and of the royal prerogatives of Jesus Christ as her only Head and King. He was a commissioner to the General Assembly (Northern) of 1866 at St. Louis, and had the honor of being stigmatized by that revolutionary body, and of being cast out, as a signer of “the Declaration and Testimony.” It was mainly through his efforts that the Synod of Kentucky was induced to unite with the General Assembly of the Southern Church in 1869; and his hand, we think, may be recognized in the clear, sound, and forcible statement of principles presented in the letter of that Synod to our General Assembly in 1867.<sup>1</sup> He was elected, by acclamation, Moderator of the General As-

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<sup>1</sup> See *The Distinctive Principles of the Presbyterian Church in the United States*, pp. 78 ff. (Second edition, Committee of Publication, Richmond.)



sembly at Mobile, Ala., in 1869. He was a power in every Assembly of which he was a member, and a valued counsellor in this and other courts of the church where he did not appear as a member. No man ever doubted, howsoever much he might differ with him in opinion, Mr. Robinson's true and ardent devotion to the Presbyterian Church.

We will mention only two other measures of general interest in which he took a leading part: One was the cooperation of the Assembly of the Southern Church with the "Presbyterian Alliance," and the other was the adoption of the *Revised Book of Government and Discipline*. Mr. Robinson was successful in his advocacy of both. The opposition to the first was of a much more formidable character than the opposition to the second; it was of a kind which it is seldom wise or safe to encounter. It embraced great names, the names of men to whom the church is always ready to listen; but the opposition was vain. The friends of the Alliance, with Mr. Robinson in the front, carried it. His essays and speeches in favor of the *Book of Government and Discipline* powerfully contributed to its adoption. "He was a man," says a writer who cannot be regarded as particularly friendly to Mr. Robinson, "he was a man of indomitable energy and resolution. He underwent physical and mental labor from which other men would shrink. At the Assembly of 1869, after moderating the court through the day, he sat with the Committee on the *Revised Book of Church Order* far into the small hours of the night, and until the other members of the committee had retired to rest or had fallen asleep over the work."

But great men cannot live forever here; great as they are, they are but men—frail children of the dust. It was evident to Mr. Robinson's friends, two or three years before his death, that he had begun to decline in health and vigor. His decline, however, was very gradual. The stroke that robbed the church and his family of their treasure did not fall until

the morning of the 5th October, 1881. On that day he fell asleep in the arms of the Saviour in whom he had trusted and whose truths he had for so many years fearlessly defended. "He passed away," says one who was with him in the solemn hour, "he passed away quietly, unable to articulate plainly, but conscious to the last. No fear disturbed him—he had never spoken of recovery during his illness, but prepared everything for leaving his beloved church and stricken family, trusting and giving all he loved into the care of the Father for whom he had labored so faithfully and whose blessing had rested so abundantly upon his works."

Mr. Robinson was the father of eight children, two only of whom survive him, both daughters. One of his sons died early in life; the other lived to be married.

Very few ministers of the gospel have been so widely known beyond the limits of the church to which they belonged as the subject of this imperfect sketch; and many pages might be filled with descriptions of the man and the preacher written while he lived, and with eulogies upon the dead. We have to be content with appending the estimate of Dr. B. M. Palmer, of New Orleans, who was his classmate at Amherst College, and his steady and life-long friend. It is contained in the address delivered at the funeral service in the Second Presbyterian Church, Louisville:

"What shall I say of my dead friend? He had a great heart, whose affections gushed forth, fertilizing life wherever they touched, and making the earth to bloom with richness and beauty. It was a heart that throbbed in generous response to every cry of distress, from whatever quarter it should come; not wasting itself in the common-places of speech, but with profuse liberality supplying the needs by which others were oppressed. His broad sympathy took hold of human life at every point, and identified him with all the great movements for the amelioration of society at

large. It overflowed into thousand tender fellowships, which knit him to the hearts of his fellow-men; but especially in the sanctuary of home the deep affectionateness of his nature softened the asperities of life to those who were the nearest to him, and made that home as much a paradise as can be found in this sinful world. With instincts so pure and so broad, he moved upon a plane far too elevated to indulge a mean thought, and spent a life of toil and sacrifice for the benefit of mankind.

“God also gave to him a massive intellect. Beneath that ample brow lay a capacious brain which did much and mighty thinking through an active and laborious life. His was a mind comprehensive in its grasp of ultimate principles which he could co-ordinate and arrange into great systems of science, philosophy, and religion. It swept freely through the whole gamut of human knowledge, touching every note from the highest to the lowest, and harmonizing them all in one complete system of knowledge and of faith. He was a man pre-eminent for his loyalty to the truth, and was one of those who had the courage of his convictions. What he believed was wrought into the very texture of his being, and became part of the blood and bone and muscle and sinew of his entire intellectual and moral nature. The most sacred thing on earth, next to God himself, is the truth which springs from the infinite mind, and bequeathed to man as the furniture of the soul for time and eternity; and the grandest spirit that lives is the spirit that can feel the truth through every fibre of its own being and stand to its defence against all adversaries, whether they be many or few. Hence it was this man, with a heart as tender and gentle as a woman’s, was ever found in the thickest of the fight, brave and sturdy as a lion, contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. Yet this mind, comprehensive and grand in its sweep, was not absorbed in the abstract and secluded speculations of the student; it was as practical as it

was profound, and could descend into all the details of the economy of life. This intense practicalness which enabled him to apply abstract principles to the regulation of human conduct rendered him a wise counsellor in all the business relations of men, and constituted him the strong pillar upon which the interests leaned in every community in which he lived. Added to all this was an indomitable will. It is easy to point to men in whom the power of will stands even for intellect itself; but when united with rare benevolence and the highest grade of practical wisdom, it makes a man a safe and mighty leader. The men who make history are always the men who do the things that can't be done. By the power of a strong faith they project themselves into the future while it is yet distant; or rather draw that future up to themselves until they are fairly abreast of it, and plant their fame with the generations that are to come. Such a will was his, forcible and persistent, which drove itself like a wedge through all complications and achieved the impossible. With this was united a marvellous power of physical endurance, which rendered labors which would be oppressive to other men like a feather's weight upon his herculean arm. Often after days full of distraction and care, which would have dissipated the energies of feebler men, the poor crippled arm would, through the weary hours of night, trace those rich contributions which he made to the press and literature of the time. Labors, alas! which too severely reacted upon his physical strength, and laid, perhaps, the foundation of what we mournfully regard this day as a premature old age.

“Passing around the circle of his intellectual and moral powers, there was not one in which he was not singly great, but his glory lay chiefly in the wonderful combination of them all; his peculiar strength lay in the harmony and proportion of his powers, which enabled him to range over the breadth of a zone.”

In conclusion, let all the ministers of the glorious gospel

of the blessed God, whatever may be their gifts, however inferior in strength, brilliancy, or variety to our departed brother's, resolve, while they gaze upon "the bright track of his fiery car," to imitate him in what is imitable, his diligence, his fidelity, his courage, in doing the work of the Lord, his Lord and theirs.

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